

Persons with Developmental Disabilities Program
Family Managed Services

Finding the Right Staff

Recruiting and Interviewing Potential Employees



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Finding the Right Staff

Introduction

Finding and hiring staff are important responsibilities of a Funds Administrator. Hiring your own staff is often the best way for you and your family member to have a direct say in how supports are provided.

Developing a Job Description

Finding staff begins with good planning.

Before you get started, ask yourself some important questions such as:

- What type(s) of support (e.g. employment, community access, or home living) am I expecting the staff to provide?
- Does my family member have any specific needs that require special skills?
- Does the staff need to have any specific knowledge, abilities, skills and/or personal characteristics in order to do the work?
 - Are there any education and experience requirements to perform the work?
 - Are there any other special requirements such as a driver's license, First Aid certificate, Criminal Record Check, etc. that would be beneficial?
 - What are the duties and responsibilities of the position? What are you expecting the staff to accomplish?
- What are the hours of work (full time, part time)?
- Are there any special conditions associated with the work, such as significant physical demands, hazards and stresses?
- Does the location where the work is to be performed present any special challenges?

Does writing a job description sound like work?

Check out [page 11](#) for a Sample Job Description.

Criminal Record Checks and Vulnerable Sector Checks are strongly recommended.

For more information ask your PDD regional staff for the fact sheet on Criminal Record Checks.

It is a good idea to look at sample job descriptions available online or in other print resources. Some ideas for places to look can be found on [pages 8 – 9](#).

Should I Use an Application Form or Ask for a Resume?

Application Form

A job application form is a useful way to make sure you get consistent information. This makes it easier to compare applicants and decide which ones you want to interview. A job application is easier and faster for people to fill out. This may encourage more people to apply for your job.

A good application form is written in plain language and is easy to fill out with enough space provided for complete answers to questions.

Thinking about using a job application form?

Check out [page 12](#) for a sample Application for Employment.

Resume

A resume allows an applicant to highlight their skills and abilities. This may give you useful information for a follow-up interview. The writing style and language used in the resume may also give you some information about the applicant such as their level of literacy and their attention to detail.

The downside of a resume is that all of them are different. This makes it difficult to compare information from applicants and you might not get all of the information you need.

Where and How to Advertise a Position

The easiest way to find staff is to ask your friends, family members and co-workers for suggestions or talk to other parents and guardians of adults with developmental disabilities. If you do not find the right staff through word of mouth, then you should think about creating a job advertisement.

Creating a Job Advertisement

Here are a few tips for creating a successful job advertisement:

- Keep it simple and short. Write five to six complete sentences to answer the following questions:
 - What is the name of the position?
 - What type of work is involved?
 - What are the hours? Full time? Part time? Overnight? Shift?
 - What is the average salary? (Many people do not list pay information, but if you do you may get a better response)
 - Where and to whom should an applicant send their application? If there is an application form, where can they access it?
- Proofread your job posting. Read it aloud, use spell check, and have someone else read it. Spelling mistakes and bad grammar may discourage educated people from applying.

Need some help writing a job ad?

See the Sample Job Advertisement on [page 16](#).

Remember:

It is illegal to show preference or ask applicants questions about their race, religious beliefs, colour, sex, physical characteristics, age, ancestry, place of origin or disability.

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There are many different ways to advertise your job and reach job seekers. As you think about the different ways to advertise remember:

- **One plan does not fit all.** What worked for someone else may not work for you. Find the right fit for you.
- **Think about your audience.** Which option will help you reach people who may be interested in and qualified for the job you have available?
- **Do not put all your eggs in one basket.** One strategy may not be enough — try several strategies.

Where to advertise	Pros	Cons
<p>Online Advertisements Use internet websites such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Service Canada-Alberta ■ JOBS (www.jobbank.gc.ca), ■ Workopolis.ca, or Monster.ca 	<p>Most websites allow postings free of charge or for a small fee</p> <p>Job ads can be longer</p> <p>Job ads can be posted easily and updated when necessary</p> <p>Job ads run for a longer time period (usually up to 30 days)</p>	<p>Only reach applicants that have computer skills</p> <p>Can be difficult to choose the best site</p> <p>Lots of job ads online which can make your job more difficult to find</p>
<p>Print Advertisements Place your ad in your local or regional newspaper</p>	<p>Used by many job seekers</p> <p>Quick way to reach an audience</p>	<p>Can be very expensive (you pay per word)</p> <p>Job ad must be quite short</p> <p>Takes longer to get responses from applicants</p>
<p>Bulletin boards in Schools, Community Centres, etc. Place your ad on bulletin boards in schools, universities, community centres, grocery stores etc.</p>	<p>Allows you to find people with specific qualifications</p> <p>May help you find a staff in your community</p>	<p>Takes longer to get responses from applicants</p> <p>Only reaches applicants that use these places</p> <p>You may not get a large response</p>

Interviewing Potential Employees

Go through the application forms and/or resumes you have received. Pick a few candidates that you think would be suitable and schedule an interview. Make sure your family member is involved in the interview process as much as possible.

- Think about where you want to have the interview. Are you comfortable interviewing the person in your home, or would you prefer to meet in a coffee shop? Although it is better to meet the applicant in person, a phone interview is also an option.

Top 10 Tips for Successful Interviewing

1. Identify the “must haves.” What are the 3 – 5 characteristics or qualifications that are most important?
2. If possible, interview with another person.
3. Prepare questions ahead of time.
4. Do not ask the interviewee to provide information that you already have.
5. Ask them to sign a Reference Check Release Form. This way you know you have their permission to contact their references.
6. Start the interview with some general, easy to answer questions and move to more difficult or sensitive questions later.
7. Ask the interviewee to spend a few minutes telling you why they would like the job.
8. Ask the interviewee to describe past situations where they demonstrated the skills/qualities you are seeking.
9. Only ask questions that are related to the job.
10. Ask the interviewee if they have any questions.

Need some help deciding which questions to ask?

Check out [page 17](#) for some examples.

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Doing Reference Checks

You should always do a reference check on your staff.

A reference check is a good way to check and make sure the information you have is correct. A good reference check will give you information about how the applicant works with other people.

Tips for effectively checking references:

- A telephone reference is better than a written reference.
- Do not ask questions about an applicant's personal life.
- Ask open ended questions. Ask questions that give you information about how the applicant interacts with other people.

Where can I find a Reference Check Release Form?

Check out [page 18](#) for a sample.

Need some help deciding which questions to ask?

Check out [page 19](#) for some examples.

Doing Criminal Record Checks

You **should** ask potential employees for a Criminal Record Check.

A Criminal Record Check will help you make sure you hire the right staff and keep your family member safe.

Criminal Record Checks are available from the local police station or RCMP office. A fee is usually charged for these.

Want more information on Criminal Record Checks?

Talk to your PDD regional staff. Ask for the fact sheet on Criminal Record Checks.

How to Offer the Job

After you decide which person you would like to hire, it is a good idea to give them a written offer letter. This will prevent miscommunication and ensure an easier transition for you and the person being hired.

Writing a Job Offer Letter?

Have a look at [page 20](#) for a sample.

Here are some things you should include in an offer letter:

- A message offering the job to the person
- A short description of the key responsibilities (It is also a good idea to include a copy of the job description as an attachment)
- When would you like them to start?
 - How many hours will they work? Are there specific times and dates?
- What is the salary or hourly rate of pay?
- Are there any “conditions of employment” (e.g. Criminal Record Check, valid driver’s license, First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training)?
- Who will they report to?
- Who should they contact?
- When should they let you know what they decide?

It is also a good idea to discuss the job offer with your employee in person or by phone.

Resources

Links

OCC Info — Alberta Occupational Profiles

Developing a job description? Have a look at OCC Info - Alberta Occupational Profiles. Some of the work may already be done for you.

Website: www.alis.gov.ab.ca/occinfo

Canada — Alberta Job Order Bank Services (JOBS)

This is a job bank that allows you to post job advertisements for free through the Internet.

Website: www.alis.gov.ab.ca/employment/jp

Human Resources Development Canada

An online information source that provides helpful information for employers on many different topics. It has information on how to write job descriptions and find staff.

Website: www.jobsetc.gc.ca/eng/pieces1.jsp?category_id=2801

Publications

The following books and other materials are available free of charge in print and online from Alberta Human Services.

Finders and Keepers: Recruitment and Retention Strategies

Employers who are able to find and keep valued employees gain the upper hand in today's labour market. Finders & Keepers provides proven strategies and practical tools to help employers attract, recruit, select and retain employees. It condenses best practices and current research into practical and affordable steps. It also contains information about additional resources and includes blank worksheets.

Beyond Pay and Benefits: Effective Practices from Alberta Employers

Alberta business owners and managers share effective recruitment and retention practices that go beyond wage and employee benefit packages.

Employing a Diverse Workforce: Making it Work

Employing a diverse workforce and creating an inclusive workplace is a strategy that works for both employers and workers. This book provides you with examples on how Alberta employers retain and engage a highly motivated and diverse workforce.

To get a copy of these guides and others:

- Call the Alberta Career Information Hotline at 1-800-661-3753
- Go online at: www.alis.gov.ab.ca/careershop

Samples

Please note: the following documents and forms are samples only; you are not required to use them. Please feel free to change the samples or make up your own documents to fit your needs.

Sample Job Description — Support Worker

Job Title: Support Worker

Job Summary: *(Short description of the job. State who the person will report to)*

The Support Worker is responsible for providing support to _____
(individual's name) to enable her/him to develop the skills to fulfill her/his goals and objectives and be a valued, contributing member of the community. The Support Worker will report to _____ *(Funds Administrator's name)*.

Key Responsibilities: *(List the 3 to 5 main job duties)*

- Help the individual identify community resources (e.g. recreational clubs, libraries, community centres etc) they would like to use.
- Support the individual to participate meaningfully in community activities that they are interested in and connect with other people who share those interests.
- Ensure the individual is treated with dignity and respect.
- Assist the individual with building relationships with community members.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Other duties as required.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities: *(List the most important ones first)*

- Belief in the right for all people to belong, participate, and contribute to their community.
- Experience supporting an adult with a developmental disability.
- Patience, time management skills and the ability to work independently.
- Good communication skills.
- A valid Class 5 driver's license; access to a reliable vehicle.
- First Aid and CPR certification.
- Criminal Record Check.

Working Conditions: *(Short description of where most of the work will be done)*

Most work will occur in community spaces but some work will be completed within the *individual/family* home.

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Sample Application for Employment

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Phone: Home: _____

Work: _____

Do you have experience working with individuals with disabilities:
Where? How long? _____

Date available: _____

Permanent: _____ Temporary: _____

Hours available (please specify):

Mornings: _____ Afternoons: _____ Evenings: _____

Overnight: _____ Weekend: _____ Emergency: _____

Days available (check all that apply):

Monday

Thursday

Sunday

Tuesday

Friday

Wednesday

Saturday

Do you have a valid driver's license? _____

What is your main means of transportation? _____

Are there any tasks described in the job description that you are unable or not willing to do (e.g. lifting, housework)? _____

Education:

Highest level completed:

- High School College University
 Other (please specify): _____

Name of school: _____

Program: _____

Completion Date: _____

Name of school: _____

Program: _____

Completion Date: _____

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Work Experience *(most recent employer first):*

1. Employer: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
Contact Person: _____
Description of your role: _____

Dates worked: From: _____ To: _____
Reason for leaving: _____

2. Employer: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
Contact Person: _____
Description of your role: _____

Dates worked: From: _____ To: _____
Reason for leaving: _____

3. Employer: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
Contact Person: _____
Description of your role: _____

Dates worked: From: _____ To: _____
Reason for leaving: _____

References:

Can we contact your employers for a reference? _____

Personal references (please provide name and contact information):

1. Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Relationship to applicant: _____

2. Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Relationship to applicant: _____

3. Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Relationship to applicant: _____

Other Interests:

Hobbies/Pastimes/Interests: _____

Memberships in Organizations/volunteer work: _____

Other Information:

A Vulnerable Sector Check and a Criminal Record Check are a condition of employment and can be obtained from your local Police Service. If offered the job, are you willing to obtain one? _____

Signature

Date

Sample Job Advertisement

Community Access Support Worker

We are looking for a **Support Worker** to provide community access support to our family member with developmental disabilities. The Support Worker will be responsible for helping our family member develop the life skills necessary to participate meaningfully in their community.

This is a **part time** (15 – 20 hours per week) position and will involve working primarily within community settings. The successful candidate will be required to complete a Criminal Record Check and a Vulnerable Sector Check as a condition of employment.

The ideal candidate will possess:

- Significant experience providing support to an adult with a developmental disability or relevant educational experience
- Time management skills, the ability to work independently and the ability to manage difficult or stressful situations
- A valid Class 5 driver's license and access to a vehicle
- First Aid and CPR training

If you are interested in lending your skills to this position and making a real difference for an adult with a developmental disability, please submit your resume to:

Funds Administrator Name: _____

Email: _____

Fax: _____

Mail: _____

All applications must be received by _____.

Only those candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

Sample Interview Questions

General Questions:

- What experience do you have working with adults with developmental disabilities?
- What experience do you have dealing with challenging behaviours?
- What are your short/long term career goals?
- How does your education and work experience make you a suitable candidate for this position?
- When we call your previous employer or references what are they likely to tell us?
- What is your view on community inclusion?
- How do you feel about working in my home?
- Do you have any reason that would prevent you from completing the following activities:
 - Assisting with personal care (bathing, toileting, feeding)
 - Transferring or lifting
 - Participating in activities: swimming, horseback riding, etc.
 - Transporting an individual in your car

Skill Based/Behavioural Questions:

- What creative ways or ideas have you used/would you use to motivate someone to complete a task?
- Describe a time when you were faced with a difficult situation. How did you resolve this situation?
- Tell me about a time when you demonstrated your trustworthiness or integrity in school or at work.
- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment to solve a problem.
- Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done.
- What is your typical way of dealing with conflict? Can you provide an example of a time when you had to deal with conflict?
- Tell me about a time when you had to make a difficult or unpopular decision.

Sample Reference Check Release Form

I, _____ give permission to
_____ (*name of Funds Administrator*)
to contact the persons listed below for the purposes of obtaining
reference information. These persons are aware that you will contact
them and have my permission to discuss information regarding my
current and/or previous employment.

Name	Phone Number	Relationship

Name (please print)

Signature

Date

Sample Reference Check Questions

- When and for how long have you known the person? In what capacity? Employer? Friend? Co-worker? If an employer, what position did the individual hold?
- What was the applicant's reason for leaving?
- Please outline his/her position and main responsibilities.
- Please describe the quality of his/her work. Can you give an example?
- How did the applicant respond to supervision?
- How did the applicant get along with other people?
- How would you describe the applicant's punctuality and reliability?
- How would you describe the applicant's ability to handle conflict?
- Please describe the applicant's communication skills.
- Describe the applicant's ability to problem-solve.
- How would you describe the applicant's adaptability? Can you give me an example of when the applicant had to prove his/her ability to adapt?
- How would you describe the applicant's decision-making ability?
- Describe the applicant's ability to work independently.
- Would you hire the individual again?
- Are there any areas of concern?
- Is there anything else that you would like to add?

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Sample Job Offer Letter

Funds Administrator Name
Funds Administrator Address

Date

Name of Candidate
Address

Dear _____ (Name),

I am pleased to offer you part time employment as a Support Worker for _____ (individual's name). A detailed job description is attached to this letter for your reference. This position will begin on _____ (date). The hours of work are _____ for a total of _____ hours per week at a rate of \$_____ per hour.

You are required to ensure you obtain a Criminal Record Check and a Vulnerable Sector Check before the first day of work.

If you agree to accept this offer of employment, please sign and return one copy of this letter to us.

I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Funds Administrator Signature

Funds Administrator Name

Employee Name

Employee Signature

Date

Tear along dotted line

We Welcome Your Feedback ...

Please tell us what you think about the *Finding the Right Staff* handbook. We welcome all comments.

Did you find the information in this handbook useful? How did it help you?

Do you have any suggestions for how to improve this handbook?

Would you recommend this handbook to other families/
Funds Administrators using Family Managed Services?

Yes No... please tell us why not _____

Please mail or fax your comments to:

PDD Program Branch
#404, 10011 – 109 Street
Edmonton, AB T5J 3S8
FAX: 780-427-1220

OR you can fill out this form on-line at www.seniors.alberta.ca/PDD/FMS

Thank you!

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Government
of Alberta ■

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