

What is the Personal Care Assistance Program?

A program that helps people with disabilities live in the community.

What can a Personal Care Assistant (PCA) do?

Depending on the needs of the person as identified in the assessment for PCA services, PCAs can help with a number of different things. PCAs can help with activities of daily living such as eating, bathing and dressing. They can help with instrumental activities of daily living such as meal planning, money management and participating in activities in the community. PCAs can also help with health-related needs such as giving medication and with behavior issues.

Who is eligible for the PCA Program?

To receive state-funded PCA services, three main eligibility criteria must be met:

1. Be eligible for or receive Medical Assistance.
2. Have a Dr.'s order that says PCA services are medically necessary.
3. Have a responsible party that can make decisions about care and monitor PCA services. This can be the person receiving PCA services if they are able to make necessary decisions and monitor their own care.

For children, PCA services are based on the needs of a child with a disability that are over and above what a parent or caregiver would normally provide for a child without a disability.

How do I access PCA Services?

- The first step is to contact the county where the person lives to request a PCA Assessment.
- PCA assessments are completed by Public Health Nurses and are supervised by registered nurses.
- A PCA assessment involves a review and evaluation of the person's need to services completed in person.
- PCA assessments need to happen within 30 days after you request the service.
- The assessment looks at what things the person needs help with and the length (1 unit is 15 minutes) of time they need help for each thing.
- Service amounts are based on the results of the assessment.
- Assessments happen annually once you start receiving PCA services, but can be requested more frequently if the needs of the person change.

What happens after a PCA assessment?

- The county sends the assessment to the state who has 30 days to review the assessment.
- The state authorizes the services.
- A plan for the PCA services is developed.
- A number of agencies provide PCA services; the county provides a list of service providers to choose from.
- PCA Choice Option is another way to receive PCA services. Under this option, the recipient is responsible for the hiring, training and firing of their staff rather than an agency.

For further information or advocacy services, contact Arc Greater Twin Cities at 952-920-0855 or visit www.arcgreatertwincities.org. Tell us what you think about this Arc Guide. Please complete a short survey online at <http://arcgreatertwincities.org/resources.aspx>. Thank you!