

**Alameda County  
In-Home  
Supportive Services  
  
Handbook**



The Public Authority for IHSS is a public service and advocacy organization that specializes in promoting independent living and supporting high-quality homecare services for IHSS consumers and homecare workers in Alameda County.

***Last updated: January 2014***

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Public Authority for IHSS in Alameda County.

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# Introduction

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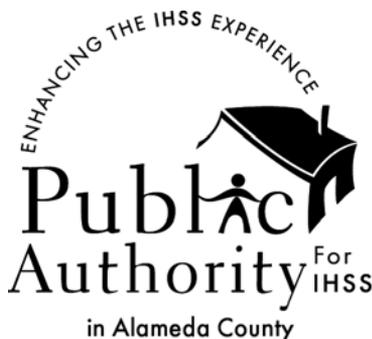
This handbook was created for IHSS workers (providers) and consumers (recipients). We suggest you review and discuss this handbook together.

We sincerely hope this handbook will help you better understand how the IHSS program works, the responsibilities of the consumer and homecare worker, and the many resources available to you.

In partnership,

Carmen Rivera Hendrickson,  
Advisory Board Chair

Charles Calavan,  
Executive Director



Lori Cox,  
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Assistant Agency Director

*Alameda County*  
*Social Services Agency*



*Alameda County*  
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# Table of Contents

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In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)	
In-Home Supportive Services Description .....	6
IHSS Services .....	7
IHSS Does Not Pay For .....	9
IHSS Social Worker Responsibilities .....	9
Share of Cost .....	10
Advance Pay .....	10
Appeals (Fair Hearing) .....	11
Hiring an IHSS Homecare Worker .....	12
Face-to-Face Interview .....	13
Worker Enrollment with IHSS .....	14
Who is the Homecare Worker's Employer? .....	15
First Days on the Job .....	16
Getting Paid	
Time Sheets .....	17
Pro-rated Hours .....	18
Direct Deposit .....	19
Late/Lost Paychecks .....	19
Income Tax Withholding (W-4 & W-2 Forms) .....	20
IHSS Payroll Department Responsibilities .....	20
Homecare Worker Benefits	
Worker's Compensation .....	21
State Unemployment Insurance Benefits (SUI) .....	21
Social Security (FICA) .....	21
State Disability Insurance Benefits (SDI) and Paid Family Leave (PFL) .....	21
Health Insurance .....	22
Vacation & Sick Leave .....	22
Worker Representation (Union) .....	23
Homecare Worker Responsibilities .....	25
Consumer Responsibilities .....	26
The Public Authority for IHSS .....	27

Public Authority Registry .....	27
Hiring a Registry Worker .....	28
Workers: Need a Job? .....	29
Public Authority Advisory Board .....	30
Training & Education .....	31
Helpful Tips and Hints .....	32
Transportation Tips .....	33
Accident Prevention and Health & Safety .....	34
Universal Precautions .....	34
Emergency Preparedness .....	35
On the Job Injuries .....	35
Legal Matters .....	36
Privacy and Confidentiality .....	36
Driving and Auto Insurance .....	36
Abuse .....	37
Mandated Reporting of Abuse .....	37
Fraud.....	38
Important Phone Numbers .....	39
Factsheets .....	40
Questions?	
How to contact IHSS .....	41
FAQ & Navigating the IHSS Phone System .....	42
INDEX . . .	44

# In-Home Supportive Services Description

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In-Home Support Services (IHSS) is a state program administered by Alameda County. IHSS provides homecare assistance to eligible aged, blind or individuals with disabilities.

This assistance allows program participants to live safely and independently in their homes rather than living in institutions or nursing homes. The IHSS program supports this by paying a worker to provide domestic and/or personal care services.



An IHSS Social Worker approves the services based on the consumer's need. The consumer then selects and hires a worker to provide the services.

## ***Who's Who?***

### ***The "Consumer"***

*People who receive IHSS are called: recipient, client, employer, or consumer.*

### ***The "Homeworker"***

*People who provide assistance are called: provider, chore provider, personal assistant, attendant, employee, homeworker, or worker.*

To apply for IHSS in Alameda County, call IHSS at (510) 577-1800 or go to [www.alamedasocialservices.org](http://www.alamedasocialservices.org).

# IHSS Services

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## Domestic Services

- Sweeping, vacuuming, washing and waxing floors
- Washing kitchen counters and sinks
- Cleaning the bathroom
- Storing food and supplies
- Taking out the garbage
- Dusting and picking up
- Cleaning the stove and oven
- Cleaning and defrosting the refrigerator
- Changing the bed



## Meals

- Menu planning
- Preparing, cooking and serving meals
- Washing, drying and putting away dishes



## Routine laundry

- Washing
- Mending
- Ironing
- Folding and storing clothes

## Grocery shopping and errands

- *Shopping and errands are limited to the nearest available stores or other facilities consistent with the IHSS consumer's cost, nutrition and cultural needs*
- *The worker is expected to shop without the consumer; extra time is not given for the consumer to shop with the worker*



# IHSS Services

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## Personal Care Services

- Dressing
- Routine baths, oral hygiene and grooming
- Bowel and bladder care
- Assistance with self-administering oxygen
- Assistance with feeding
- Care and assistance with prosthetic devices and medications
- Routine menstrual care
- Walking and assistance with repositioning
- Rubbing of skin to promote circulation



## Taking the consumer to medical and other appointments

- *Provider is not paid for being at appointment or for waiting for the consumer to complete the appointment*



## Protective Supervision

- *Only for mentally impaired persons who meet specific criteria*

## Paramedical Services



- Such as tube feeding, injections, wound care
- *Only when ordered by a licensed health care professional and administered under that professional's direction*

## Heavy Cleaning

- *One-time only with IHSS Social Worker pre-approval*

# ***IHSS Does Not Pay For***

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- ⊙ *Gasoline, mileage, parking or public transportation costs*
- ⊙ *Routine gardening or other outdoor work*
- ⊙ *Pet care (feeding, cleaning up after, or exercising)*
- ⊙ *Moving furniture, boxes, etc.*
- ⊙ *Washing windows*
- ⊙ *Household chores for visitors or family members who are not IHSS consumers*
- ⊙ *Paying bills*
- ⊙ *Care when the consumer is in the hospital or nursing home*



# **IHSS Social Worker Responsibilities**

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- Receive applications and determine if individuals qualify for IHSS services
- Initial and yearly assessment/home-visit
- Approve services and monthly hours for services to consumers
- Reassess services and hours when requested because of change in consumers' functioning level or living situation
- Provide information and referrals to community resources

**To apply for In-Home Supportive Services,  
call (510) 577-1800 or go to  
[www.alamedasocialservices.org](http://www.alamedasocialservices.org).**

## Share of Cost

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- Consumers whose income is greater than the SSI benefit level may be required to pay a portion of the cost of their IHSS services. This is called the share of cost.
- The IHSS social worker will inform the consumer if they have a share of cost. Consumers must inform their worker.
- The State will mail a letter to the consumer and worker after each pay period showing the share of cost amount that was deducted from the worker's check.
- The consumer pays the share of cost monthly, from his/her own money, to the homecare worker.
- If the consumer does not pay the share of cost, he/she may be terminated from IHSS services. (The county **is not** responsible for ensuring that the consumer pays the share of cost.)

## Advance Pay

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- Some consumers receive funds each month to pay their homecare worker directly. This is called Advance Pay.
- Consumers must be authorized for at least 20 hours of personal care services to be considered for the Advance Pay program.
- Consumers and homecare workers must submit to Payroll completed timesheets each month.

For more information on Advance Pay, consumers can contact their IHSS Social Worker.

# Appeals (Fair Hearing)

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Whenever the County makes any change in services, the consumer receives a Notice of Action letter at least 10 days before the effective date of the change.

If there is a disagreement about the change, whether it is a change in the hours, services or termination of service, we recommend that the consumer immediately:

- Contact the IHSS social worker to discuss any concerns with them.
- If the issue is not resolved, contact the social worker’s supervisor and discuss the situation with them.
- You have the right to appeal (request a fair hearing). The appeal procedure is on the back of the Notice of Action letter.
- If you request a fair hearing **before the change goes into effect**, you can ask that you continue to receive your current hours and services until the hearing is over. It is called “aid paid pending.”
- You must request a fair hearing **within 90 days** of the mailing date on the Notice of Action.



**To request a Fair Hearing**, the consumer can fill out the back of the *Notice of Action* form and send it to the address on the form, or call 1(800) 743-8525. For additional help contact your local independent living centers (ILC) or Disability Rights of California.

# Hiring an IHSS Homecare Worker

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IHSS consumers are in charge of finding and selecting their homecare worker. We suggest consumers follow these steps when hiring:

- 1) **Search** for potential workers
- 2) **Conduct a telephone interview** to talk about the job
- 3) **Conduct a Face-to-Face interview** if the job and worker match.
- 4) **Check references** to learn about a worker's job history
- 5) **Select** one or more workers and extend an offer of work
- 6) **Hire** – write up a job agreement, fill out enrollment forms and workers new to IHSS attend an orientation.

## Hiring Steps

- 1) **Search** for potential workers by talking to family or friends for recommendations, advertising through local newspapers or websites, or by contacting the Public Authority Registry (**See p. 28**).
- 2) **Conduct a telephone interview** - Talk about the job to see if the job and worker match. By the end of the phone interview the following items should be covered:



- ✓ Days and times the worker is expected to work
- ✓ What date the worker would begin to work
- ✓ The total hours expected to work a month
- ✓ What tasks the worker is expected to perform
- ✓ “Make or break” issues regarding care, lifting, diet, allergies, worker needs to have a car, schedule, etc.
- ✓ If a face-to-face interview is arranged, make sure address and directions to the interview are clear.

## Hiring an IHSS Homecare Worker (continued)

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- 3) **Conduct a Face-to-Face interview** - During the interview the worker and consumer should go over the same items as the phone interview in more detail. Workers should bring:
- ✓ Employment and personal references
  - ✓ Picture identification and work permit
  - ✓ Signed Social Security card
  - ✓ Any training certificates



It is illegal for consumers to ask workers questions regarding: race, ethnicity, age, children or religion. Focus interview questions on worker's ability to do the job tasks required.

- 4) **Check references** - Consumers should check each of the worker's references. Consumers may ask about: the worker's dates of employment, type of work done, quality of work and what needed improvement.
- 5) **Selection** - Consumers should select workers who can meet the consumer's need for assistance and who are available when they need them.

*NOTE: The homecare worker must be fingerprinted and pass a **background check** prior to being paid as an IHSS worker. If the worker doesn't pass, the consumer will be responsible to pay him/her for any work done.*

- 6) **Hire** – Enroll the homecare worker with IHSS, see page 14. We also recommend you create a job agreement that the consumer and worker sign. The agreement should include:
- ✓ The tasks to be done, how often they should be done and any special instructions.
  - ✓ Arrangements about pay (such as share of cost, expenses, shopping, driving, etc.)

# Worker Enrollment with IHSS

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**IHSS consumers** must enroll each new worker they hire before the worker will receive a timesheet or be paid. Consumers must inform IHSS Payroll of a change in workers within 10 days. Take these steps:

- 1) **Request an enrollment packet.** Consumers request packets by calling IHSS at 510-577-1900 (*see p. 43 for details on calling IHSS*), visiting IHSS offices or writing IHSS Payroll (address is below).
- 2) The consumer and worker must **complete and sign the enrollment forms**. Turn in the enrollment forms at the IHSS Orientation or send to:

**IHSS Payroll**  
**6955 Foothill Blvd., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor**  
**Oakland, CA 94605**



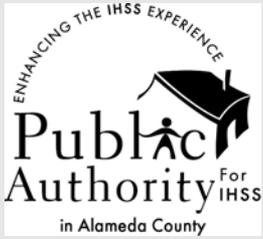
- 3) Homecare workers new to IHSS must **attend the IHSS Orientation**. The first page of the enrollment packet has details about if and when to attend the orientation. At the IHSS Orientation providers will:
  - ✓ Watch a **state-mandated video** about IHSS.
  - ✓ Sign and turn in enrollment **forms** as needed.
  - ✓ Pick up the form “Request for Live Scan Service.” Take it to a Live Scan Vendor to pay for and undergo a **criminal background check**.
    - The worker must not have been convicted or in jail within the last ten years for elder abuse, child abuse or fraud.
    - Cost of the Live Scan varies. It is approximately \$50 – 70.
    - The form and a list of vendors are available at IHSS offices.
  - ✓ Show county staff the provider’s original, unexpired government photo **ID** and signed **social security card**.
    - The name on the Social Security card and identification must match exactly.

- If Social Security card states "Valid for work only with INS or DHS authorization," provide a copy of your work authorization too.

4) Payroll mails a **first timesheet** to the worker after enrollment forms, orientation and background check have been processed.

## Who is the Homecare Worker’s Employer?

Once enrolled with IHSS, the homecare worker has three “employers”, each with different roles and responsibilities.

 <p><b>The Consumer</b></p>	 <p><b>The State of California</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Selects worker</li> <li>✓ Hires worker</li> <li>✓ Supervises worker</li> <li>✓ Fires worker</li> <li>✓ Verifies hours worked</li> <li>✓ Signs timesheets</li> <li>✓ Pays Share of Cost (<b>see p. 10</b>)</li> <li>✓ Provides employment references</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Pays IHSS hours worked</li> <li>✓ Pays employer taxes</li> <li>✓ Provides Workers Compensation, Unemployment and Disability insurance to those qualified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Negotiates wages and benefits for workers</li> <li>✓ Provides health insurance benefits enrollment for eligible workers</li> <li>✓ Provides training classes to eligible workers</li> </ul>

# First Days on the Job

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**What is the job?** Review the tasks to be done. If helpful, write the tasks down as a checklist. Clarify what jobs are done on what days.

**Clarify payment issues:** Have IHSS forms and provider orientation been completed? Does the consumer have a Share of Cost (see p. 10)? Will the worker be paid for mileage to transport the consumer? How much?

**How will the job be done?** The consumer will need to find out what the worker already knows and what instructions the worker needs. Some consumers want things done in a very particular way. Others are flexible about how things can be done. Consumers should describe any equipment, supplies and cleaning products available and explain how to use them.

**Worker dress:** Workers should wear clean, comfortable clothing. Many consumers prefer that workers do not wear a uniform, since that may be associated with hospital employees. Do not bring a large backpack, purse or other bag that might cause concern about possible theft.

**Paramedical assistance:** Request training from a health care professional for tasks such as monitoring or giving medications, injections, wound and catheter care. Make a list of any medications, including schedule and amount, if the worker will help with medications.



**Preparation for emergencies:** Post a list of phone numbers for doctors, clinics, therapists, social workers, relatives or friends to call in case of an emergency. Discuss how the worker should handle different emergencies.

# Time Sheets and Paychecks

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There are two **pay periods** each month:

1<sup>st</sup> -15<sup>th</sup>  
and  
16<sup>th</sup> – the last day of the month



Fill out timesheets with **black ink**. Write clearly.

**Never use white out.** Cross out mistakes.

**Timesheets must be signed and dated** by both the worker and the consumer, unless the consumer has an authorized representative.

**The consumer signature** on the timesheet confirms that the worker has completed the hours on the timesheet. Consumers should not sign inaccurate, incomplete or blank timesheets.

Workers should **claim only actual hours worked**. Claiming more hours is considered fraud.

Workers should not work or claim more than the authorized hours. They will **not be paid for working extra**.

The U.S. Department of Labor issued new regulations that require overtime pay for hours worked in excess of 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week for any one employer. **The state of California is expected to respond to the new rules by prohibiting any work that would result in overtime pay.** However, there are legal and political challenges pending. Homecare workers are advised to pay close attention to this issue which takes effect on January 1, 2015.

# Time Sheets and Paychecks

Workers should not work extra hours in any month unless the consumer has **already received an increase in hours**.

Workers **cannot claim hours** when the IHSS recipient is out of her or his home. Examples include a stay in a hospital or skilled nursing facility, board and care home, in jail/prison or travel out of state (unless travel was pre-approved by the social worker).

**Unused** hours each month don't carry over into the next month.

IHSS homecare worker **employment ends immediately** if the consumer dies.

If the worker is **employed only part of a month** (examples: worker hired mid-month, consumer hospitalized part of the month) the authorized hours may be adjusted (pro-rated) for the month. See below for an example of pro-rating hours for a consumer with 60 hours a month and out of home 10 days.

M	T	W	Th	F	S	Sun
1 2hrs	2 2hrs	3 2hrs	4 2hrs	5 2hrs	6 2hrs	7 2hrs
8 2hrs	9 2hrs	10 2hrs	11 2hrs	12 2hrs	13 2hrs	14 2hrs
15 2hrs	16 2hrs	17 2hrs	18 2hrs	19 2hrs	20 2hrs	21 2hrs
22 2hrs	23 2hrs	24 2hrs	25 2hrs	26 2hrs	27 2hrs	28 2hrs
29 2hrs	30 2hrs					

① Calculate hours per day. EX: 60 hours/30 days = 2 hours/day

② Count days consumer in the home. EX: 20 days

③ Calculate pro-rated hours. EX: 20 days x 2 hours/day = 40 pro-rated hours for a 30 day month.

# Time Sheets and Paychecks

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Timesheets must be turned in after the last day worked in the pay period. Mail timesheets to:

**The address on the envelope that comes with the timesheet.**

**The State of California** mails paychecks within 10 working days of receiving the timesheet.



**Direct Deposit** is available to IHSS homecare workers.

- With Direct Deposit, the IHSS payroll paycheck is deposited directly into the worker checking or savings account.
- You must work for 3 months before you qualify for Direct Deposit.
- To enroll in Direct Deposit, the worker fills out the Direct Deposit Enrollment/Change/Cancellation Form (SOC 829). For forms or information, call the Direct Deposit Help Desk toll free at (866) 376-7066.

**Replacement timesheets** can be requested from Payroll.

Wait 5 working days before reporting a **late paycheck**.

If your paycheck was lost or stolen, call immediately.

**IHSS Payroll: 510- 577-1877**

(See P. 41 for payroll hours.)

# **Income Tax Withholding (Forms W-4 & W-2)**

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- Workers who want Federal Income Tax (FIT) withheld from their pay must fill out a Form W-4 for each consumer.
- Payroll will not process incomplete or incorrect W-4 forms. Check your paystub to make sure taxes are taken out, or you may owe money when you file taxes.
- The state mails W-2 forms to workers each year before January 31<sup>st</sup>. Form W-2 is needed for Federal and State income tax purposes. Call payroll for a replacement Form W-2 if not received by February 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Many workers are eligible for Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). EITC is a federal program that may provide a tax refund to the worker, even if the worker did not pay any taxes. Information about this credit is available from the IRS or in your tax form booklet.
- Questions about your taxes? Call the Internal Revenue Service at 1-800-829-1040 or go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

# **IHSS Payroll Department Responsibilities**

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- Enroll new workers
- Terminate workers at consumers' request
- Mail initial and replacement timesheets
- Confirm worker's number of authorized hours
- Help with lost or late paychecks
- Process change of address
- Process Workers' Compensation claims
- Fax to: 510-577-1819 for employment and income verification (at least 10 business days before needed)

# Worker Benefits

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## Worker's Compensation

Workers injured on the job or who become ill due to work may qualify. Call York at 1-855-446-9675 to report a claim and/or to request a claim form. Mail completed claim forms to IHSS Payroll attention Sandra Pearson.



## State Unemployment Insurance Benefits (SUI)

Some workers are covered by unemployment insurance and may receive benefits when they are laid off. Contact the Employment Development Department for more information at 1(800) 300-5616.

## Social Security (FICA)\*

FICA is a tax deducted from each check. The State of California pays an employer matching contribution. The FICA tax money is placed in the Social Security Trust Fund, which provides retirement income, disability insurance, Medicare and benefits for survivors. Call Social Security at 1(800) 772-1213 for more information.

## State Disability Insurance Benefits (SDI) and Paid Family Leave (PFL)\*



Those unable to work due to disability, birth of a child or need to care for a disabled family member may qualify. For claim forms and information, call the 1(800) 480-3287 for State Disability Insurance and 1(877) 238-4373 for Paid Family Leave or visit [www.edd.ca.gov](http://www.edd.ca.gov).

*\* Child, parent and spouse homecare workers do not have FICA, Medicare, or SDI deducted from their paycheck. They can pay out of pocket for SDI by completing the Elective SDI Coverage form. Call EDD at 1(800)480-3287 for more information.*

# Worker Benefits (continued)

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## Health Insurance

Eligible IHSS workers can receive a health plan as a job benefit. The employer pays most of the cost of the plan and the enrolled workers pay for a small percentage which is deducted from their pay check. Workers are also responsible for co-pays, when applicable. The health benefits plan covers the IHSS worker only. Spouses and dependents are not covered.



**Workers must submit the health benefits enrollment form to the Public Authority in order to be enrolled in the plan.**

The Public Authority determines eligibility and enrolls IHSS workers in a bundled **Medical, Dental & Vision Plan**. These components are not offered separately.

In traditional employment, employers are able to verify on a daily basis, who is working and how many hours they are working. However the Public Authority does not know what hours the homecare worker has worked until they receive timesheet information once a month from the state showing when and how many hours a worker was paid. As a result, initial and continuing eligibility for health insurance is **based on hours paid, and when those hours are paid**, not when the hours were worked.

Once covered, if you are issued checks for less than 80 hours in a month, we send you a warning letter. If paid for less than 80 hours in each of (2) consecutive months, you will be terminated from the health plan.

**Filling out timesheets correctly and mailing them in immediately after the end of each pay period will help ensure that your coverage is uninterrupted.**

Since you may not receive a check after you stop working, your share of the premium for the last 2 months is deducted over the first ten months of coverage. This means that, for the first 10 months, you pay 24 dollars a month (if you have the healthcare bundle with dental HMO) or 54 dollars a month (if you have the healthcare bundle with the dental PPO). After ten months you will only pay 20 dollars a month for the dental HMO healthcare bundle or 45 dollars a month for the dental PPO healthcare bundle.

- **Medical Benefits: Alameda Alliance Group Health Plan (HMO)**
- **Vision: EyeMed**
- **Dental: You have a choice between Dental Care USA HMO plan and The Delta Dental PPO plan (which is \$30 more per month)**

**Call the health benefits specialists for more information or for an enrollment packet: (510) 577-3551**

### **Vacation & Sick Leave**

There is no earned overtime, sick leave, vacation, or holiday pay. Homecare workers are paid only for actual hours worked.

## Worker Representation

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IHSS in Alameda County is a “Union Shop.” This means that IHSS homecare workers are required to pay monthly dues and/or other fees to a selected union.

### **SEIU – United Long Term Care Workers Union 6434**



SEIU 6434 negotiates with Alameda County for higher wages and improved benefits for workers. They provide assistance with IHSS provider enrollment forms, problems with timesheets and late paychecks. Through their union, IHSS homecare workers have a voice about their job. You can contact the union to get involved.

- Call SEIU at **1(877) MY-ULTCW (1-877-698-5829)** or go to **[www.seiu-ultcw.org](http://www.seiu-ultcw.org)** for more information.
- Contact the Homecare Worker Training Center at **1 (866) 888-8213** for information on training opportunities.

*\*The Union and Public Authority have agreed that “no-strike; no lock out” rules apply to IHSS Homecare workers in Alameda County.*

# Homecare Worker Responsibilities

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- Complete and turn in enrollment forms, attend the IHSS Orientation; submit fingerprints and pay for a criminal background check (See p. 14 for details).
- Follow the consumer's directions regarding work schedule and task completion.
- Provide reliable, safe, quality services.
- Perform services that are approved by IHSS. IHSS Notice of Action letter mailed to the consumer explains the services.
- Show up on time, or inform the consumer in advance if you will be late for work.
- Keep a record of hours scheduled and hours worked each day.
- Submit a completed, signed timesheet to IHSS payroll after hours and tasks are completed.
- Notify payroll within 10 days of change in worker's personal information or if the worker's job as an IHSS worker ends.
- Inform the IHSS Social Worker of significant changes in the consumer's condition.
- Report suspected abuse of an IHSS consumer to Adult Protective Services (See p. 37).
- Respect the confidentiality of consumers (See p.36).
- Respect diversity, age and disability differences between people.



# Consumer Responsibilities

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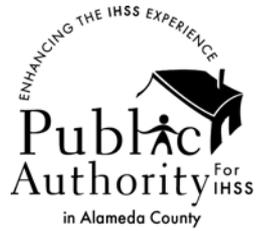
- Find, hire, train, supervise and terminate your homecare worker(s).
- Inform IHSS of any a change in homecare workers within 10 calendar days.
- Fill out and turn in an enrollment packet to IHSS Payroll when hiring new worker(s) (See p. 14 for details).
- Make a work schedule for your worker(s).



- Inform worker(s) of IHSS approved tasks, how to do them, and authorized hours available.
- Keep a record each day of hours scheduled and hours worked.
- Provide safe and healthy working conditions for the worker.
- Request an IHSS reassessment of hours if your functioning level or living situation changes.
- Be available to meet yearly with your Social Worker to complete a re-assessment for services.
- Immediately inform your IHSS social worker of any change in your case such as: your address, phone number, number of people living in your home, or if you are hospitalized.
- Do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, age or disability when hiring.
- Sign the timesheet for all hours worked.
- Pay share-of-cost if applicable.



# The Public Authority for IHSS



The Public Authority (PA) works to make the IHSS program in Alameda County work better for consumers and workers. We are a separate agency from the County IHSS program. The PA provides the following:

## For Consumers

- ❖ Help finding a homecare worker. Call our Registry and we will link you to pre-screened workers (see page 28)
- ❖ Workshops, discussion groups, guides, factsheets, and other tools to help you navigate and advocate within the IHSS system, effectively manage your homecare worker and maintain your independence.
- ❖ A voice in the IHSS system. You are invited to participate and learn more by attending our consumer majority advisory board meetings (see page 30) Check out our website for ideas, inspiration, and opportunities for advocacy.

## For Homecare Workers

- **Registry** of homecare workers (see page 28)
- **Free skills training and education** (see page 31)
- **Medical insurance enrollment** (medical, dental and vision) (see page 22)

**Public Authority**  
**510-577-3552**



*Enhancing personal assistant services to support independent living since 1993*

# Public Authority Registry

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The Public Authority operates a Registry that connects consumers and workers.



The Registry:

- Provides IHSS consumers referral lists of the names and phone numbers of workers that match their needs and preferences. Lists can be mailed or sent by e-mail.
- Uses a computer database (list) of IHSS homecare workers to make referrals.
- Educates homecare workers listed on the registry through the “Registry Essentials” workshop.
- Screens and interviews IHSS homecare workers on the Registry.
- Checks references of IHSS homecare workers on the Registry.
- Ensures that homecare workers on the Registry have passed a criminal background check.
- Provides assistance and training to consumers and homecare workers.
- Offers interpretation services for consumers who need registry services in their language.



# Hiring a Registry Worker

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When the consumer gets a list of available homecare workers from the Registry, they can call them to find out if they are available for work. Although the Registry has reviewed the workers' employment background and checked references, we strongly recommend that consumers interview the worker and speak with their references.



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The consumer is responsible for hiring, enrolling, training, supervising and firing (if necessary) the worker that they select to provide services.

## Workers: Need a Job?

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If you want to work as an IHSS homecare worker, being listed on the Registry may help you connect with consumers looking for a new worker.



Once you are accepted onto the Registry, consumers who want to hire a homecare worker can get your name from the Registry. It is then the responsibility of the consumer to call, interview, select, hire, pay and supervise the worker. The Registry does not schedule or conduct interviews for consumers.

## Want to join the Registry?

Call the Registry worker information line at **510-577-5694**. You'll find information on how to apply to be listed on the registry.

# Public Authority Advisory Board

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## Do you want your voice heard on IHSS matters?

Attend Public Authority *Advisory Board* meetings!  
The board makes recommendations to IHSS and the County Board of Supervisors on issues relating to the IHSS Program.

**Join other consumers**, homecare workers and agency representatives at our monthly board meeting.

All meetings are **open to the public!** We welcome your participation.

**WHEN:** 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month  
(Except August)

**TIME:** 1:30 – 4:00 PM\*

**WHERE:** Big Sur Meeting Room  
Adult & Aging Services  
6955 Foothill Blvd., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Oakland, CA

**CALL:** 510-577-3552 for information

**WEBSITE:** [www.ac-pa4ihss.org](http://www.ac-pa4ihss.org)



*\*Meetings dates and times subject to change*

# Training & Education

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The Public Authority offers the following training:

## **Navigating IHSS & the Public Authority Registry**

- "IHSS BASICS" workshop
- Registry Essentials for Registry applicants

## **General Skills Training for Workers**

- CPR & First Aid and Health & Safety
- Nutrition, Alzheimer's, Transfers, and more!
- Homecare Worker Certification Class

## **Education and Information for Consumers**

- "A Consumer Guide to IHSS" handbook
- Workshops and discussion groups are offered throughout the year including some that are over the phone!



### **FREE Fact Sheets Available!**

- Go to: [www.ac-pa4ihss.org](http://www.ac-pa4ihss.org)
- In the lobby of Adult & Aging Services at 6955 Foothill Blvd., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Oakland

**English isn't your first language?** We provide translated handouts and interpretation services at many workshops.

For information or to sign up for the training mailing list:

- Call 510-577-3554; or
- Fill out response card in *For Those Who Care* brochure

# Helpful Tips and Hints

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## For Consumers:

- Create a job agreement based on the consumer's Notice of Action letter from the IHSS social worker.
- Be respectful of the worker and appreciate the work done.
- Take care not to share confidential information with your worker (unless absolutely necessary).
- When your homecare worker shops alone, make a clear shopping list and write down the amount of money you give them. Ask for a receipt and any change when the worker returns.



- It is best to give at least two week's notice, when possible, if you plan to let your worker go.

## For Homecare Workers:

- The consumer is your boss. Follow his/her directions unless the requests are outside of IHSS approved tasks or could be dangerous.
- Do not bring friends or family members to work with you unless previously agreed upon with the consumer.
- When assisting a person with vision, memory or mental disability, always put things back in their place so the consumer can find them again.
- If possible, give at least two week's notice if you plan to leave your job.

# More Helpful Tips and Hints

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## For Consumers and Workers:

- It is recommended that you do not loan or borrow money from the consumer or the worker.
- Clear, open and honest communication is important. Ask questions in order to avoid any misunderstandings.

## Transportation Tips:

- Remember: IHSS does not pay for gas, mileage or public transportation costs while the worker performs IHSS tasks.
- However, the worker may ask the consumer to pay for gas or mileage. If the consumer agrees:
  - Set a clear rate. For example pay per mile at the IRS rate (\$.55 per mile for 2012)
  - Only pay mileage for work-related tasks, such as shopping or accompaniment to doctors' appointments. Do not pay for getting to and from work.
- Workers driving consumers should have a valid driver's license.
- The vehicle that the worker drives should be insured with liability and collision coverage.



# Accident Prevention and Health & Safety

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## Prevent Accidents & Injuries

- **The Right Tool for the Job** – use mops, carts with wheels for carrying heavy objects, stepstools, transfer chairs, shower chairs and bars, etc. when doing homecare work.
- **Use Good Body Mechanics** – avoid back and other injuries by correctly using and positioning your body.
  - ☑ Don't lift anything you think is too heavy for you
  - ☑ Don't twist when lifting; move your feet to turn
  - ☑ Bend your knees, not your back
  - ☑ Bring the weight close to your body
- **Prevent Falls** - keep walkways clear of clutter, loose rugs, spilled water, electrical cords.
- **Get a copy of the free guide to safer homecare:** Call (510) 777-4202
- **Take Classes on Health & Safety** – see p. 31 on training and education.

**Use Universal Precautions:** Avoid spreading illness and disease.



- ★ **Wash hands frequently** with soap and running water. Wash when arriving or leaving work, before handling food, after using/cleaning the bathroom or assisting with personal care.
- ★ **Wear gloves** if you may have contact with blood or other body fluids.
- ★ **Use mild bleach solution** (ten parts water to one part bleach) to clean up blood or other body fluids. Use alternate cleaners when the consumer has chemical sensitivities.

# Accident Prevention and Health & Safety

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## Universal Precautions (continued)

- ★ **Avoid handling sharp objects** that might have come in contact with blood or body fluids. Use heavy plastic containers for storing needles and other sharp objects.
- ★ **Get a Hepatitis B Vaccine** – call your primary care physician or call “2-1-1” to find a free vaccine clinic in your area.

## Emergency Preparedness



- ❖ Discuss a plan for handling emergencies
- ❖ Keep a list of consumer’s medications and emergency phone numbers
- ❖ Prepare an emergency kit



## On the Job Injuries

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If you are hurt on the job, seek emergency medical attention if needed.



Then make a report by calling York at 1-855-446-9675 to report a claim and/or to request a claim form. Mail completed claim forms to IHSS Payroll attention Sandra Pearson.

# Legal Matters to Think About

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## Privacy and Confidentiality

Homecare workers should not discuss the names, identity or health information or personal business of the consumers for whom they work with anyone. Most of this information is illegal to share under HIPPA and confidentiality laws.

Any problems or concerns about consumers should be brought to the attention of the social worker, the Registry that connected them to the consumer, or Adult Protective Services (APS) when necessary.



## Legal and Financial Affairs

Unless the worker is a relative or a close friend, it is recommended that the worker NOT be involved in the consumer's legal and financial affairs, such as power of attorney, a will, a living will, or a loan. Only information needed in case of an emergency should be shared.

## Driving and Auto Insurance

Workers driving on the job must have a valid and current driver's license. Workers driving their own car must have auto insurance. If a worker drives the consumer's car, make sure it is in good working condition and that the worker is covered under the insurance.



Remember, IHSS does not cover transportation expenses like gas, mileage, or parking. The consumer and worker should work out in advance how the consumer will pay for such costs if provided.

# Abuse

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Abusing a child, dependent adult or elderly person is a crime. As a homecare worker you are **required to report** the suspected abuse of any person for whom you provide care.

Criminal abuse of elderly and dependent adults includes:

- Financial misuse or theft
- Physical or sexual mistreatment
- Assault or battery
- Neglect or self-neglect
- Intimidation
- Cruel punishment
- Abandonment
- Social isolation
- Unreasonable physical restraint
- Any treatment causing physical or mental pain or suffering
- Prolonged deprivation of food, water or medical treatment

**To Report Abuse  
CALL  
1-866-Call-APS  
[1-866-225-5277]  
∞ ∞  
24 hours a day  
7 days a week**

Abuse of children includes physical injury, neglect, cruel or excessive punishment, sexual misuse, assault and exploitation.

**Homecare  
Workers  
MUST  
REPORT  
ABUSE  
∞ ∞  
All reports are  
confidential.**

## Mandated Reporting

Homecare workers are mandated reporters of elder/disabled abuse. If you observe or suspect an IHSS consumer is being abused, you are required by law to inform/report the situation immediately to Adult Protective Services. Failure to report

suspected abuse is a misdemeanor.

# Fraud

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Welfare fraud is a crime against the most vulnerable in our society. Some examples of welfare fraud include:

- ★ Splitting the IHSS paycheck between homecare worker and consumer
- ★ Falsifying timesheets (signing timesheets for more hours than worked)
- ★ Paying or requesting more than the IHSS hourly rate
- ★ Dishonesty about completion of job duties
- ★ Use of IHSS hours for unauthorized tasks
- ★ Reporting hours worked while consumer is hospitalized or in rehabilitation.
- ★ Reporting hours worked by someone other than the authorized provider.

## To Report Welfare Fraud

- **Call** 1-888-991-8477 or 510-615-5300
- Submit an anonymous **online form** at [www.alamedasocialservices.org](http://www.alamedasocialservices.org)
- Or **write** to:

Alameda County Social Services Agency  
Welfare Fraud Prevention Division  
7751 Edgewater Drive, Oakland, CA 94621-3013



# Important Phone Numbers

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## Adult & Aging Services (including IHSS)

**Main number *and* IHSS Consumer (Client) Information**  
(510) 577-1900

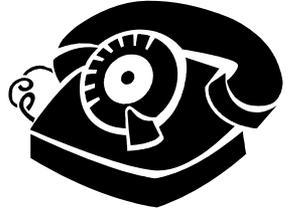
**Apply for IHSS *or* check status of an IHSS application**  
510-577-1800

## **IHSS Payroll Information**

(510) 577-1877

## **Adult Protective Services**

(866) 225-5277 or 1-866-CallAPS



## The Public Authority

**The Public Authority for IHSS in Alameda County**  
(510) 577-3552

**Health Benefits Eligibility** for homecare workers  
(510) 577-3551

## **Registry**

(510) 577-1980 consumer assistance line

510) 577-5694 homecare worker information line

## **Training**

(510) 577-3554

## Other Important Numbers

**Union (ULTCW 6434)**

(888) 373-3018

**Labor Commission** (disputes with consumer as employer)

(510) 622-3273

**Adult and Aging Information and Assistance**

(800) 510-2020

# Free Factsheets

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**Need more information?** The following fact sheets are available in English, Chinese and Spanish at the IHSS offices, 6955 Foothill Blvd., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Oakland, CA and on the Public Authority for IHSS website: [www.ac-pa4ihss.org](http://www.ac-pa4ihss.org).

- Applying for IHSS
- Sample Job Agreement
- Share of Cost
- Interviewing for Homecare Work
- Phone interview Cheat Sheet
- IHSS homecare Worker Enrollment
- Paycheck Explanation
- Consumer & Homecare Workers' Responsibilities
- Workers' Compensation Benefit
- Employee Benefits – SDI, DI and PFL
- Effective Communication
- Negotiating Solutions to Workplace Problems
- Protection from Infectious Diseases
- Body Mechanics and Safe Transfers

# Questions? How to contact IHSS

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## CALL

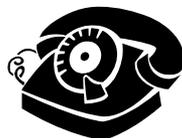
**Workers call Payroll** at 510-577-1877.

**Consumers find IHSS Information** at (510) 577-1900.

**Consumers apply for IHSS** at 510-577-1800.

**Automated phone system hours:**

Monday to Friday, 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM



## VISIT IHSS offices at:

Eastmont Town Center  
6955 Foothill Blvd., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Oakland, CA 94605



Monday through Friday

8:30 AM to 5:00 PM

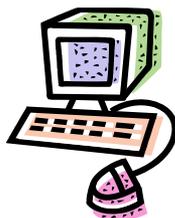
**Payroll Hours:** Monday through Friday,  
9:00 – 11:30 AM or 1:00 – 4:00 PM.

## INTERNET

<https://alamedasocialservices.org>

Select “Eligibility Programs Website” on the side menu, or search keywords: Alameda, IHSS, interactive.

**Internet hours:** Monday to Friday from 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM.



## STILL CAN'T reach anyone?

Write a letter to the address above or visit us in person.

*Frequent WORKER Questions.....call 510-577-1877*

- *How many hours am I authorized to work this month?*
- *When was my paycheck mailed?*
- *To request a duplicate timesheet*
- *To request verification of employment or income*
- *To Request a duplicate W-2*
- *To Request a new W-4 form*
- *To change your address*

*Frequent CONSUMER Questions call 510-577-1900*

- *What is the status of my case?*
- *What's my share of cost, if any?*
- *What are my monthly authorized hours?*
- *What is the date of my next assessment?*
- *What is my social worker's name and phone number?*

- *What is my social worker's name and phone number?*  
**Call 510-282-2002**

**HAVE TO LEAVE A MESSAGE?**

Be sure to leave your full name, IHSS I.D. number, your phone number and a description of the problem – including pay periods.

# INDEX

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## **Abuse**

- elder abuse, 25, 37
- Adult Protective Services, 25, 36-37, 39
  - mandated reporting, 37
- Accident prevention, 34-35
- Address changes, 20, 26, 42
- Adult Protective Services, 25, 36-37, 39
- Advance pay, 10
- Advisory Board of the PA for IHSS 27, 30
- Appeals procedure, IHSS, 11
- Applying for IHSS, 6,41, 42
- Assessment of IHSS hours, 9, 26, 32, 42
- Authorized hours, 17-18, 25, 42
- Benefits for homecare workers**
  - health/medical benefits, 21-23, 27, 40 paid Family Leave, 21, 40
  - Social Security, 21
  - State Disability Insurance, 21, 40
  - State Unemployment Insurance, 21
    - worker's compensation, 21, 40
- Chore provider enrollment, 13-14, 16 24-25, 42
- Classes, 15, 31, 34
- Communication, 33, 40
- Confidentiality, 25, 32, 36
- Consumer responsibilities, 26, 40
- Criminal background check, 14, 28
- Dental benefits, 22
- Direct deposit, 19, 42
- Direct deposit help desk, 19
- Disability Insurance, 21, 40

- Emergency preparedness, 16, 35
- Employment verification, 20, 42
- Enrollment packet, IHSS, 13-14,-25, 26, 42
- Face-to-face interview, 12-13
- Fact sheets, 31, 40
- Fair hearing, IHSS, 11
- Fraud, 17, 38
- Gasoline, 9, 16, 26, 33, 36
- Health and Safety**, 31, 34-35
  - accident prevention, 34-35
  - emergency preparedness,16, 35
  - healthy working conditions, 26
  - injuries on the job, 35
  - universal precautions, 34-35, 40
- Health benefits, 23, 39
- HIPPA, 36
- Hiring, 12-13, 26
- Homecare worker responsibilities, 24, 40
- Home visit by social worker, 9
- IHSS**
  - applying for, 6, 41, 44
  - authorized services, 7-8
  - enrollment for workers, 13-14, -26, 42
  - orientation for workers, 13-14
  - payroll, 10,14,19-21, 35, 39, 41-43
  - payroll hours, 41
  - social workers, 6, 9, 26, 32, 36, 42
- Income tax, 20
- Income verification, 20, 42
- Injuries from work, 35
- Interviewing potential workers, 12-13, 40

# INDEX (continued)

---

Job agreement, 12-13, 32, 40

## **Legal Matters**

confidentiality, 32, 36

HIPPA, 36

privacy, 36

Lifting and transfers, 31, 34, 40

Lost/late paychecks, 19-20,, 42

Mandated abuse reporting, 37

Notice-of-action, 11, 32

Orientation for workers, 14-15

Paid Family Leave, 21

Parking, 9, 36

**Paychecks**, 17-19, 21, 22, 38, 40,

42

direct deposit, 19

direct deposit help desk, 19

lost/late paychecks, 19-20, 23,

42

Payroll, 10, 14, 19-21, 35, 39, 41-

42

Payroll hours, 41

Phone numbers, 39

Privacy, 36

Pro-rating, 18

Public transportation, 9, 33

**Registry**, -28

finding work with IHSS, 28

how to get on the registry, 28

Replacement timesheets, 19

## **Responsibilities**

consumer, 26

homecare worker, 25

IHSS Payroll, 20

IHSS social workers, 6, 8-11, 18,

24-25, 32, 36, 39, 43

Rights, consumer and worker, 40

SEIU 6434, 23

Share-of-cost, 10, 13, 16, 43-40

Social Security, 14, 21

Social worker, see IHSS Social

Worker

Tasks approved by IHSS, 7-9, 25,

32

Telephone interview, 12, 40

**Timesheets**, 10, 14-15, 17, 19-20,

23-25, 38, 42

authorized hours, 17-18, 25, 42-

43

conversion chart for minutes

worked, 17

pro-rating hours for month, 18

replacement (duplicate)

timesheets, 19

**Training and Education**, 31

workshops, 31

**Transportation**, 22, 26, 33

gasoline, 19, 22, 26, 33, 36

mileage, 9, 33, 36

parking, 9, 36

public Transportation, 9, 33

## **Union**

SEIU-LTCWU 6434, 24, 39

Unemployment Insurance, 21

Universal precautions, 34-35, 40

Verification of Income, 20, 42

Vision benefit, 22

W-2 and W-4, 20, 42

Worker dress, 16

Worker's compensation, 21, 40

Workshops, 31



