

Service Standard Personal Assistance

Personal Assistance is the coordination of support, care and supervision in the person's home and/or a variety of settings to enable or maintain integration in the community. Personal Assistance focuses on keeping individuals safe while providing direct support in a variety of settings, including work, appointments, community activities, and in their own home. The goal is to assist with the safety and supervision of individuals at home and in the community to encourage choice, inclusion, and independence.

Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC) recognizes that some consumers require additional support for medical and/or daily living skills in order to participate in age appropriate and community based activities. When natural supports and/or generic resources are insufficient to minimize the risks to the health and safety of a consumer, VMRC may provide personal assistance. Personal assistance is typically provided to individuals in order to help them perform tasks that someone could accomplish if he or she did not have a disability. This can include personal care, daily living skills, attending appointments, medication reminders, household activities, support, and supervision. The Planning Team, having utilized all available generic resources and current services and supports, including natural supports, determines the amount of personal assistance hours needed. Hours are based on the needs of the individual identified in the Individual Program Plan process, utilizing the Consumer Services Assessment Tool. These may be services provided in the home, post-secondary school, work and in community activities.

Personal Assistance service is normally geared toward individuals 12 years of age and older. If the Planning Team determines a need for an individual younger in age, and criteria is met through completion of the Checklist and Assessment, the request will be forwarded to the POS Exception Committee.

The person providing the service must be at least 18 years of age and cannot be the consumer's spouse or parent.

Consideration for Personal Assistance shall be based on the following:

- The need is identified and described by the Planning Team and identified as a combination of caregiving and support as opposed to training.
- Documentation exists pertaining to family/extended family availability to provide natural supports.
- Generic resources are identified and are in place (i.e. IHSS, Nursing Waivers, EPSDT, and Disability Student Services).
- The service is necessary to maintain residency in the community.
- The critical needs to be met by the assistance of attendants shall be clearly identified. VMRC places a high priority upon preserving the dignity of independence and promoting least restrictive alternatives. The concept of lowest level of care necessary shall guide the frequency, duration and intensity of the service provided.
- These services shall not duplicate those already being purchased by VMRC or other public entities.

- If parents are unable to provide care due to disability or illness.
- If parents are sleeping due to job responsibilities or they are caring for other family members who have significant needs.

As part of the IPP process, the Planning Team may make exceptions to VMRC's considerations/guidelines. Exceptions may include, but are not limited to:

- A family whose financial resources indicate that they are living at poverty level (e.g. Public Assistance programs – TANF and Food Stamps recipients).
- Situations that will result in maintaining a child in the family home and prevent either the CPS removal or voluntary placement of a child in out-of-home care.
- Situations involving the need for extended summer and other periods when school is not in session may be reviewed on an individual basis. This exception does not include typical family/federal holidays.
- Situations where parent's employment is inconsistent and/or does not lend itself to a routine setting which would meet a child's care needs (i.e. swing shifts requiring off hours, an unemployed parent seeking employment/job interviews).