

Dear Prospective Companion Employer:

As requested, information is provided below about C.A.R.E., Companion Aide Registry for the Elderly. If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Prince William Area Agency on Aging at 703-792-6374. We hope this service will be helpful to you.

C.A.R.E. is a listing of self-employed persons offering, for a fee, companionship and limited assistance with daily tasks. The registry is available to persons age 60 or older or individuals requesting it on behalf of an older person. The service is one of several sources to help locate for hire in-home workers. Services may include, but are not limited to, such things as light housekeeping, respite care, grocery shopping, meal preparation, laundry, and friendly visiting. The fee for this service is negotiated between the companion and potential employer.

Companions, for the most part, do not provide nursing care. However, there may be some companions who may have nurse's training. For more specialized home health care services, request a listing of local home health agencies from our office at 703-792-6374.

The Prince William Area Agency on Aging does not, in any way, certify, train, license or interview persons listed with C.A.R.E. It is the responsibility of the prospective employer of a companion to determine the suitability of any person listed, and to hire, give directions and discharge a companion. **(Individuals who file with C.A.R.E. remain independent contractors, and are not employees of the Prince William Area Agency on Aging or Prince William County.)**

If you hire someone from the registry, be sure to explore with him or her **who** will take responsibility for filing income with IRS and paying FICA for Social Security benefits. Check with the IRS and Social Security Administration for further details.

Sincerely,

Linda Moore, CIRS-A/D
Information and Referral Specialist

Empower, Enhance, and Enjoy Aging!

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Tips for Choosing a Companion

1. **Shop around.** Interview several individuals on the list until you find a satisfactory match.
2. **Check references.** The Prince William Area Agency on Aging does not check references of all companions. Each companion has listed three references on his/her application. It is the responsibility of the prospective employer to check references.
3. **State expectations.** Be clear about specific tasks with which you need assistance and how often it is needed. Be sure to discuss what provisions you will make for the companion, such as free meals, transportation, or room and board. What alternate arrangements will be made when a companion is sick or on vacation?
4. **Decide on hours.** Discuss with the companion the days, hours and projected length of time (i.e., three months, one year, etc.) you will need the service. Information on when companions are available is provided on the enclosed applications.
5. **Discuss fees.** Keeping in mind the type of service you are requesting, decide how much money you are willing to pay, and negotiate this with the companion. Some companions have listed the fee they charge for their assistance on the application. Also set up a schedule for when and how often payment is made.
6. **Examine compatibility.** You may want to know if the companion smokes; what their interests and hobbies are; how they cook; what previous experience they have had as a companion, etc.
7. **Hire on a trial basis.** After a trial period (about a month), evaluate with the companion the service you are receiving, and if the service the companion is providing meets your expectations and needs.

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