

# Guide to Hiring Your Own Staff

*Chester County Self Determination Action Team*

*July 2007*

**HIRING YOUR OWN STAFF**  
**THROUGH THE CONSOLIDATED WAIVER AND THE PERSON FAMILY**  
**DIRECTED SUPPORT WAIVER**

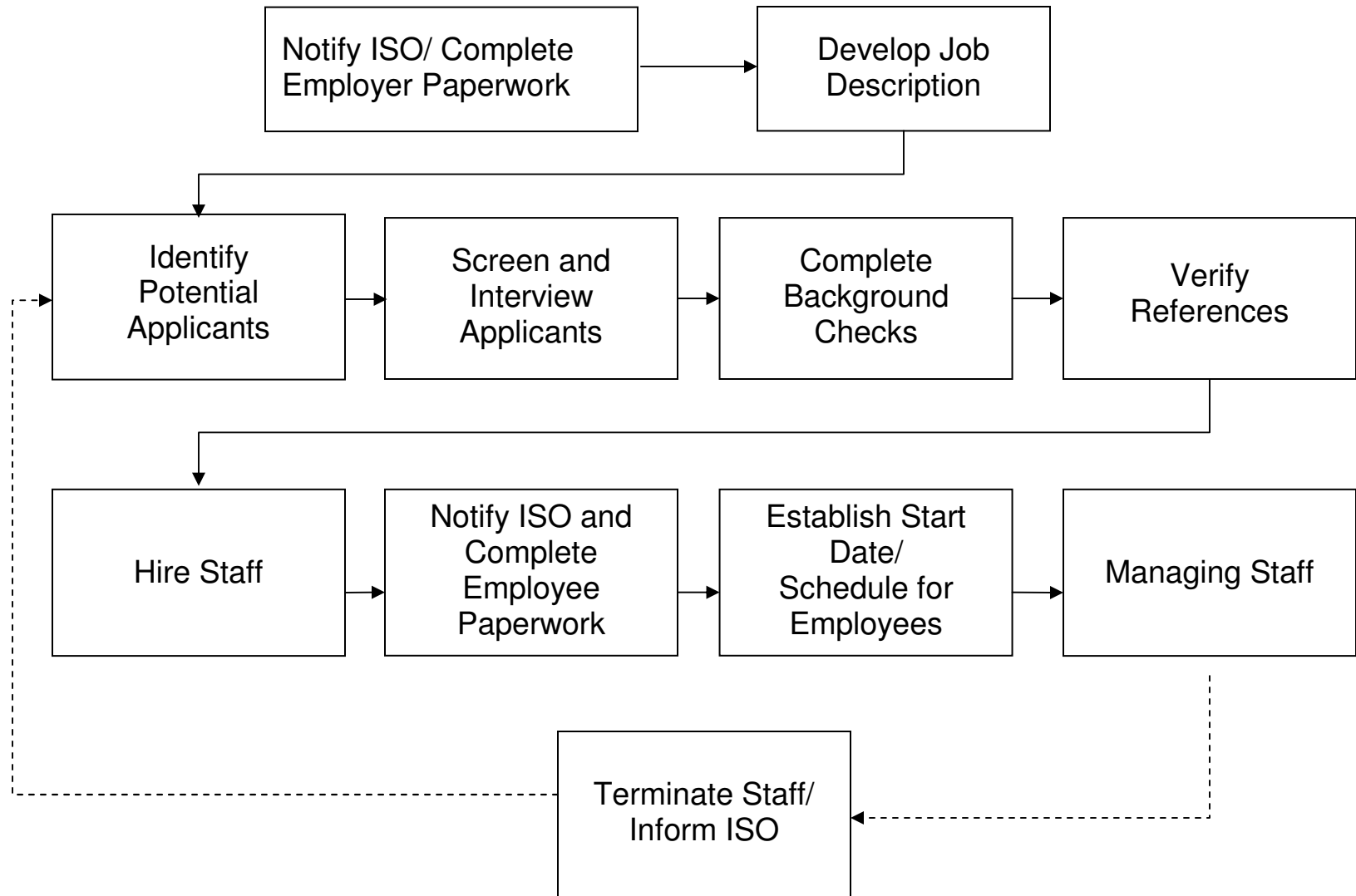
This guide is intended for individuals and families to use when they have chosen to hire their own staff for waiver eligible services. The individual must be registered with the Chester County Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation and enrolled in the Home and Community-Based waiver or the Person/Family Directed Support Waiver program. In order to pay for staff, the individual's staff must be signed up with the Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent Intermediate Service Organization (ISO). The individual's Supports Coordinator can help them with this process. The individual/family will need to provide the ISO with information regarding their employees, the hours they work and the rate of pay. The necessary forms and paperwork required of families are described in this guide.

\*Currently Tesak is the agency that contracts with Chester County MH/MR to provide ISO services. In the future, the Office of Developmental Programs will be contracting with an ISO that will be providing these services statewide.

*Please remember if you choose to hire your own staff you are considered an Employer and must follow all Federal guidelines that are required.*

This guide includes a flowchart of the Activities and appendices to show examples of forms.

# Hiring Process



# **Hiring Your Own Staff**

## **Getting Started**

- (1) Approval for home and community based waiver program.
- (2) Meet with Supports Coordinator.
- (3) Develop Individual Service Plan (ISP).
- (4) Develop a budget for services requested in the ISP.

## **Hiring Process**

- (1) Develop Job Description
- (2) Identify Potential Applicants
- (3) Screen & Interview Applicants
- (4) Complete Background Checks
- (5) Verify References
- (6) Hire Staff/Sign Letter of Agreement
- (7) Establish Start Date/Schedule for Employees
- (8) Notify ISO and Complete Paperwork
- (9) Manage Staff
- (10) Terminate Staff/Inform ISO

## **Job Description**

Although not required, it is suggested that the individual/family complete a written job description for prospective employees. Examples of what should be included on the job description are included below:

### **General –**

- To perform this job successfully, an employee must be able to: perform each essential duty satisfactorily in a caring and respectful manner, have the ability to communicate effectively with the individual and family, and have the ability to solve problems independently.
- The working hours should be listed
- Pay rate should be included. Note: pay rate must be cost –effective.
- It is suggested that the employee sign and date the job description.

### **Documentation –**

- A signed time sheet for the hours an employee works is necessary.
- When an employee is working with an individual on skills a “Progress Report” must be completed and submitted to the supports coordinator on a monthly basis.

### **\*Minimum Qualifications (Required) –**

- 18 years of age or older
- There can be additional qualifications based on specific needs of the consumer (prior experience, driver’s license, etc.).

### **\*Clearances (Required) –**

- PA criminal record clearance is required. Website: [Psp.state.pa/us](http://Psp.state.pa/us) Go to: Criminal History request online. A copy of the form is in the appendix.
- If the person receiving care is under the age of 18 a Child Abuse Clearance is also required. Website: [dpw.state.pa.us](http://dpw.state.pa.us). Go to Services for Children in PA/ChildAbuseNeglect/PA Child Abuse History Clearance Forms
- FBI clearance required if you have not been a PA resident for one year. Website: <http://www.fbi.gov/hq/cjisd/fprequest.htm>

*All clearances must be within one year of employee’s start date.*

### **Health & Safety –**

Based on the consumer’s needs consider the following: CPR training, first aid training, Universal Precautions, ability to administer medication and knowledge of side effects, knowledge of special diets, feeding and food allergies, positioning, lifting.

*\* Required for federally funded Waiver programs*

### **Daily Living Skills --**

- Provide routine care or assist in developing self help skills.
  1. Daily Care: bathing, toileting, dressing, eating, transfers, etc.
  2. Self Help skills: Meal preparation, personal hygiene, household chores, range of motion exercises, etc.

### **References**

- It is recommended to obtain several references.

## **Identify Potential Applicants**

- Newspaper advertisement
- College bulletin boards
- Recommendations from current staff
- Bulletin boards in local community settings (libraries, YMCAs, churches, schools, etc.)
- Post ad on the internet
- Sample ad in Appendix

## **Screen & Interview Applicants**

### (1) Personal Information

- Where is your home?
- Do you have a driver's license/insurance?
- What is your time availability?
- Are you presently working?
- What do you do in your free time?
- Ask about their special skills and talents.

### (2) Experience

- Have you worked with an individual with disabilities?
- Have you worked with children?
- Describe your job history.

### (3) Discuss Job responsibilities. For example: if Personal Hygiene is required describe specific tasks the individual needs assistance with.

- Describe family/individual's activities.
- Have them spend some time with your family member and observe the interaction.

### (4) Ask for a commitment (for example: 9 months).

### (5) General:

- Make them feel comfortable.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- If necessary ask them to come back and spend some more time.

### (6) Interview more than one person.

### (7) Check references thoroughly.

# Important Issues to Review with Your Employee

## **Reporting Serious Issues Related to You or Your Family Member's Health and Safety**

According to state regulations anyone who receives funds from the Office of Developmental Programs is required to report certain incidents related to the individual's health and safety to their Supports Coordinator. These reportable events are limited to abuse, neglect and death. In the event of such an occurrence the family/individual/staff should call the Supports Coordinator and make a report regarding the specifics of the situation and the outcome. Please reference the Mental Retardation Bulletin #6000-04-01, *Incident Management* for more detailed information.

## **House Rules**

When you are reviewing your house rules with your employee be clear about what information you want the employee to inform you about immediately. Always leave a name and dependable phone number in case of an emergency.

Review with the employee that they may be confronted with some challenging behaviors. Instruct them as to how you want the employee to handle situations where your family member needs to be redirected.

## **Consumer Information Sheet**

Spend some time completing a consumer information sheet. This will help the employee know more of the specifics about your family member and can also be used as a reference when you are not available. Use the consumer information sheet to list specific needs of your family member, i.e., daily schedule, likes and dislikes, favorite foods, music TV programs or videos, etc. It may also include communication methods, life skill abilities and limitations, medications and side effects. It may also explain what calms your family member down when they are upset or angry. (See Appendices for Consumer Information Sheet.)



# The Role of the ISO (Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent Intermediate Service Organization)

The ISO processes and pays the payroll; files the necessary federal, state and local taxes; and provides complete payroll records.

The ISO:

- Registers the family/individual as the employer, providing assistance in completing required forms to obtain an employer identification number for the various state and federal agencies as well as unemployment and Worker's Compensation Insurance agencies.
- Receives and processes timesheets and prepares the payroll deducting appropriate income tax, FICA, unemployment and other withholdings according to local, state and federal regulations, as well as making appropriate employer contributions.
- Distributes payroll checks according to the individual/family and the Department of Public Welfare's Policies and Procedures.
- Provides the individual/family with regular summaries of payroll and deductions made on their behalf.
- Provides the individual/family with information, orientation and training on an as needed basis related to their fiscal and payroll responsibilities as an employer.

## **The Employer's (Individual/Family's) Responsibilities**

The employer is the individual/family/or guardian. They have the freedom to recruit, interview, hire, fire and establish pay rates as well as define the duties of the person. It is the responsibility of the employer to do the following:

- Make sure that all necessary employment forms are completed and submitted to the ISO.
- Provide and submit accurate timesheets signed by both the employee and employer.
- Conform to all standards of minimum wage, overtime requirements and nondiscrimination regulations.

In order to secure an ISO the individual/family must complete the following forms:

- (1) Employer Appointment of Agent
- (2) Application for Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- (3) Local county and school district forms
- (4) Worker's Compensation form

\*In addition to the rate paid to the employee, worker's compensation and employer taxes will be paid for the employee and deducted from the individual's budget. Currently, a \$175.00 month administrative fee is paid to TeSak for Vendor/Fiscal Employer Agent Intermediary Service Organization (ISO) services. This fee is not deducted from the individual budget, but is paid through waiver administration funds. The ISO can assist with all of the necessary forms that must be submitted for both the employer and the employee to insure the payroll process adheres to all federal, state and local regulatory guidelines.

**The Employee's Responsibilities**

- Complete and submit a monthly progress report (if working on skills) on a timely basis.
  - Submit timesheets for employer's signature on a regular basis for payment.
- \* The ISO has no responsibility for the employee except in regard to payroll and payroll deductions.

## APPENDICES

- A. Sample ads
- B. Clearances and Prohibitive Offenses
- C. Wage and Tax Forms
- D. Employer's Packet
  - Duties of the ISO/Individual
  - ISO agreement form
  - Individual Habilitation Certificate
  - Sample Consumer Information Sheet
  - Sample monthly progress report
  - Provider services calendar form