

Direct Care Worker (DCW) Job Description

Direct Care Workers (DCWs) are MassHealth providers who provide services to participants in the Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) and Moving Forward Plan (MFP) Waivers. Direct Care Workers are the employees of the ABI/MFP Waiver participants to whom they provide services.

ABI/MFP Waiver participants who wish to self-direct waiver services have Case Managers from MassAbility or Service Coordinators from the Department of Developmental Services to help them with the process.

ABI/MFP Waiver participants may hire DCWs to provide any of the following waiver services: Adult Companion, Chore, Homemaker, Individual Support and Community Habilitation, Peer Support, and Personal Care.

Adult Companion:

DCWs who work as Adult Companions provide non-medical care, supervision, and socialization to functionally impaired adults. Companions may assist or supervise the participant with such tasks as meal preparation, laundry, and shopping. They may also perform light housekeeping tasks if needed.

Chore:

Waiver participants may hire DCWs to provide Chore Services if they need help keeping their home clean, sanitary, and safe. Chore Services can include heavy household chores such as washing floors, windows and walls, tacking down loose rugs and tiles, moving heavy items of furniture, and shoveling snow.

Homemaker:

DCWs who work as Homemakers perform general household tasks for a waiver participant. These tasks may include meal preparation and routine household care, such as laundry, bed-making, dusting, and vacuuming.

Individual Support and Community Habilitation (ISCH):

ISCH services help a waiver participant to successfully live in the community through modeling behaviors, training, and educating. DCWs providing ISCH service may work with the waiver participant on skills related to finding housing, managing personal finance and health, shopping, and navigating community resources.

Peer Support:

DCWs providing Peer Support services provide training, instruction, and mentoring to waiver participants about self-advocacy, civic participation, and participation in the community. DCWs may provide one-to-one support to the waiver participant, or DCWs may provide this support in small groups. Peer Support services enhance the skills of the waiver participant to function in the community and/or family home.

Personal Care:

DCWs providing Personal Care services help waiver participants to accomplish tasks that they would normally do for themselves if they did not have a disability. This assistance may take the form of **hands-on assistance** (actually performing a task for the waiver participant) or **cueing and supervision** (prompting the waiver participant to perform a task and monitoring them while they do it).

Assistance may involve tasks such as bathing, dressing, personal hygiene and other activities of daily living.

Many DCWs may also be Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) for MassHealth members. Personal Care for Waiver Participants can include cueing and supervision, while PCAs provide only hands-on assistance.

The MassHealth regulations governing the ABI/MFP Waivers are located at 130 CMR 630.000 and contain more information about service definitions, as well as provider qualifications.

Tasks that are not covered by the MassHealth ABI/MFP Waivers include the following examples. The list below does not include all of the possible non-covered services. These and other non-covered services are not paid for by MassHealth.

- Providing waiver services while the waiver participant is admitted to a nursing facility, hospital, or other inpatient facility
- Providing services that are for the benefit of other individuals in the waiver participant's household, rather than the waiver participant
- Babysitting
- Tasks that involve illegal activity prohibited by federal or state law

All DCWs are entitled to a safe working environment and are not expected to participate in any aspect of the employer/employee relationship that threatens their health and safety. This includes an environment that is free of abuse, inappropriate physical or sexual behavior, and sexual harassment.