



The Consumer Connection

Winter 2022

Public Authority Services
by Sourcewise



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COVID-19 Vaccination Required for IHSS Providers

By Shannin Prather

At the start of October 2021, all IHSS care providers were notified that a Public Health Order issued on September 28, 2021 requires all In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) care providers be vaccinated against COVID-19, with the exception of care providers who live in the same household as the person they provide care for or those providing care for family members and no one else.

This Public Health Order remains in effect, which means care providers who have enrolled in IHSS since the order was issued last year are being held to the same expectation and must be fully vaccinated against the virus.

As the employers of the care providers, IHSS care recipients are responsible for requesting proof of vaccination from their care providers. IHSS and Public Authority Services do not have these records.

Care providers are responsible for keeping their own records of

vaccination and must show you proof of vaccination if asked. If a provider chooses not to get the COVID-19 vaccine, you may choose to no longer have that provider work for you.

If a provider chooses not to get the COVID-19 vaccine, you may choose to no longer have that provider work for you.

If a care provider requests an exemption from getting the vaccine, they must show you a signed copy of the *COVID-19 Vaccination Exemption Form*—available at cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/ihss—and must get a COVID test weekly, plus always wear a surgical or N95 mask while providing services in your home.

If your care provider tests positive for COVID-19, they should not be providing IHSS services. Please continue to follow public health guidelines to keep yourself healthy and safe in the new year.

Designate Your Provider Through the ESP

By Shannin Prather



In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) consumers can hire their IHSS care providers through the Electronic Services Portal (ESP), the same website used to approve care

provider timesheets (etimesheets.ihss.ca.gov). This makes the process for starting timesheets for care providers much faster, as well as being better for the environment.

In the past, consumers had to complete the Recipient Designation of Provider (SOC426A) form on paper and mail it to IHSS. Now, IHSS consumers have the option of hiring their care providers electronically in just five quick steps:

1. Log in to the ESP using your username and password, then click “Hire Provider” on the top menu navigation bar.
2. “Locate Provider” by entering the care provider’s nine-digit care provider ID number and clicking the “Find Provider” button. NOTE: Care providers who have not yet completed the enrollment process will not know their care provider ID number. Provider ID numbers will be

mailed in a letter from IHSS after the provider has finished all enrollment steps.

3. Verify this is the correct provider when their information appears and then click the “Select” button.
4. Enter the date the provider will start—or did start—working for you and select your relationship to the provider, then click the “Hire Provider” button.
5. Review the Recipient Agreement, click the box at the bottom verifying you have read and agree, then click the “Confirm Hire” box.

After completing the steps above, you will receive an email confirmation stating that you have successfully hired your provider and timesheets will be generated automatically. If the provider has not completed their enrollment, even if they already know their provider ID number, their status will say “Pending Hire.” Once enrollment is complete, you and the provider will receive notification that they have been hired and can begin completing timesheets.

[For more help with assigning providers to your case using the ESP you can contact the IHSS Service Desk, Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at \(866\) 376-7066 option 4.](#)

Retirement Savings Program for IHSS Care Providers

By Shannin Prather

In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) care providers eighteen years of age and older are now able to enroll in a retirement savings program through CalSavers.

Care providers who sign up for the program will make contributions to their retirement savings by setting up automatic transfers from their bank account to their CalSavers account with each paycheck. Care Providers can choose the amount they want to

contribute per month, as well as how their money is invested.

Care providers can sign up for the program directly and do not need to contact Public Authority Services or IHSS to join.

[To learn more and sign up for the CalSavers program, visit \[saver.calsavers.com\]\(https://saver.calsavers.com\) or call \(855\) 650-6918.](#)

Prepare Now for Emergencies Later

By Shannin Prather

Medical emergencies and natural disasters are unexpected events that happen without notice and are often frightening and highly stressful, however, no one should face emergencies unprepared. Making the effort to create an emergency plan right now is a smart strategy to help you and your loved ones stay safe during and after an emergency.

It is important to consider your individual circumstances and needs to effectively prepare for emergencies and disasters. Follow these tips to begin building your emergency plan:

Create a Support Network of 2 to 3 People

These can be family, friends, neighbors, care providers, or others whom you trust who are willing and able to assist you during emergencies. These people should know your needs, know your emergency plan, and be able to help.

Communicate and Agree on Evacuation Plans

Where will you meet your loved ones if you are evacuated and how will you get there? Agree on an “out-of-area” contact person who will share messages among you and your support network if local communications are down. Advanced planning will ensure that everyone in your support network stay connected, informed, and calm.



Making the effort to create an emergency plan right now is a smart strategy to help you and your loved ones stay safe during and after an emergency.

Put Together a Kit of Emergency Supplies

In a disaster could you make it on your own for several days? Gather emergency supplies and store them in a container that is easy to get to and transport. Items to keep in your kit include:

- Three days' worth of water and nonperishable food, a can opener
- Flashlight with extra batteries – check yearly to make sure it works
- First aid kit, hand sanitizer, baby wipes, and a few rolls of toilet paper
- Matches or a lighter in a waterproof container
- Whistle or other noise-maker to alert emergency workers to your presence
- Change of clothing and something for warmth (jacket, blanket, gloves, etc.)
- Photocopy of I.D. & other important documentation in zip-lock bag
- List of important medical information, medications and the Rx printouts received from your pharmacy
- Back-up of essential items, such as tooth brush, glasses, hearing aid batteries, denture cup, phone charger, etc.
- Checklist of all necessary essentials, such as: air tank, walker/cane, wheelchair, medications, dentures and adhesive, glasses, hearing aids, etc.
- A distraction—something to entertain you, such as a book or playing cards

For more information and tips on how you can prepare for emergencies, visit [The Red Cross website at: www.redcross.org/prepare](http://www.redcross.org/prepare) or call (877) 727-6771.

Update Contact Information Easily With the ESP

By Sonia Munoz, IHSS Lead Account Clerk II

In Home-Supportive Services (IHSS) is pleased to announce the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has added a new self-service feature that allows care providers to view and update their address—physical and/or mailing—and telephone number in the Electronic Service Portal (ESP) without contacting the IHSS office.

Consumers will also be able to use this self-service option in the ESP to update their telephone number. Consumers will need to continue contacting their assigned case worker to make any changes to their address.

Once you successfully update your address and/or telephone number using the ESP, you will receive an email confirming the address and/or telephone number change has been successfully updated.

IHSS will gladly continue to receive the change of address request by mail, fax or in person. It's important to remember that photo ID such as a driver's license, passport, or Provider ID badge (given by Public Authority Services) is required to process address changes. The Photo ID does not need to show the new address, it is simply used to confirm the identity of the person asking for the change.

If you require assistance updating your username, password, or email via the ESP, contact the Electronic Timesheet Help Desk at 1 (866) 376-7066 or visit www.etimesheets.ihss.ca.gov.

In-Home Supportive Services strives to better serve the community every day. These new self-service options will allow faster access to information and resolutions for consumers and providers.

Protect Your Eye Health with Yearly Exams

By Shannin Prather

Vision changes are common with the natural aging of the eye, including difficulty seeing close-up objects clearly and needing more light to see well. These changes can often be corrected with glasses, but it is important to know the difference between changes that are normal and those that are not.

The National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP - www.nei.nih.gov) is dedicated to raising awareness about vision and aging, and sharing the message that vision loss and blindness are not a normal part of aging.

According to NEHEP, many eye diseases have no early symptoms. Regular eye exams and early detection of disease can greatly improve the chances of maintaining good eye health and vision as you age.

Left untreated, many conditions can lead to low vision and cannot be corrected with glasses, medication, or surgery. While lost vision usually cannot be restored, an optometrist can help plan a rehabilitation program so independence can be maintained.

To protect your vision, it is important to have regular eye exams. Even if you haven't noticed any vision issues, many eye diseases can be detected and treated early before noticeable vision loss occurs.

The American Optometric Association recommends all individuals over the age of 60 have their eyes examined yearly. February is National Low Vision Awareness month. Let this be a reminder to schedule your annual eye exam and protect your vision.

Recognizing Signs of Depression in the Senior Community

By Sergio Serna

Depression is a serious mood disorder that can affect the way people feel, act, and think. Fortunately, despite older adults having more medical issues than younger people, studies show most older adults feel satisfied with their lives.

Depression is not a normal part of aging; however, older adults are at increased risk according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Depression is a serious condition, but treatments can help. For most, depression gets better with consistent counseling, medication plans, and other treatments.

There are several types of depression that older adults may experience. Major Depressive Disorder—symptoms interfering with a person’s ability to perform daily tasks lasting at least two weeks—and Persistent Depressive Disorder—a depressed mood that lasts more than two years, but the person may still be able to perform daily tasks—are two of the most common.

Depression in older adults may be difficult to recognize because older individuals may have

different symptoms from younger individuals. For some older adults with depression, sadness is not their main symptom. They could instead feel numbness or a lack of interest in activities. They may not be as willing to talk about their feelings.

People experience depression differently and symptoms may not be the same for everyone, but some common symptoms include:

- Feelings of hopelessness, guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Eating more or less than usual, usually with unplanned weight gain or loss
- Thoughts of death or suicide attempts
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions

If you are experiencing depression, are worried about a loved one, or would like emotional support, the Lifeline Network is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a nationwide network of local crisis centers that provide local resources and quality care across the United States. Contact the Lifeline Network at (800) 273-8255.

IHSS Care Provider Wage Increases in 2022

By Shannin Prather

On January 1st, 2022, In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) care providers in Santa Clara County got a raise of one dollar per hour. Care providers now earn \$16.62 per hour and \$24.93 when working overtime hours.

As a reminder, overtime wages are paid for any authorized overtime hours above 40 that a provider works in one workweek—Sunday through Saturday. If a care provider works 43 hours per workweek, they will be paid for 40 regular hours ($\$16.62 \times 40$ hours) plus three hours of overtime ($\$24.93 \times 3$ hours).

On April 1st, 2022, care providers will see another wage increase on their paychecks when their hourly wage becomes \$17.62 per hour and \$26.43 for overtime hours.





Public Authority Services

by Sourcewise



Public Authority Services by Sourcewise www.pascc.org
Phone: (408) 350-3206 Fax: (408) 296-8340 E-mail: info@pascc.org

Important Phone Numbers

Public Authority Services by Sourcewise

Information concerning provider benefits, bus pass, training or other services of the Public Authority.
(408) 350-3206

Public Authority Services Registry

Call the Registry, if you need help finding an IHSS care provider.
(408) 350-3251

IHSS Social Services

Information regarding authorized hours and services or to speak with a social worker.
(408) 792-1600

IHSS Payroll

Call for any payroll or timesheet matters.
(408) 792-1600

UNION SEIU Local 2015

Representing providers. Call for information about the Union and payroll deductions.
(855) 810-2015

Adult Protective Services

24-hour Hotline. Call for help, if you or someone you know suspect abuse of a senior or dependent adult.
(408) 975-4900
(800) 414-2002

Sourcewise Information & Awareness

Information on available services in Santa Clara County.
(408) 350-3200, option 1

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