



# WASHINGTON **CARE CAREERS**

**Opportunities for High School Students**



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# UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF CAREGIVERS



Are you looking for a dynamic, rewarding career but aren't ready to commit to four more years of school? If you are still exploring your future after high school, becoming a caregiver is an excellent way to experience the health care field while working. In the role of a caregiver, you will provide direct care to older adults and adults with disabilities who need extra assistance with activities of daily living. Caregivers are an essential part of a client's healthcare team. It is more than just a job - it is an opportunity to build meaningful relationships and improve the lives of others. Because of caregivers, many adults can continue to live independently, with dignity, whether at home or in a community-based setting or long-term care facility.

## CAREGIVING CAREERS OFFER NUMEROUS BENEFITS

- You can work as a caregiver if you are at least 18 years old and start earning income fast. **Many employers will pay for you to complete training while you work**, allowing you to enter the workforce without paying high tuition or training costs.
- A caregiving career introduces you to the healthcare field. This experience could answer many of your career choice questions. You will **find out if the healthcare field is for you** and understand the career advancement that is available!
- Washington caregivers are some of the most highly trained in the country. **You will learn valuable skills that you can use to advance in healthcare or translate to other professions.** Some of the many skills you will learn include patience, problem-solving, accountability, compassion, and practical care skills.
- As a caregiver, **no two days are the same.** You will face unique challenges, meet interesting people and learn new things every day.

# THE ROAD TO BECOMING A HOME CARE AIDE

If you like helping others, enjoy a flexible schedule, working independently and making a difference in peoples' lives, then a career as a home care aide may be perfect for you!

There are many paths that may lead you to this career. Here's a brief overview of the steps to become a home care aide.

1

## Start

You like helping others and want to learn skills to become a home care aide.

2

## Time to Get Trained

Home care aides are required to take 75 hours of training. Some employers may offer to hire you upfront and pay for your training! Courses are offered all throughout the state. Visit our [Home Care Aide Training webpage](#) and search for a list of training programs near you.

3

## Testing and Certification

You will take a test that includes knowledge and skills sections. [Prometric](#) offers the test in 13 languages. The [Department of Health](#) will process your test results, make sure you have met the requirements, and issue your certification. This process can take a few weeks. The Department of Health will notify you via email, so make sure to check your inbox regularly for messages.

4

## Let's Get to Work

Congratulations! You have completed the training and certification process and are ready to begin your career as a home care aide! You can work in a client's home, an adult family home, or an assisted living facility.

# ALL ABOUT HOME CARE AIDES

A home care aide is an important role that requires skill, compassion, flexibility, patience, problem-solving, determination, and initiative. These direct-care workers are an essential part of a client's health care team. They help clients perform activities of daily living so they can live more independently. To begin work, you must be 18 years of age or older, attend 5-Hour Safety and Orientation Training, and pass a background check.

## THE WORK ENVIRONMENT OF A HOME CARE AIDE

- As a home care aide, **you may work in a client's home** or a **community-based setting** such as an **adult family home (with two to six residents)** or an **assisted living facility (with more than six residents)**. **You may work for a facility, a home care agency, or directly with a client.**
- **You will assist with activities of daily living** such as bathing, dressing, feeding, toileting, walking, or transferring (for example, from a bed to a wheelchair). You may also prepare meals, do housework or run errands.
- Because you work so closely with your clients, **you may be the first to notice and document any changes in a client's behavior, mood, preferences, and physical or mental condition.**

## THE BENEFITS OF A CAREER AS A CERTIFIED HOME CARE AIDE

- **Home care aides can choose from a wide range of work settings.** Some choose to work one-on-one with clients, while others work in a larger facility with many clients and coworkers.
- **Every day is different as a home care aide.** Some days, you may be running errands, while other days, you may be helping your client with personal hygiene needs.
- **Many home care aides have the flexibility to set their hours.** They may work part-time or full-time and can build a schedule around school and family commitments.



# THE ROAD TO BECOMING AN INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER

A career as an individual provider may be perfect for you if you like to work directly with clients, enjoy a flexible schedule, and want to make a difference in peoples' lives.

Many paths may lead you to this career. Here is a brief overview of the steps to become an individual provider.

## 1 Start

You like to help others and want to start your career as an individual provider.

## 2 Time to Get Trained

Individual providers who care for someone who is not their family member or care for more than one client are required to take 75 hours of training. The individual provider union, SEIU 775, may [pay for your training!](#)

## 3 Testing and Certification

You will take a test that includes knowledge and skills sections. [Prometric](#) offers the test in 13 languages. The [Department of Health](#) will process your test results, make sure you have met the requirements, and issue your certification. This process can take a few weeks. The Department of Health will notify you via email, so make sure to check your inbox regularly for messages.

## 4 Let's Get to Work

Congratulations! You have completed the training and certification process and are ready to begin your career as an individual provider! You are prepared to care for clients in their own homes.

# ALL ABOUT INDIVIDUAL PROVIDERS

Individual providers have a unique caregiving role of providing one-on-one care to individuals in their own homes. They are independent self-starters who are comfortable working directly with one client at a time. These caregivers help their clients stay in the comfort of their own homes as long as possible. Individual providers must be 18 years of age or older and pass a background check to begin working.

## THE WORK ENVIRONMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER

- **You will work closely with one person at a time in their own home.** Your client is your only boss and is the person who hires and supervises you. They may be someone you know, such as a family member or neighbor, or someone you just met. Many individual providers work with more than one client.
- **You will assist with activities of daily living** such as bathing, dressing, feeding, toileting, walking, or transferring (for example, from a bed to a wheelchair). You may also prepare meals, do housework or run errands.
- Because you work so closely with your clients, **you are the first to notice and document any changes in a client's behavior, mood, preferences, and physical or mental condition.**

## THE BENEFITS OF A CAREER AS AN INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER

- **This position is the most flexible of all other direct-care jobs.** You can select the clients you work with and negotiate a schedule that works for both of you. You can work with one client or many.
- **You can get to know your clients and establish meaningful relationships.** Individual providers often build strong relationships with their clients. These relationships are often the most satisfying and enjoyable aspects of this job.
- **If you are taking care of a family member, you may not need to complete the entire home care aide training to get paid.** For more information, visit the Department of Social and Health Services [Individual Providers page](#).



# Long-Term Care Careers: **Requirements**

For more details, visit [Home Care Aide Training Information page](#).

## Home Care Aide

✓	<b>Training:</b> 75 hours
✓	<b>Testing:</b> Required
✓	<b>Certification:</b> Required through the Washington State Department of Health
✓	<b>Work Settings:</b> A client's home, adult family home or assisted living facility

## Individual Provider

✓	<b>Training:</b> 75 hours
✓	<b>Testing:</b> Required
✓	<b>Certification:</b> Required through the Washington State Department of Health
✓	<b>Work Settings:</b> A client's home



# TIPS FOR JOB SEARCHING

Direct-care workers are in high demand all over Washington state. Whether you already have your certification or are looking for an employer who will help you become certified, you can find many resources available to you. See below for some tips on finding your ideal job.



## FINDING A JOB AS A HOME CARE AIDE

- Use the [Home Care Agencies map](#) to search for and connect with home care agencies, assisted living facilities, and nursing homes in your area. Contact them directly and ask them about current or upcoming opportunities to work as a home care aide.
- **Connect with your local WorkSource Center.** WorkSource can help you find employers looking for direct-care workers, including those employers who will pay or help pay for your training. WorkSource can also allow you to register for training and apply for jobs.
- **Use job search engines.** Some good keywords for your job search include: “home care aide,” “nursing assistant-certified,” and “caregiver.” Set up notifications so you can hear about newly posted job opportunities, whether for a Home Care Aide or a Nursing Assistant.

## FINDING A JOB AS AN INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER

- The [Consumer Direct Care Network Washington](#) can help you find one-on-one job search assistance, schedule training, and complete a background check.

# LONG-TERM CARE OPTIONS FOR CAREER GROWTH

Long-term care can be a lifelong career with excellent benefits. For those looking for growth opportunities, long-term care also provides many opportunities to move up in the field of health care. Below is a map of the options for career growth within the field of health care.

## Individual Provider (Certified)

Certified individual providers work in their clients' own homes.



## Home Care Aide (Certified)

Home care aides work in adult family homes, assisted living facilities and in clients' own homes.



## Nursing Assistant-Certified

Nursing assistants-certified work in hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, adult family homes and clients' own homes.



## Licensed Practical Nurse

Licensed practical nurses work in nursing homes, hospitals, client's homes and other settings.



## Registered Nurse

Registered nurses work in hospitals, nursing homes and other settings.

## Adult Family Home (AFH) Provider

AFH providers are licensed business owners that provide care and services for two to six adults in a residential setting.



## Facility Administrators

Facility administrators oversee the daily operations of facilities that provide care and services to adults living in community settings.

