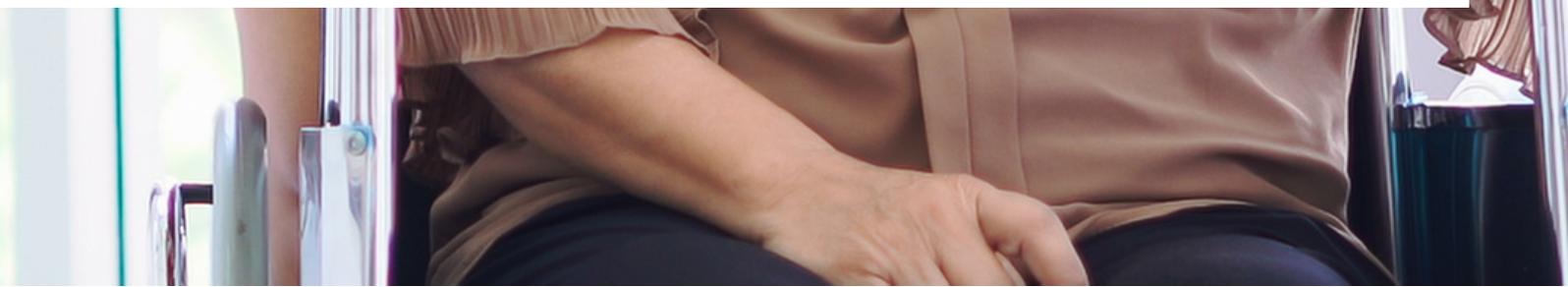




RIVERSIDE COUNTY  
IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (IHSS) & PUBLIC AUTHORITY  
**CAREGIVER HANDBOOK**



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# WHAT IS IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES?

The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program provides in-home assistance to eligible aged, blind and disabled individuals as an alternative to out-of-home care and enables recipients to remain safely in their own homes.

## INTRODUCTION

We are happy to have you on board as a Riverside County IHSS caregiver. Many elderly and disabled individuals prefer to stay independent for as long as possible. They want to stay in control of their lives and live in their own home among familiar surroundings and people they know. To accomplish this, the IHSS program pays family members, friends, and neighbors to provide care to eligible recipients. When an eligible recipient does not have someone that can become their caregiver, but they still want to remain living at home, they can be referred to the IHSS Public Authority who can connect registry caregivers to IHSS recipients in need of assistance.

Whether you are a family caregiver or a registry caregiver, this guide will give you information to help you feel more comfortable about your role. You will also find detailed information about questions to ask your IHSS recipient regarding hiring, supervising and dismissing caregivers.

# WHAT IS THE IHSS PUBLIC AUTHORITY?

*According to the California Association of Public Authorities (CAPA), The Public Authority was established to protect and enhance the quality of IHSS and provide seniors and people with disabilities access to personal assistance to meet their needs and support the choice to live independently. Public Authorities are responsible for maintaining caregiver registries, providing IHSS consumers (recipients) with caregiver referrals, and providing for consumer and caregiver training. In addition to these services, Public Authorities are the employer of record for purposes of collective bargaining. Public Authorities are required to have an IHSS consumer-majority advisory committee.*

The Riverside County Public Authority operates a registry that:

- Recruits caregivers to join the registry.
- Screens registry applicants through background checks and drug & alcohol screenings.
- Maintains a computer database of IHSS recipients and caregivers location and availability preferences, among others.
- Matches IHSS recipient needs with the skills and availability of caregivers.
- Provides IHSS recipients a list of names of potential caregivers from which they can hire.
- Provides free and optional training to IHSS recipients and caregivers

The Registry provides support services to IHSS recipients as needed. These services may include:

- Assisting the IHSS recipient and caregiver in understanding employer/employee roles, rights, and responsibilities.
- Assisting the IHSS recipient with the hiring of caregivers.
- Assisting with conflict resolution between an IHSS recipients and caregiver.

## IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE



The Riverside County IHSS Advisory Committee is comprised of current and former IHSS recipients and caregivers who are committed to meeting once every other month to advocate for their peers. IHSS caregivers and recipients can also join the IHSS Advisory Committee as a member when a vacant seat becomes available. If you are interested in joining, please visit: <https://rivcodpss.org/disabled-adults-seniors/ihss-advisory-committee>

# YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A CAREGIVER

As an IHSS caregiver the recipient you work for is your employer. As the employer the recipient will provide instructions to you on how to complete your authorized tasks.

You have the responsibility and obligation to:

- Be on time to work every time (no excuses).
- Provide quality service by using the authorized hours in an efficient and effective manner.
- Know what services are authorized by reviewing the "Notice of Action" with the IHSS recipient and provide authorized services only. Remember you are only to do work needed by the IHSS recipient, not others in the household.
- Help the IHSS recipient maintain or increase self-sufficiency.
- Promptly report any changes in the IHSS recipient's health, abilities, environment, or need for services to the IHSS HOME (Helping Others Manage Efficiently) Call Center at 1-888-960-4477
- Complete electronic timesheets, work schedules and other forms as required.
- Maintain strict confidentiality about the IHSS recipient for whom you work.
- As a mandated reporter you are required to report any suspected abuse or neglect immediately to the County Adult Protective Services or Children's Protective Services agency.
- Give at least a two-week notice if you need to resign from working for an IHSS recipient.

## WHAT IS THE IHSS NOTICE OF ACTION?

All tasks are authorized by the IHSS social worker as shown on the IHSS recipient's "Notice of Action." The recipient's Notice of Action will list the services that you are authorized to perform for a particular recipient. As an IHSS caregiver, you may perform a variety of household management tasks including meal planning, shopping, food preparation, house cleaning, personal care, accompaniment to medical appointments, paramedical services, and laundry. Each IHSS recipient's Notice of Action is unique. You are only authorized to perform tasks that are listed on your IHSS recipient's Notice of Action, which are instructed by the recipient. A description of authorized IHSS tasks can be found on page 14.

## DRIVING YOUR IHSS RECIPIENT

Transportation services (accompaniment to medical appointments) may be authorized for you to take the IHSS recipient to medical appointments. The purpose is to make sure the person receives the transportation to and from the doctor's office. Accompanying the IHSS recipient to medical appointments is permitted when the IHSS recipient requires assistance at the appointment and cannot go alone.

- Assisting an IHSS recipient in and out of a vehicle or an office building is allowed when the IHSS recipient is unable to perform these activities independently.
- IHSS does not pay for gasoline or reimburse caregivers for mileage.
- IHSS does not pay for automobile insurance, but you must have insurance to transport the IHSS recipient in your own vehicle.
- For safety reasons, turn off your cell phone when transporting an IHSS recipient to avoid an automobile accident.

# YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A CAREGIVER

## INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS

Workers Compensation covers caregivers for injuries they may incur while doing services specifically authorized by an IHSS social worker. If you are injured while performing a task that is not authorized by IHSS, you will not be covered. Refer to your Provider Letter (SOC2271) for your list of authorized tasks. The IHSS recipient could be held responsible if the IHSS recipient asked you to perform the task. Report injuries immediately to the IHSS HOME Call Center at 1-888-960-4477.

## COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

Per the State of California, all caregivers that are not living with or caring for a family member must be vaccinated and boosted against coronavirus (COVID-19). You are required to maintain your own records of vaccination, or COVID-19 test results if applicable, and must provide them if asked by your recipient. If your recipient tests positive for COVID-19, you are not required to continue caring for the recipient during that time. Additionally, if you test positive for COVID-19 you should not be providing IHSS services for any recipient. You should contact your IHSS recipient(s) immediately and let them know you are unavailable. If you are a registry caregiver, you will need to contact the Public Authority's Registry Dispatch Unit at 1-800-915-1777.

Upon request, while supplies remain available, the IHSS Public Authority can provide you with essential protective gear (EPG), such as masks and gloves. Call 1-888-960-4477 to request EPG equipment.



# TIPS FOR REGISTRY CAREGIVERS:

Once you have become active on the registry, you will be eligible to be hired to work for an IHSS recipient. Any time that you are looking to work for a new IHSS recipient you will need to contact the Public Authority's Registry Dispatch Unit at 1-800-915-1777.

A representative will review your work preferences with you and add you to the list of caregivers who are ready to be paired with a new recipient.

## PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

### TELEPHONE SCREENING

IHSS recipients will take the time to interview applicants, but first they will want to screen them by phone. The IHSS recipient may or may not choose to set up an in person interview following the telephone conversation.

It is very important that you respect and maintain confidentiality. Do not ask the IHSS recipient for any personal information such as name, address, or phone number prior to being offered an interview.

Remember to:

- Be friendly.
- Give a brief description of your skills and experience.
- Specify the days and hours you are available to work.
- Ask if the IHSS recipient needs you to accompany him/her to medical appointments. If so, how often and what is the distance?
- Offer to provide the IHSS recipient with a list of references at the time of the interview.
- Thank the recipient for calling, even if you do not get the offer of a personal interview.

### INTERVIEWING IN PERSON

Arrive at your interview on time. Be prepared to show a photo ID to identify yourself.

The IHSS recipient may wish to have a registry social worker or someone they know present during the interview to help them feel more comfortable. The accompanying person may assist in identifying additional questions to ask.

Become acquainted with the IHSS recipient by letting them tell you about themselves. This also shows the recipient that you have an interest in them as a person.

Review with the IHSS recipient their "Notice of Action" which they received from their IHSS social worker. This will tell you how many hours and which tasks they are authorized to receive. The IHSS program will only pay for tasks that you have been authorized to complete in the Notice of Action.



# TIPS FOR REGISTRY CAREGIVERS: PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

## POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What kind of work have you done?
2. What kind training, if any, have you had?
3. Why are you in this line of work?
4. Do you mind being around someone who smokes or drinks?
5. Are you allergic to cats, dogs or other animals?
6. Would you be willing to take me to my doctor's appointments?
7. Do you have a Driver's License and car insurance?
8. Would you be willing to work together with me on some tasks?
9. Will you cook according to my needs and plan menus with me?
10. Is there anything on the "Notice of Action" that you cannot or would not do?
11. Do you have any problem understanding written or oral directions?
12. What days and hours are you available?



## SPECIAL NEEDS INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The IHSS recipient may have special needs. The following is a list of questions that provides the IHSS recipient information about your experience working with a recipient who has special needs. If you have experience or special knowledge in these areas, let the IHSS recipient know.

1. Have you had any experience in caring for a person with severe memory loss?
2. How would you handle a person who wanders?
3. How would you deal with a person who refuses to eat?
4. How would you handle aggressive or abusive behavior?
5. How would you handle a medical emergency?
6. Have you ever been certified to give First Aid and/or CPR?
7. Can you perform wound care? Would you be willing to learn how?
8. Can you measure and document changes in someone's behavior?
9. Do you know how to operate a lift to transfer someone?
10. Can you change a bed with someone in it?

# IHSS PAYROLL & BENEFITS



## ELECTRONIC TIMESHEETS

There are two pay periods each month:

- 1st to 15th
- 16th to the last day of the month.

Caregivers should not work or claim more than the authorized hours. They will not be paid for working extra hours unless pre-approved for overtime. Claiming more hours is considered fraud.

- Any private arrangement made between the IHSS recipient and the caregiver to do work other than that which is authorized by the IHSS social worker is strictly between the IHSS recipient and the caregiver and will not be paid for by IHSS.
- If the IHSS recipient has a Share of Cost (SOC), he or she is responsible for paying the SOC amount directly to the caregiver when it is deducted from a paycheck. The caregiver will receive a letter explaining how much SOC is to be collected from the IHSS recipient.
- The county is not responsible for paying the IHSS recipient's SOC. The amount your recipient needs to pay you directly may change each pay period, depending on whether the recipient has paid some or all of their SOC for other medical expenses before the timesheet for each pay period is processed."

## ELECTRONIC SERVICES PORTAL (ESP)

Having an Electronic Services Portal (ESP) account is required for all caregivers to receive payment. The ESP is where you as a caregiver can take care of any payroll needs. You may access this website using any electronic device. On the ESP you will be able to submit your electronic timesheets, view your payment status, download payment history, submit sick leave claims, and enroll for direct deposit.

Your IHSS recipient(s) will have access to ESP or Telephonic Timesheet System (TTS) to approve or reject your electronic timesheets.

To access the ESP visit: [www.etimesheets.ihss.ca.gov](http://www.etimesheets.ihss.ca.gov)

# IHSS PAYROLL & BENEFITS

## DIRECT DEPOSIT

IHSS caregivers will be required to use Direct Deposit or a pay card. Your paycheck will automatically be deposited into a bank account or the pay card of your choice.

There are several advantages of using direct deposit

- You will receive your paycheck faster.
- You don't need to worry about your paper check being lost or stolen.
- No need to wait for a paper check to be mailed to you.

You must be already registered in the ESP at [www.etimesheets.ihss.ca.gov](http://www.etimesheets.ihss.ca.gov) to enroll for Direct Deposit.

## TAXES

Social Security contributions will be withheld unless you are caring for your spouse, or are a minor child working for your parent. Income taxes will not be withheld unless you request it. If you want taxes withheld, fill out the W-4 form and send to County of Riverside Department of Public Social Services, In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority, PO Box 7300, Moreno Valley, CA 92552-9901. Caregivers may be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit. Be sure to speak to a tax professional about this.

## BENEFITS

Depending on the amount of time worked, you may be eligible for State Disability and/or unemployment benefits if you are laid off. Caregivers who work more than 80 hours per month for three consecutive months may be eligible for health benefits.

## REGULAR WORK HOURS AND TIME OFF

IHSS does not pay for vacation. If the caregiver does not work the hours authorized, the IHSS recipient may give that time to another caregiver. Requests for time off/sick time must be directly coordinated with the IHSS recipient.

- Always call the IHSS recipient if you will be arriving late or are unable to work.
- If planned time off is needed, call the social worker, and give the IHSS recipient plenty of advanced notice so there will be time to arrange for a replacement through the Public Authority Registry (if the recipient has confirmed willingness to accept registry provider).
- Registry Caregivers should call the Public Authority's Registry Dispatch Unit at 1-800-915-1777 to update your availability when time off is needed.
- Never send a substitute to work for the IHSS recipient.
- Submit timesheets promptly and accurately at the end of each pay period.

## SICK LEAVE

There are one-time requirements that must be completed by caregivers to accrue and use paid sick leave. For the latest sick leave eligibility information [visit the California Department of Social Services website](https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/ihss-providers/resources/sick-leave): <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/ihss-providers/resources/sick-leave>

# IHSS PAYROLL & BENEFITS

## VIOLATIONS

Violations are given when guidelines for overtime and travel time limitations are not followed. Some of the actions that will cause you to get a violation are:

- Working more than 40 hours in a workweek without your recipient getting approval from the county when your recipient is authorized less than 40 hours in a workweek.
- Working more hours for your recipient than the recipient's maximum weekly hours which causes you to work more overtime hours in a month than you normally would without receiving county approval.
- Working more than 66 hours in a workweek when working for more than one recipient.
- Claiming more than 7 hours for travel time in a workweek.

More information regarding violations can be found on page 18 and on the [CDSS website](https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/ihss/ihss-providers/resources): <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/ihss/ihss-providers/resources>



## UNPAID TIME

Caregivers will not be paid for any time spent performing tasks while an IHSS recipient is hospitalized or goes on vacation. Vacation exceptions may be made if a recipient goes on vacation and needs the caregiver to accompany them for assistance, in which case the trip must be in the United States and be approved by the IHSS social worker.

# MAINTAINING GOOD WORK PRACTICES

## BE PROFESSIONAL ON THE JOB

Always remember that this is a job. Just because the work is in someone's home or working for a relative or friend does not mean it can be treated as any less of a job.

- Do not bring friends or children to the workplace.
- Do not tell the IHSS recipient your personal problems. Keep discussions of personal life to a minimum.
- Do not eat the IHSS recipient's food or accept gifts or loans from the IHSS recipient.
- Do not borrow money from the IHSS recipient even if they offer it.
- Never discuss controversial subjects such as religion or politics.
- Never ask the IHSS recipient to contribute to join or buy anything.
- Turn off your cell phone or put it on vibrate while you are working for the IHSS recipient.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Never tell anyone personal information about the IHSS recipient. This information is considered confidential and was included in your signed Participant's Rights, Responsibilities, and Release Agreement (DPSS 3492). Never discuss the IHSS recipient's personal or private affairs with anyone other than the IHSS social worker or the IHSS Public Authority staff.

## HANDLING THE IHSS RECIPIENT'S MONEY

When you handle money, personal checks, and other types of checks, credit cards, or Medi-Cal cards that belong to the IHSS recipient:

- Obtain a note with permission from the IHSS recipient for anything that is handled and/or taken out of their home.
- Before leaving the IHSS recipient's house, count the money in front of the IHSS recipient and verify the amount taken.
- Make a note of the amounts on a piece of paper.
- Upon returning, verify the amount spent and the amount of change, and have the IHSS recipient initial the piece of paper. This is for the protection of the caregiver and the IHSS recipient.
- Provide receipts for all expenditures.

## WORKING ALONE IN THE IHSS RECIPIENT'S HOME

Never work in the IHSS recipient's home when the IHSS recipient is temporarily absent, such as at a doctor's appointment. Only work while the IHSS recipient is present to reduce the likelihood of complaints regarding theft or damage to the IHSS recipient's personal property and to reduce questions about the completion of tasks.

# MAINTAINING GOOD WORK PRACTICES



## GOOD COMMUNICATION

Communication is the key to being a good caregiver. When the IHSS recipient explains the task, ask questions to make sure there is an understanding of exactly what is needed to be done and how the IHSS recipient wants it done. Ask the IHSS recipient to write down how they want tasks to be done. Try to do the tasks as the IHSS recipient asks. Remember, this is their home and their body, and they know what will work. Listen to the IHSS recipient's wishes and do everything you can to meet them within reason and the Notice of Action. Respect their knowledge. If you are unclear about something, ask the IHSS recipient. Please do not argue with the IHSS recipient. If problems arise in communicating with the IHSS recipient, the IHSS social worker can help with mediation.

## SUPERVISION

Supervision includes accountability, good communication and recordkeeping. It is important to encourage the IHSS recipient to do as much as they can. Ask the IHSS recipient to post the main list of their needs and the job description on the refrigerator. If they want certain things done in a specific way, it is important to write them down. This makes communication and supervision easier. Remember, there are many ways to do things. This should be a collaborative effort.

## ACCEPTING CORRECTION

- Discuss problems as they arise, don't bottle them up. Discuss them fairly and calmly.
- When being offered correction, first listen to the IHSS recipient, then ask them how they want the task done.
- Blaming the IHSS recipient or making them feel ashamed is not helpful to the situation. If you find it difficult to be corrected by your IHSS recipient, ask for help from the IHSS social worker. They can assist in mediating problems.

## ACCIDENTAL DAMAGE TO AN IHSS RECIPIENT'S PROPERTY

Be careful in the IHSS recipient's home to avoid damaging any of the IHSS recipient's possessions. If something is damaged, tell the IHSS recipient immediately to avoid being liable for payment or replacement. Remember, the IHSS recipient may terminate you if items are routinely damaged.

# MAINTAINING GOOD WORK PRACTICES

## MAINTAIN RESPONSIBILITY

- IHSS recipients should not leave valuables lying around. They should keep their jewelry, cash, checkbook, and credit cards put away safely and securely. If valuables are left out, ask the IHSS recipient to put them away. Do not move any valuables without their permission.
- Ask for a receipt every time when shopping for the IHSS recipient. Be sure to give all receipts to the IHSS recipient.
- Do not add your name to the IHSS recipient's savings, checking, charge account, Social Security Income (SSI) or any other documents. This could result in allegations of financial abuse.
- Try not to get involved with the IHSS recipient's private life.
- Do not lend the IHSS recipient money, household furnishings or clothing.

**If the IHSS recipient is abusive, for example: hitting or endangering health and safety, contact their IHSS social worker or the Public Authority social worker. Call the police (911) or Adult Protective Services at 1-800-491-7123. Always report problems to the IHSS social worker by calling the IHSS HOME Call Center at 1-888-960-4477.**

## TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

There are many reasons for letting someone go. It may be that the IHSS recipient just does not feel comfortable, the caregiver is uncooperative, is not doing what they agreed upon, is arriving late for work or is missing days without notice. Remember, the IHSS recipient is the employer and has the right to terminate you for any reason.

Examples of reasons for dismissal may include but are not limited to:

- Abuse of drugs and/or alcohol.
- Excessive use of the telephone.
- Theft or financial abuse.
  - The IHSS recipient may ask for an explanation if they suspect theft or misuse of bank accounts. If they really believe something of value is missing, they may call the police.

## ENDING AN ASSIGNMENT WITH AN IHSS RECIPIENT

- Make sure you give the IHSS recipient timely notice so they can find a new caregiver. A two-week notice is preferred.
- Call the IHSS HOME Call Center at 1-888-960-4477 to advise that you are no longer working for the IHSS recipient.



# RESOURCES FOR CAREGIVERS



## RIVERSIDEIHSS.ORG WEBSITE

Visit [www.RiversideIHSS.org](http://www.RiversideIHSS.org) for helpful information regarding the IHSS program. You will find that many of the resources you need are available online.

## SELF-TICKETING PORTAL

On the [RiversideIHSS.org](http://RiversideIHSS.org) website, caregivers can request services electronically and will receive a ticket confirmation to check the status of their requests.

## IHSS HOME CALL CENTER

1-888-960-4477

The IHSS HOME Call Center can assist you with most concerns related to your IHSS case, including enrollment, linking you to your recipients, questions about timesheets, verifications of employment, and workers' compensation, among others.

## REGISTRY DISPATCH UNIT

1-800-915-1777

The Registry Dispatch Unit can assist registry caregivers with requesting new clients and updating their status and availability to provide care. Registry caregivers can update their availability online at: <https://riverside.ihsspa.org/paceseam/login.seam>



## CAREGIVER TRAINING

The Public Authority collaborates with other community organizations to offer free trainings opportunities that will likely help you on your journey as a caregiver. These trainings are optional and available for all Riverside County In Home Supportive Services caregivers. A range of different topics are offered from Caregiver Basics to Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia. Many trainings are offered in English and Spanish. To get more information about available trainings and to register visit: <https://rivcoihsspatrainings.eventbrite.com>



For questions about In-Home Supportive Services or IHSS Public Authority, call the IHSS HOME Call Center at 1-888-960-4477.

For caregiver referrals to the Public Authority Registry, contact the Registry Dispatch Unit at 1-800-915-1777.

To report elder or dependent adult abuse or neglect, please call Adult Protective Services at 1-800-491-7123.

To report child abuse or neglect, please call Children's Protective Services at 1-800-442-4918.

