

PERSONAL CARE ASSISTANT SERVICES

The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation can provide Personal Care Assistant Services through direct payment to consumers. This service is intended to support consumer choice, control and maximum participation in the consumer's rehabilitation programs. Counselors and consumers must work together to identify the need for personal care assistant services.

The Department recognizes that this service involves a major responsibility for the consumer and provides support to develop the necessary skills to recruit, hire, supervise, manage, and terminate attendants. It is important that consumers make realistic decisions about the number of hours needed and as well as the payment for the attendants whom they interview and employ. Detailed information and sample forms and documents can be found in the "Personal Care Assistant Manual."

Consumers document the costs of assistant care and are reimbursed for incurred costs by means of Imprest Cash. Necessary supporting documentation includes assistant timesheets signed by both the consumer and assistant. A tax worksheet detailing associated costs (FICA, Federal Unemployment Tax, etc.) must also be provided to the counselor before payment is processed.

The Imprest Cash authority granted for personal care attendants represents the highest allowable dollar amount. **Payment for Personal Care Assistant Services cannot exceed \$2,000 per month per consumer.** Central Office mails the Imprest Cash check directly to consumers for personal care assistant service expenses. Since the Department reimburses only for incurred rehabilitation services costs; payments to consumers are not considered income. Further information is provided in the manuals.

The current procedure supports consumer choice and control. Consumer responsibility and accountability are essential elements in the process. The ability to manage assistant care can be as important to successful employment as job skills acquired through training. The Department believes that developing skills in managing personal care assistance is critical to successful employment for consumers who require personal care assistant services.