

**NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
PERSONAL CARE AIDE  
TRAINING PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

Thank you for your interest in applying to provide Personal Care Aide Training

There are specific regulations governing the training of individuals employed by home care services agencies to provide personal care services in New York. Training is a quality of care standard. Use of untrained or improperly trained personal care aides places the consumer's health and safety at risk and raises questions about the quality of service being delivered. Therefore it is important to have regulations and guidelines which clearly define the training requirements.

Each person performing personal care services, other than household functions only, is required to participate successfully in a personal care aide (PCA) training program or a home health aide (HHA) training program approved by the New York State Departments of Health or Education. Agencies that choose to have a PCA training plan approved by the New York State Department of Health may develop a PCA training plan and submit it to the address below for review and approval. Agencies that choose to have a HHA training program approved by the New York State Department of Health should contact the Home Care Program Manager in the appropriate Department of Health Regional/Area Office for HHA training program requirements and approval procedures.

The personal care training plan submittal must include the agency's plan for providing basic training, in-service training, on-the-job training and evaluation of the aide's overall job performance. The agency must also use the Alternative Competency Demonstration (ACD) for individuals who, due to their education and experience, may not need to complete the PCA training program but would still need to be tested to ensure that they have the required skills and knowledge.

Any questions regarding Personal Care Aide training and program approval requirements should be directed to the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Credentialing at 518-408-1297 or via email to: [pcatp@health.state.ny.us](mailto:pcatp@health.state.ny.us)

## Training Requirements

A description of each training plan component and the information that must be included in the applicant's training plan submittal follows.

### **I. Basic Training**

Basic training is defined as a formal course which includes didactic training and demonstration of personal care aide (PCA) skills. Such training must include an orientation to the roles and responsibilities of the personal care aide and the policies and procedures of the employing agency.

PCA training programs must use the Home Care Curriculum (April 2006; January 2007) (HCC) for basic training. The HCC is a 40-hour minimum basic training course, exclusive of testing, containing twelve discrete content areas or modules. The HCC meets PCA training standards for content and length. The curriculum identifies minimum hour requirements for each of the twelve modules. To evaluate each Personal Care aide trainee's competence in performing the minimally required number of personal care skills, each PCATP must utilize the HCC evaluations for each module of the HCC and written test questions must comprehensively test the student in all areas of the curriculum and questions must be rotated. If a student is retaking a test after an unsuccessful attempt, this test must be a different version from the previous test taken. A minimum of 80% is required to ensure mastery of the subject material. Both the Home Care Curriculum and Home Care Curriculum - Evaluations may be downloaded from the Health Commerce System (HCS) at <https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/public> or the Department website at [http://www.health.state.ny.us/professionals/home\\_care/](http://www.health.state.ny.us/professionals/home_care/) written tests obtained from publishers who publish text books for the purpose of training personal care and home health aides. Test questions must be obtained from a "bank" of test questions.

Personal care aide training programs must have an exemption methodology. "Exemption methodology" is defined as an evaluation process through which individuals with related training or experience in performing hands-on skills may be exempt from the requirement to complete basic training. "Related training" is defined as formal training involving instruction in hands-on skills included in the required basic training program. "Related experience" is defined as experience in an institutional or home setting which involves the performance of hands-on skills included in the required basic training program.

The required exemption methodology for all personal care aide training programs is the ACD compiled by the Department of Health and available on HPN. The ACD combines the description of qualifications, interview and documentation sections of the discontinued Standardized Assessment Methodology with the written and clinical test questions from the Home Care Curriculum – Evaluations. Thus all individuals employed by home care services agencies to provide personal care services will have to pass the same written and clinical exams regardless of whether they completed the basic training program or were competency-tested with the ACD.

The basic training course information that must be submitted for review is:

1. The qualifications of individuals accepted for basic training as defined in 18 NYCRR 505.14 (d)(4). The minimum criteria must include:

- (a) maturity, emotional and mental stability, and experience in personal care or homemaking;
  - (b) ability to read and write, understand and carry out directions and instructions, record messages, and keep simple records;
  - (c) sympathetic attitude towards providing services for patients at home who have medical problems;
  - (d) documented good health as required for all home care workers by 10 NYCRR 763.13.
2. A policy statement that no fees of any kind will be charged to any individual for any of the costs of PCA training, including the costs for textbooks, materials, and supplies. If any training costs are charged to the student who enrolls in the PCA training program, you must receive approval for your program from the New York State Education Department (NYSED), not the New York State Department of Health. Directions to obtain NYSED proprietary school licensure may be found on the NYSED website: <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/bpss/steps.htm>.
  3. County(ies) to be served.
  4. The name and resume of the Director/Coordinator of Training. The individual must be a currently licensed (in New York) registered professional nurse or a social worker and must have at minimum a bachelor's degree in an area related to the delivery of human services or education. Human services may include health and social services. Registered nurses may be exempt from the requirement of a bachelor's degree if they have two years of nursing experience, at least one year of which must be in the provision of home health care services. Submit a copy of the current NYS license.
  5. The names and resumes of all basic training course instructors. Appropriate instructors include currently licensed (in New York) physical therapists, social workers, registered dietitians, or public health nurses. A registered nurse must be the instructor for content related to personal care skills. Submit a copy of a current NYS license for each instructor.
  6. Training schedule for each day. A daily training schedule that includes specific reference to the content of each HCC module and unit, instructors and administration of written skills evaluations. Although the HCC represents the Department's minimum 40 hours of required content, recent updates to the HCC, especially in Module XII, may require additional teaching and evaluation time beyond the time allocations in the HCC. Other topics may be included in the training, but must be in addition to the minimum 40-hour requirement and may not be substituted for required topics. The time allocated to each module, unit within each module, and didactic and lab sessions must be the same as or more than those specified in the HCC. The number of minutes allocated to each module and unit cannot be less than what is specified in the HCC.

Identify in the training schedule when each module quiz will be administered. Module

quizzes may be administered after each module or consolidated into one or more exams. Identify in the training schedule when the skills performance evaluations will be administered. Procedural checklists for evaluation of “Required” and “Optional” procedures are included in the HCC itself.

Time required for the administration of module quizzes and skills evaluations may not be included in the required 40-hours of basic training.

7. Training schedule by module, unit and sub-unit.

## **II. In-Service Training (IST)**

In-service training is defined as formalized group training provided on a regularly scheduled basis to review or expand skills or knowledge included in basic training, or to develop specialized skills or knowledge not included in basic training. Such training may review HCC content or provide more in-depth and intensive training in relation to a specific basic training topic.

At a minimum, the Department requires each personal care aide employer to provide each of its personal care aides with six hours of in-service training during each year of employment. The year begins with the first day of employment. In-service hours are not transferable from one employer to another, i.e., they do not “follow” the PCA from one employer to the next employer. Home study programs, independent viewing of videos and on-the-job training are NOT acceptable methods for the provision of in-service training.

Content of in-service training will vary from agency to agency depending on the objectives of the personal care services program, characteristics of the personal care service caseload, and assessed needs of aides performing personal care services. In-service training may be provided by the employing agency or, if arranged by the employing agency, another provider agency, community agency or institution. Additionally, for PCAs employed by more than one agency, only one of the employers must meet the in-service training requirement for the employee. However, all of the PCAs employers must maintain documentation of participation in in-service training in the employee’s file regardless of which employing agency provided the in-service training. The in-service training information that must be submitted for review is:

1. The agency’s policy and procedure for in-service training including the individual responsible for the provision/coordination of in-service training.
2. A tentative one-year schedule of in-service training that identifies the topics, instructors and projected hour allocation for each topic.
3. The methods and form(s) used to document in-service training.

## **III. On-the-Job Training (OJT)**

On-the-job training (OJT) is defined as training provided, as the need is identified, to instruct or assist a PCA in a specific skill or technique or to assist the PCA in resolving problems in individual case situations. It is a fluid, unstructured type of training, frequently given on a one-to-one basis.

OJT may be administrative in nature, such as individual case conferences involving the PCA, case

manager and the R.N. supervisor. It may also be technical in nature, whereby individualized instruction in performing a basic skill or technique related to the client's need is provided by the supervising R.N. or the appropriate professional.

As part of supervisory responsibilities for personal care services, the registered nurse is responsible for evaluating the personal care provider's ability to carry out assigned functions. The registered nurse is also responsible for providing and arranging for OJT when indicated.

The information that must be submitted for OJT is:

1. The name and qualifications of the individual(s) responsible for the provision of OJT;
2. The agency policy and procedure for the provision of OJT; and
3. The methods and form(s) used to document OJT.

#### **IV. Overall Job Performance Evaluation (OJPE)**

The employing agency is responsible for conducting overall job performance evaluations (OJPE). The purpose of the evaluation is to determine the competency of an individual providing personal care services. The OJPE is not intended to reflect the individual's performance in a specific case situation.

Evaluations may be completed by the individual responsible for administrative supervision or a registered professional nurse employed by the agency to provide nursing supervision.

To complete performance evaluations, the employing agency may review and utilize information about the individual's performance on specific cases as reflected in the nursing supervisory reports. Information from training and personnel records may also be used. An individual's performance on an active case may be observed but is not required.

At a minimum, the Department requires that evaluations be completed annually. Evaluations should be maintained in each individual's personnel record and should include the comments and signatures of the employee and the individual or individuals who completed the evaluation.

The OJPE information that must be submitted for review is:

1. The agency's policy and procedure, including criteria and methods, for evaluating the aide's overall job performance; and
2. The method and form(s) used to document the aide's overall job performance.

#### **V. Pass/Fail Standard**

The pass/fail standard for each Home Care Curriculum Module is **80%**.

## **VI. Exemption Methodology**

An exemption methodology is a required component of a basic training program. It is defined as an evaluation process through which individuals with related training or experience in performing hands-on skills may be exempt from the requirement for completion of basic training. The exemption methodology that all personal care aide training programs must use is the Alternative Competency Demonstration, which consists of an interview process and the Home Care Curriculum Evaluations. The Home Care Curriculum Evaluations are identical to the evaluations required to be used to test those who successfully complete the Home Care Curriculum.

Documentation of related training or experience must be obtained prior to testing. Related training is defined as formal training involving instruction in hands-on skills included in the required basic training program. Individuals completing training as a New York State certified nurse aide, home health aide and/or a licensed practical nurse and registered nurse programs following direct patient care experience, may be eligible for alternative testing. Related experience is defined as experience in an institutional or home setting which involves the performance of hands-on skills included in the required basic training program.

The information which must be submitted for review is:

1. An attestation that the agency will use the Alternative Competency Demonstration for any individuals it deems potentially eligible for exemption from the 40-hour basic training program.

## **VII. Maintenance and Confidentiality of Records**

Maintenance and confidentiality of all personal care aide training program records including any documents used to verify identity of the trainee, and trainer, examinations, standardized curricula unit and model tests/quizzes, Alternative Competency Demonstration materials and competency evaluation forms. These documents must be retained for a period of six years after the successful completion of training.

## **VIII. Maintenance of Training Program Records**

Maintenance of training program records for all training programs, trainers and trainees. The training record for each person who has successfully completed personal care aide training and/or competency evaluation, any documents used to verify identity of the trainee. For any such document examined, information regarding the document title, issuing authority, document number and expiration date, if any, must be recorded and maintained in the permanent records of the program. These documents must be retained for each PCA employee for as long as the individual is employed by the agency, and for a period of at least six years after the termination of a worker's employment.

## **VIII. Sites**

Training programs will no longer be associated with a specific site, but rather with a designated sponsoring home care agency. An approved training program can operate multiple sites where

training is conducted continually or episodically.

Home care agencies that are currently operating multiple training programs (sites) may choose to operate a single approved PCATP that offers training at various sites under the direction of a coordinating nurse instructor. Agencies choosing to implement this option must identify which currently approved PCATP(s) will close and the effective closure date for each. The identified program will be closed on the HCR. The closure date should be the day after the successful completion date of the last training conducted by the program at that site. The home care agency must use the NYS DOH PCATP Application Form 4437.

## **IX. Personnel**

Nurse Instructor and Director Coordinator credentials must meet regulatory requirements and must be submitted to the Department at time of application. Additional supportive documentation is required if the instructor proposes to train in a language other than English. Changes to PCATP personnel requires pre-approval. PCATP personnel must be approved and available in the Home Care Registry prior to commencement of class.

## **X. Training and Testing Materials**

The training program must be conducted utilizing lesson plans based on the content of the Department's Home Care Curriculum (HCC) and Health Related Tasks Curriculum (HRTC) available on the DOH website and Health Commerce System.

## **XI. Certification and Certificates**

The training program must follow the timelines as detailed in Home Care Registry statute and regulations.

## **XII. Training in a Foreign Language**

A training program will be approved to conduct training in a foreign language only if the approved nurse instructor meets the specified proficiency requirements in the foreign language, as detailed below.

If a program proposes to teach in a foreign language, the Nurse Instructor must be bi-lingual and fluent in both English and the language in which instruction is given in order to adequately teach and evaluate the student. The program that proposes to conduct training in a foreign language must submit the Nurse Instructor application with documentation of the Nurse Instructor's fluency in the foreign language. Documentation of fluency must include two written references; one of which may be from the sponsoring organization; and one of which may be proof of graduation (such as diploma) where the targeted foreign language is spoken.

Classes can only be conducted in one language at a time and not through an interpreter. Testing may be conducted in the language that the curriculum was taught.