



# PCA Program Manual

Your PCA Program Skills Trainer is\_\_\_\_\_

413-773-5555 extension \_\_\_\_\_

### **What is the MassHealth PCA Program?**

The PCA Program allows individuals with disabilities or chronic medical conditions to hire their own **Personal Care Attendants** in the community. It is a consumer-directed program and as such, consumers are considered the direct employers of the PCAs they hire. Consumers are set up with Federal Employer Identification numbers and are responsible for recruiting, screening, hiring, training, supervising, and terminating their own PCAs. The PCA Program is designed to give individuals with disabilities control over how their personal care needs are met at home. Those who may be unable to manage all aspects of the program independently can receive assistance from a volunteer surrogate. MassHealth contracts with a fiscal intermediary, **Tempus Unlimited Inc**, for performance of employer-related fiscal tasks for LifePath's PCA consumers. These tasks include payment of PCAs, filing and paying the consumer's share of state and federal taxes including unemployment, and issuing W-2s.

### **Am I eligible for PCA Program services?**

You may be eligible for services if you are on MassHealth (Standard or CommonHealth) and you:

- Have a permanent disability or medical condition
- Require physical assistance with at least two **Activities of Daily Living** (see ADL list in next section)
- Are identified by MassHealth as having a medical necessity for services

### **What can a PCA do for me?**

Your PCA's job responsibilities are to help you with the Activities of Daily Living that have been approved for you by MassHealth. **ADLs include the following:**

- Mobility/Transfers
- Medications
- Bathing/Grooming
- Dressing/Undressing
- Passive Range of Motion exercises
- Eating
- Toileting

If you are eligible for PCA Program services, PCAs may also be able to assist you with the following Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs):

- Shopping
- Laundry
- Housekeeping
- Meal preparation
- Transportation to medical appointments

**PCA time is not approved for activities such as recreation, babysitting, or vocational training. PCA time is also not authorized for verbal prompting or cuing, or supervision.**

### **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. However, your PCAs must be legally authorized to work in the United States and must be able to understand and carry out your instructions. There are some restrictions. The following individuals cannot be hired as PCAs:

- Spouse of consumer
- Biological, adoptive, or foster parent (if consumer is under 18 years of age)
- Surrogate
- Legal guardian or legally responsible adult

**It is your responsibility to screen and check the references of prospective PCAs before you hire them. We also strongly encourage that you require CORI checks. If you need information on how to obtain a CORI, please contact your Skills Trainer.**

### **What is a Surrogate?**

If you cannot independently manage your PCA program, you may have the help of a volunteer surrogate. The surrogate is often a family member or friend but may be any other person you designate who has the ability to manage the program. A surrogate can assist you with managing all or parts of the PCA Program. When you apply for PCA services, and annually thereafter, PCA Program staff will complete an assessment with you to determine whether you will require surrogate assist or not. Your PCA cannot also be your surrogate.

### **What is a Skills Trainer?**

A Skills Trainer is an employee of LifePath, Inc. The Skills Trainer's job is to explain the rules and procedures of the PCA Program to you, and be a resource to help you manage your own PCA services. **If you are unsure of the name of your Skills Trainer, call the PCA Office Coverage line at 413-773-5555 ext 1260 to inquire.**

### **What is Skills Training?**

Skills Training is instruction and support from the PCA Program that enables you to successfully manage your services and maximizes your ability to self-direct your care. The basic components of skills training include PCA Training & Management, Personal Health Care Maintenance, Emergency Management, Fiscal Intermediary Services, and the Rules, Policies, and Procedures of the program.

### **What is a Service Agreement?**

The Personal Care Attendant Service Agreement is a plan developed jointly by the LifePath PCA staff member, the consumer, and the surrogate (if any). The plan outlines the responsibilities of the consumer/surrogate, the PCA, the PCA agency, and the fiscal intermediary. The Service Agreement also describes the type and frequency of functional skills training that you and your surrogate (if any) require from the PCA agency in order to facilitate successful program management. Minimally, your Service Agreement will be reviewed with you quarterly in your first year on the program, any time you identify a new surrogate, or for any other reason deemed necessary by the PCA agency or by MassHealth. Thereafter it will be reviewed and updated annually. You will receive a copy of your Service Agreement.

### **What is a PCA Evaluation?**

An evaluation is an initial determination by the PCA agency of the scope and type of personal care services needed. The evaluation is conducted by a registered nurse and an occupational therapist. You will receive a copy of your Evaluation.

### **What is a PCA Reevaluation?**

A reevaluation is a determination by the PCA agency of the scope and type of personal care services needed for a consumer who requests continuance of PCA services. The reevaluation is conducted by a registered nurse. You will receive a copy of your Reevaluation.

### **How many hours of service will I receive?**

A PCA Program RN will conduct an evaluation to determine your individual need for physical assist in the home with ADLs and IADLs. This evaluation is task-oriented and determines the number of hours per week the program will request from MassHealth. The MassHealth agency

may approve, modify, or deny your request for services. Should they modify or deny your request, LifePath will explain the MassHealth appeals process to you. PCA services are usually approved for one year at a time.

### **Will MassHealth pay for PCA assistance at night?**

If you require hands-on assistance with ADLs during the overnight, MassHealth may approve night attendant hours. MassHealth typically approves 2 hours per night to be used between midnight and 6 am. Authorized day hours are to be used between 6 am and midnight.

### **What should I do if I need more help?**

Your PCA hours should reflect your current needs. Call your Skills Trainer if you think you may need more (or less) hours. A change in your personal care needs may be due to your disability, or may be due to some other event, such as a fall or moving into another living situation. A PCA Program RN will review your evaluation and make adjustments as necessary. MassHealth must approve any increase or decrease request.

### **What happens if the PCA I hire quits suddenly?**

MassHealth expects you to have a **back-up plan** in case your regularly scheduled PCA is prevented from working. PCA Program staff will review your back-up plan with you on a quarterly or annual basis and document it in your Service Agreement.

### **I live with family. How will this affect my PCA services?**

Your PCA evaluation, and eventually your approval, will take into consideration your disability and your living situation, as well as your daily routine. If you live with family members they will be expected to assist with most household chores. For example, routine laundry, housekeeping, shopping, and meal preparation should include the needs of the family member with the disability.

### **I receive other services in my home. Can I still use PCA services?**

PCA services may be used in combination with some other services, such as Visiting Nurse, Adult Day Health, Occupational or Physical Therapy, Home Care services, and SCO or OneCare services. If you do receive other services, the PCA Program cannot duplicate them. Therefore it is important to inform PCA Program staff of any other services in your home, so they can help determine how to best coordinate those services with the PCA Program.

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

You must schedule your PCAs according to the number of hours approved for you by MassHealth, which is based on your PCA evaluation. Your PCA schedule may change slightly from week to week, depending on medical appointments or other activities.

Your PCAs will not be paid by MassHealth for any work they do if there is no approval in place for that date, if you are considered ineligible for MassHealth on that date, or if you have used up all of your approved PCA hours. If you **over-utilize or overbill** (use more hours per week than you are authorized for) *you may run out of hours before the end of your authorization period. In this instance, you may be responsible for paying your PCAs out of pocket.*

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

The PCA may be eligible for unemployment benefits during this time and should contact the unemployment office for more details.

### **Do PCAs need to be certified?**

PCAs do not need to be Certified Nursing Assistants or Home Health Aides. It is up to you as the employer (or your surrogate) to train your PCAs to provide the care you need at home. Call your Skills Trainer if you would like information on training for PCAs, or contact the HomeCare Training Benefit at 877-409-8283.

### **What is a fiscal intermediary?**

MassHealth contracts with fiscal intermediaries to perform employer-related fiscal tasks for PCA consumers. These tasks include payment of PCAs, filing and paying the consumer's share of state and federal taxes including unemployment, and issuing W-2s. The fiscal intermediary for the LifePath PCA Program is **Tempus, Unlimited**.

### **What is the PCA New Hire Orientation?**

The PCA New Hire Orientation is intended for brand new hires into the PCA system of services. This program is intended to ensure that PCAs receive basic information about their rights and responsibilities and about your role as their employer. The fiscal intermediary will notify you if a PCA you hire is required to complete this curriculum. Your PCA will be paid for the 3 hour Orientation and this will not affect your authorized hours per week. Orientation is provided in group sessions around the state or the consumer can opt to provide the Orientation directly to the PCA. Contact PCA Program staff or the fiscal intermediary with questions about the PCA New Hire Orientation. You can also contact the HomeCare Training Benefit at 877-409-8283 for information about group sessions in your area. The curriculum can be completed online at <https://pcaworkforcecouncil.training.ehs.state.ma.us>.

### **What if I need my PCA to work Overtime (more than 40 hours per week)?**

PCAs are subject to state and federal labor laws, including overtime rules. *PCAs should not be scheduled to work more than 40 hours per week.* If you require an individual PCA to work between 41 and 50 hours per week, MassHealth will pay overtime without prior authorization.

**If you require an individual PCA to work more than 50 hours per week, you will need to request prior authorization for overtime from MassHealth. Please be aware that MassHealth will not approve all requests for overtime.** Your Skills Trainer can help you determine if you qualify for overtime and assist with submission of the request to MassHealth.

### **Will my PCA be paid for jury duty?**

MassHealth will pay your PCA for Jury Duty if they served during their regularly scheduled PCA work time. If another PCA fills in for the regular PCA, they will also be paid for their work. Please contact your Skills Trainer to learn how to request Jury Duty pay.

### **How do I schedule my PCA time?**

Your PCA hours should be scheduled to provide care when you need it and as authorized by MassHealth. We suggest you use your PCA evaluation as the basis for a daily schedule. Please contact the LifePath PCA Program to request a copy of your current evaluation if you don't already have one.

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

Your fiscal intermediary, Tempus Unlimited, will handle PCA payroll and tax reporting obligations for you. Your Skills Trainer will provide training regarding the roles and responsibilities of Tempus. Your Skills Trainer will also teach you how to use a system to record, verify, and submit your PCA's payroll information including daily start and end times and total amount of hours worked per week.

### **Will my PCAs be paid for sick time?**

PCAs accrue sick time at a rate of 1 hour per every 30 hours worked. Sick time starts accruing on the PCA's first day of work and can be accessed 90 days after their start date. PCAs can accrue up to 40 hours per year in earned sick time. Ask your Skills Trainer for more information about submitting requests for sick time pay.

### **What if one of my PCAs gets injured on the job?**

Call the fiscal intermediary, Tempus Unlimited, to report an injury right away. You can also call the Department of Industrial Accidents at 617-727-4900 if you have questions about worker's compensation insurance or coverage.

### **Will my PCA be paid for travel time?**

Your PCA will be paid for travel time when they travel from one consumer's home to another on the same day to provide PCA services. This is called same-day travel and it does not include travel to or from the PCA's home before or after the work day. The fiscal intermediary will automatically calculate same-day travel and reimburse the PCA directly.

### **What should I do if I am being abused or neglected or if I suspect someone else is being abused or neglected?**

If you suspect the abuse or neglect of an individual aged 60 or over contact the Elder Protective Services 24/7 Hotline at 800-922-2275. If you suspect the abuse or neglect of someone between the ages of 18 -59 contact the Disabled Persons Protection Commission at 800-426-9009. For children under the age of 18 contact The Department of Children & Families at 800-792-5200.

*This information is also included in the **LifePath PCA Program Safety Brochure**, which is provided annually to all PCA consumers. If you don't think you have this brochure, please ask your Skills Trainer for a copy.*

### **What should I do if I suspect someone of committing fraud against the PCA Program?**

Contact the MassHealth Fraud Hotline at 800-372-8399. PCA Program staff can provide more guidance on what may constitute fraud but please see a limited number of examples below:

- Billing for PCA hours that were never worked
- A spouse being paid for providing PCA services to their partner
- Billing for services on days the consumer was a resident in a nursing home or hospital

### **What are my responsibilities as a PCA consumer?**



- Recruiting, screening, hiring, training, scheduling, supervising, firing PCAs or working with a surrogate to carry out these responsibilities
- Making sure your PCAs are paid in an accurate and timely manner
- Informing LifePath, MassHealth, and the fiscal intermediary if your contact information changes
- Employing PCAs for no more than the number of PCA hours authorized by MassHealth, and only to provide physical assistance with ADLs and IADLs as per your PCA evaluation
- Scheduling an individual PCA to work no more than 40 hours per week, unless authorized by MassHealth for overtime
- Contacting LifePath to make requests for prior authorization for overtime or for a PCA's juror service
- Cooperating with LifePath and MassHealth during assessments, evaluations, reevaluations and other required contact
- Working with LifePath to establish and maintain a current list of available PCAs who can be contacted when an unforeseen event prevents your regularly scheduled PCA from providing care
- Collaborating with LifePath and the fiscal intermediary to resolve any issues or complaints
- Reviewing and signing required program documentation such as the Evaluation, Reevaluation, Service Agreement, and Consumer Assessment to Manage PCA Services forms
- Complying with all applicable state and federal labor laws

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

- Assessing your eligibility for the program
- Assessing whether or not you need a surrogate
- Evaluating the amount of services you need based on tasks and medical necessity
- Reevaluating the amount of services you need annually, bi-annually, or when there has been a change in your functional abilities or living situation
- Requesting authorization from MassHealth for your PCA services
- Teaching you and/or your surrogate how to manage your PCA Program
- Developing a Personal Care Attendant Service Agreement that is unique to you and describes your responsibilities, as well as the responsibilities of the PCA, the surrogate (if any), the PCA agency, and the fiscal intermediary
- Reviewing your Service Agreement with you and providing in-person Skills Training support on a quarterly or annual basis or by phone whenever requested
- Maintaining a communication system for appropriate and timely responses to requests for skills training and other matters
- Maintaining a Grievance Procedure for consumer complaints and concerns

**What if I have an issue with PCA staff at LifePath or with a decision regarding my services?**

The LifePath PCA Program has a process for attending to complaints and appeals requests. PCA Program staff will review the process with you and supply you with a copy of our Grievance Procedure.

**What if I need more information?**

*Call your fiscal intermediary (Tempus) if you:*

- Have questions about your PCA's pay or payroll process
- Have questions about employment forms or status of set-up of a new PCA
- Need to terminate a PCA
- Have a change in your contact information or your PCA's or surrogate's contact information
- Need to file a worker's compensation claim

*Call your Personal Care Agency (LifePath) if you:*

- Have questions about hiring, firing, training, or scheduling your PCAs
- Have questions about the process of requesting overtime or jury duty pay for one of your PCAs
- Require more skills training to assist you in managing your PCA services
- Have questions about your evaluation or weekly hours or require an adjustment in your hours
- Have identified a new surrogate
- Have a change in your contact information or your surrogate's contact information

**Your fiscal intermediary is Tempus, Unlimited**

600 Technology Center Drive

Stoughton, MA 02072

Telephone: 877-479-7577

Fax: 800-359-2884

**Your PCA Agency is LifePath, Inc.**

101 Munson Street, Suite 201

Greenfield, MA 01301

413-773-5555

Ext 1260 for PCA Program Office Coverage

**Helpful Resources for PCA Consumers & Surrogates:**

**Atlantic Charter ~ Worker's Comp**

(For worker's compensation claims and questions)

617-488-6500

**Community Legal Aid**

(To find legal assistance)

Western and Central Mass

855-252-5342

**Criminal Offender Record Info (CORI)**

(To request a CORI on a PCA applicant)

617-660-4600

[mass.gov/chsb](http://mass.gov/chsb)

**Department of Workforce Development**

(To find a local career center or to learn about available recruiting or hiring services)

617-626-5300

[www.mass.gov/dwd](http://www.mass.gov/dwd)

**Disability Law Center**

(To find legal assistance)

800-872-9992

[www.dlc-ma.org](http://www.dlc-ma.org)

**Disabled Persons Protection Commission**

(For reports of abuse or neglect of disabled persons ages 18 – 59 years old)

800-426-9009

[www.mass.gov/dppc](http://www.mass.gov/dppc)

**Elder Protective Services**

(For reports of abuse or neglect of people 60 years and older)

800-922-2275

**Excluded Individuals List**

(For a database of workers who have been convicted of patient abuse)

202-619-1343

[oig.hhs.gov/exclusions/index.asp](http://oig.hhs.gov/exclusions/index.asp)

**HomeCare Training Benefit**

(For info about PCA trainings)

877-409-8283

**Internal Revenue Service**

(For questions about federal employer taxes or employer ID number)

800-829-1040 or 800-829-4933

[www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

**Mass PCA Directory**

(To access a database that can help you find PCA workers)

1-888-MASS-PCA (1-888-627-7722)

[www.masspcadirectory.org](http://www.masspcadirectory.org)

**Mass. Attorney General's Office – Fair Labor Hotline**

(For questions about payment of wages, employing minors, etc)

617-727-3465

[www.ago.state.ma.us](http://www.ago.state.ma.us)

**Mass. Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)**

(For questions about employer's responsibilities relating to discrimination and sexual harassment)

617-994-6000

[www.mass.gov/mcad](http://www.mass.gov/mcad)

**Mass. Dept. of Revenue – Customer Service**

(For questions about employer taxes)

800-392-6089

[www.dor.state.ma.us](http://www.dor.state.ma.us)

**Mass. Division of Unemployment Assistance and Division of Career Services**

(For inquiries into unemployment claims or regarding unemployment taxes)

877-626-6800

[www.mass.gov/lwd/employment-services](http://www.mass.gov/lwd/employment-services)

**Mass. Office on Disability**

(For info on available government programs and independent living services)

800-322-2020

[www.mass.gov/mod](http://www.mass.gov/mod)

**MassHealth Customer Service**

(For questions or concerns regarding your MassHealth eligibility or benefits)

800-841-2900

**MassHealth Fraud Hotline**

(For reporting concerns of PCA Program or MassHealth fraud)

800-372-8399

**New Hire PCA Orientation online curriculum**

<https://pcaworkforcecouncil.training.ehs.state.ma.us>

**PCA Union SEIU 1199**

(For inquiries regarding the PCA union, worker's rights, etc)

877-409-1199

[www.1199seiu.org](http://www.1199seiu.org)

**PCA Workforce Council**

(Ensures quality of long term personal care in the home and supports recruitment, training, and stabilization of PCA workforce)

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/personal-care-attendant-workforce-council>

1 Ashburton Place, 11<sup>th</sup> flr

Boston, MA 02108

**Rewarding Work**

(To access a database that can help you find PCA workers)

866-212-9675

[www.RewardingWork.org](http://www.RewardingWork.org)

**Sex Offender Registry Board**

(To see if a PCA applicant has registered as a sex offender)

800-936-3426

[mass.gov/sorb](http://mass.gov/sorb)

**Social Security Administration**

(For applications or questions regarding Social Security benefits)

800-772-1213

**Tempus Unlimited – your fiscal intermediary**

(For questions about employer-required task, payroll, new PCA set-up, forms)

877-479-7577 (tele)

800-359-2885 (fax)

<https://www.masscp.org/form-generator>

600 Technology Center Drive

Stoughton, MA 02072

