



## **Passport Program Tip Sheet**

*~ For Passport Participants and the Service Providers who support them ~*

# **Hiring a Personal Support Worker**

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Hiring a Personal Support Worker (PSW) requires time and planning. The following tips are a guide to help you through the process. Additional steps and considerations may be required for you to find the right PSW for you.

1. Identify your needs
2. Consider your options to find a PSW
3. Conduct screening
4. Write an agreement

If you have additional questions about hiring a PSW, please contact the Passport office at 416-780-1106.

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## Identifying Your Needs

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Before you begin the search for the right Personal Support Worker (PSW), take some time to think through your needs. The following list is provided to help guide you through the planning process. You may have other needs not listed below that you'll want to consider. Making a list of your interests will help you find the best PSW for you.

1. What do I want this person to do? Some examples are:
    - Teach life skills such as riding the TTC, doing laundry, or making a snack
    - Attend courses, programs, or activities with me
    - Personal care such as feeding or going to the bathroom
  
  2. When and where will I ask them to work?
    - Day time, evenings, weekends
    - At the same time every day or week or a changing time
    - In my home or outside of my home
    - Will we travel together, and if so, how?
  
  3. What is my budget?
    - How much can I pay this person?
    - What level of experience am I looking for?
    - Will I pay an hourly wage or flat rate?
    - What is the current minimum wage in Ontario?
    - How often will I pay them and how?
  
  4. Ideal PSW traits – what do I want in my PSW?
    - Previous experience? If so, how much?
    - Formal education, like a personal support worker certificate?
    - What characteristics do I want to see in this person, for example someone who is reliable, compassionate, and/or funny?
    - How will I know this person is a good fit for me?
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## Finding a PSW

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Personal Support Workers can be anyone. The decision to hire someone you know, someone with training and education, and/or someone with previous experience, is up to you. This sheet lists some tips to think about when searching for a PSW. Additional considerations may be helpful to you depending on your needs.

1. Consider your options:
  - Do I know someone that I'd like to hire? What are the positives and negatives of hiring someone I know?
  - Do I want to hire through an agency?
  - Am I interested in hiring a student or someone who is semi-retired?
2. Seek feedback from others:
  - Do I know anyone else who hires a PSW who might recommend a PSW?
  - Ask for input into the decision from close family and friends, or by connecting to others hiring PSWs at service agencies or on websites such as ConnectABILITY: <http://connectability.ca>.
3. Review online resources:
  - Respite Services: <http://www.respiteservices.com/Toronto/>
  - Home Health Care Network: <http://www.homehealthcarenetwork.com/psw-jobs/toronto-psw-jobs>
  - PSW Resource Center: <http://personalsupportworkerhq.com/psw-salary/#sthash.H76ZYQkT.dpbs>

*Family Service Toronto does not recommend or endorse any of the above services.  
Information provided as a reference only.*

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## Screening

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Selecting a Personal Support Worker (PSW) is an important decision. When you find a few people who you are interested in, take your time and screen them before you ask them to start working with you. The following tips are provided as a guide. Additional steps and considerations may be required for you to find the right PSW for you.

1. Gather information
    - Ask the PSWs to send you their resume or view their profile on a website
    - Keeping your interests and needs in mind review their experience, education, and interests.
    - Connect with them over the phone. Explain what you are looking for, salary, and location of work.
    - Ask them to describe their experience and provide you with references, diplomas, valid police reference check, and identification.
  2. Meet in-person. Sample interview questions:
    - What do you enjoy about being a PSW?
    - Where do you see yourself in five years?
    - Tell me more about your previous experience.
    - What do you find most challenging about being a PSW?
    - What would you expect from me if you were hired?
  3. Check references of previous clients / employers. Sample reference questions:
    - How do you know this person?
    - How long have you known this person?
    - Please describe the quality of their work.
    - Is there anything I should know before hiring them?
    - If you could, would you hire them again?
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## Writing an Agreement

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Having a written agreement with your PSW will help clarify roles and responsibilities and will reduce conflict in the future. Consider including the following items in your agreement. A sample agreement is attached. Additional information may be required in the agreement with your PSW, based on your needs and circumstances.

1. When and where
    - Dates and time of work
    - Location of work
    - Method of travel
  2. Salary
    - Hourly pay or flat rate amount
    - Dates of pay or frequency
    - PSW responsibility to declare income
  3. Goals for the person being supported
    - Learning goals
    - Skill development
    - Socialization
    - Safety
    - Participation
  4. Expectations of the PSW
    - Recording hours worked
    - Calling in sick / missing work
    - Maintaining safety
    - Respecting personal and cultural customs
    - Personal liability
    - Notice of resignation
  5. Any other information
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## Personal Support Worker Agreement

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Name of Support Worker:	
Phone numbers:	
Address:	

Start date:	
Work hours:	
Location of work:	
Method of travel:	

Salary:	
Pay schedule:	

Name of person being supported:	
Name of contact person (if different):	
Phone numbers:	
Cancelation agreement:	

Goals:	
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