

# Hiring a Caregiver

## What you need to know

Hiring a caregiver can provide critical support, peace of mind, and maintain your quality of life. However, choosing the right caregiver requires careful planning. This page will guide you through what to look for, questions to ask, and how to find a caregiver you feel good about. Whether hiring independently or through an agency, thoughtful selection helps ensure safety, comfort, and continuity of care.

### How to Find a Quality Caregiver:

- **Ask for Recommendations:** Start with referrals from doctors, nurses, friends, family, senior centers, or your local *Area Agency on Aging*.
- **Use Reputable Agencies:** Licensed home care agencies often screen, train, and supervise caregivers.
- **Check Online Resources:** Websites like *Care.com*, *Aging Life Care Association*, or local senior directories-list caregivers and agencies with reviews.
- **Request Background Checks:** Always ask for a criminal background check, driving record (if they'll be transporting), and references.
- **Clarify Duties and Expectations:** In the resource unit you will find a caregiver agreement template that can be used to document expectations as well as compensation.
- **Do a Trial Period:** Start with a trial to see if the caregiver and you or your loved one are a good fit.
- **Trust your instincts:** If something feels off during the interview or trial, continue your search. Compatibility and trust are essential.

# Questions to Ask When Interviewing a Caregiver

## **Experience and Training:**

- How many years have you been a caregiver?
- What types of conditions or illnesses have you cared for (e.g., dementia, stroke, mobility impairments)?
- Do you have any certifications (CNA, CPR, First Aid)?

## **Background and References:**

- Are you willing to undergo a background check?
- Can you provide at least two professional references?
- Do you have a valid driver's license and reliable transportation (if needed)?

## **Availability and Flexibility:**

- What days and hours are you available?
- Are you available for emergencies, overnight care, or weekends if needed?
- How do you handle schedule changes or time off?

## **Caregiving Approach:**

- How do you handle challenging behavior, like resistance to bathing or memory loss?
- How do you encourage independence while providing support?
- What would you do in a medical emergency?

## **Specific Skills and Comfort Level:**

- Are you comfortable assisting with bathing, dressing, toileting, and mobility?
- Can you assist with medication reminders, cooking, light housekeeping, or transportation?
- Have you worked with individuals who use mobility aids like walkers, wheelchairs, or lifts?

## **Personality and Fit:**

- What do you enjoy most about caregiving?
- How do you build rapport with the people you care for?
- Are you comfortable working around pets, if there are any?

## **Payment and Employment Terms:**

- Are you willing to sign a caregiver agreement outlining duties and responsibilities?
- Are you an independent contractor or employed through an agency?
- Are you willing to document the care provided, to support a long-term care insurance claim?
- What is your hourly or daily rate?