

# TILL Personal Care Management Services

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## ABOUT THE PCA PROGRAM

### What is the PCA Program?

The Personal Care Attendant (PCA) Program is a MassHealth program that helps people with long-term disabilities live at home by providing funds to hire PCAs.

The PCA program is a participant-directed program. This means that the individual with the disability is the employer. This is different from more traditional home health care programs in which an agency provides the worker. The PCA program is designed to give individuals with disabilities control over how their own personal care needs are met.

### What tasks can PCAs help me with?

PCAs can help with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) such as:

- Mobility/Transfers
- Medications
- Bathing or grooming
- Dressing or undressing
- Range of Motion exercises
- Eating
- Toileting

PCAs can also help with Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) such as:

- Shopping
- Laundry
- Meal Preparation
- Housekeeping

**PCA time is not approved** for activities such as recreation, babysitting, or vocational training. Nor is PCA time allowed for verbal prompting or cuing, or supervision.

### Who is eligible?

You may be eligible for PCA services if you are a **MassHealth Standard or Commonwealth member** and:

- You have a permanent or chronic disability that impairs your ability to perform Activities of Daily Living and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living without physical assistance.
- You need physical assistance with two or more Activities of Daily Living (see list above)
- Personal Care services are prescribed by your physician or nurse practitioner
- MassHealth determines that PCA services are medically necessary.

### What is the application and approval process?

TILL's PCM services provides the initial evaluation which MassHealth uses to determine eligibility and hours of services needed. TILL's PCM Skills Trainer assists you in learning the process of managing your PCA services.

**Please note: The application and approval process takes 2-3 months to complete** and consumers may continue receiving other services until a determination is made.

### How many hours of service will I get?

TILL's PCM clinicians conduct an evaluation, which will describe your personal care needs in detail, and recommend the number of hours of PCA services you need each week. After approval by your physician or nurse practitioner, this evaluation is sent to MassHealth, which makes the final decision about whether you are eligible and how many hours of PCA services will be approved for you. PCA services are usually approved for one year at a time.

## MANAGING YOUR PCA SERVICES

### Who hires the PCA?

If MassHealth approves PCA services for you, you must recruit, hire, fire, train and schedule your own PCAs. TILL Personal Care Management services can help you by:

- offering skills training to help you learn how to do these tasks
- assessing whether you need a surrogate to help you with some or all of these tasks

The Fiscal Intermediary program can do payroll processing and tax filing on your behalf, but the consumer is still the employer of your PCAs.

### What is a fiscal intermediary?

A fiscal intermediary is an agency hired by MassHealth to help you with the employer required tasks of employing a PCA, such as:

- receiving and processing your PCA Activity Forms (time sheets)
- preparing your PCA's paychecks and direct deposits
- sending the paycheck to you to give to your PCA
- filing and paying your share of state and federal taxes, including unemployment
- buying workers' compensation insurance for your PCA
- issuing a W-2 to your PCA

**Cerebral Palsy of Massachusetts has contracted with MassHealth to be the PCA Fiscal Intermediary.**

Information and forms can be found on their website: [www.masscp.org](http://www.masscp.org)

### What is a Surrogate?

If you cannot independently manage your PCA program, you may have the help of a surrogate. The surrogate is often a family member but may be any other person you choose who has the ability to manage the program. A surrogate can assist you with managing any part of the PCA program with which you have difficulty. When you apply for PCA services your Skills Trainer will determine whether you are able to manage the program independently, what skills training you will need to learn how to manage the PCA program, and whether you will need any help from a surrogate.

If you do need help managing your PCA program, you, your Skills Trainer and your Surrogate will work together to develop a Service Agreement that describes the responsibilities of the Surrogate, and which elements of the program you will handle.

### Who can I hire as a PCA?

As a consumer-directed program, the PCA program allows for great flexibility and control in who you can hire as a PCA. There are some restrictions however. The following individuals cannot be hired as PCAs:

- The Parent of a Minor Child, Including Adoptive and Foster Parents
- Spouse
- Surrogate
- Legally Responsible Relative

Your PCAs must also be legally authorized to work in the United States, they must be able to understand and carry out your instructions, and they cannot be receiving pay for their PCA work time from any other agency.

It is your responsibility to check the references of prospective PCAs before you hire them.

### **How many hours each week can my PCAs work?**

You must schedule your PCAs according to the number of hours approved by MassHealth, which is based on your evaluation.

Your PCAs are subject to state and federal labor laws, including overtime rules. Unless your PCA lives in your home, they must be paid time-and-a-half if they work over 40 hours in a week.

Please be aware that your PCAs will not be paid for any work they do if there is no approval in place for that date, or if you have used up all your approved PCA hours.

PCA services cannot be used while you are a resident in a hospital or rehabilitation facility.

Your PCA hours should be scheduled to provide the care that MassHealth has authorized, at the time that you need that care. Your PCA schedule should be set up to meet your own daily needs. Your Skills Trainer will work with you in this area to help you learn how best to schedule your time.

### **What are my responsibilities?**

As a consumer of PCA services, you are responsible for:

- hiring, firing, training and scheduling your PCAs, or working with a surrogate to carry out these responsibilities
- completing and turning in activity forms to the fiscal intermediary
- following the rules of the PCA program
- making sure your PCAs are paid correctly and on time
- letting TILL know if your personal care needs change
- letting TILL know if you unexpectedly need overtime pay for one of your PCAs, or if a PCA must perform Jury Duty
- with your TILL Skills Trainer, making a list of PCAs to contact if your regular PCAs are unavailable
- letting TILL know if you move, change your phone number, or change your doctor.

### **What are the personal care agency's responsibilities?**

As your personal care agency, TILL is responsible for:

- assessing your eligibility for the PCA program
- assessing whether you need a surrogate
- evaluating the kind and amount of services you need
- asking MassHealth for approval for PCA services
- teaching you to manage your PCAs
- teaching you how to complete your PCAs' Activity Forms
- working out a service agreement with you that describes your responsibilities, as well as the responsibilities of the PCA, the fiscal intermediary, the PCA agency, and the surrogate (if any).
- helping you decide which employer option is better for you
- reviewing your service plan with you periodically
- conducting re-evaluations as needed, and submitting them to MassHealth at least 21 days before your current approval runs out.

Your PCM agency must meet with you in person for initial orientation and skills training, and at least quarterly in your first year of service. This is usually done by your Skills Trainer, who will be assigned to you when you apply for PCA services.

### **How and when do I pay my PCAs?**

When you are approved by MassHealth for PCA services you will receive paperwork showing the number of hours of service you are approved for, and the start and ending dates of your approval.

Every two weeks you will submit timesheets to the Fiscal Intermediary showing the hours your PCAs worked. Each payroll period begins on a Sunday and ends on a Saturday; PCAs will normally receive their paychecks the following Friday. Each new consumer is assigned to Schedule One or Schedule Two, usually based on the first letter of your last name.

You may choose to have the Fiscal Intermediary handle your PCA payroll and tax reporting obligations (Option One), or you may choose to handle these tasks yourself (Options Two). Please see the Fiscal Intermediary pages for more details on the payroll process.

## **MORE QUESTIONS?**

### **What if I need more information?**

Call your fiscal intermediary if you:

- have questions about your Activity Forms that can be answered over the telephone
- have questions about the employment forms sent to you by the fiscal intermediary that can be answered over the telephone
- need Activity Forms
- have questions about paying your PCAs

Call your Personal Care Agency if you:

- have questions about hiring, firing, training or scheduling your PCAs
- have questions about the process of requesting overtime pay, or need to request overtime pay for one of your PCAs
- need more skills training to assist you in managing your PCA services
- have questions your fiscal intermediary cannot answer by telephone.

For more information about TILL's Personal Care Management Services, contact:

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