



S.O.S.

SENIOR OUTREACH SERVICES

IN-HOME HELP – WE’RE YOUR BACK UP

Many older adults and their families feel that staying in their own home for as long as possible is the most desirable option. Achieving this goal may require putting additional support, such as a professional caregiver, in place. Caregivers can provide a wide variety of assistance including:

- Assistance with bathing, dressing and personal care
- Shopping and cooking
- Laundry and housekeeping
- Errands or accompanying to appointments
- Companionship and monitoring
- More highly trained caregivers or licensed vocational nurses can also assist with some health procedures, medications, etc.

AGENCY VS. INDEPENDENT

Caregivers can be hired two different ways, either independently or through an agency. Each way has its advantages.

Considerations when hiring independently:

- Most independent caregivers are hired by word of mouth through personal recommendation.
- You may also choose to contact a registry, such as JFS A+ Personal Care, which charges a small fee and conducts fingerprinting and background checks.
- Generally, this route is less costly than going through an agency.
- When you hire an independent caregiver, YOU are the employer, and as such you are responsible for taxes, reporting, and liability.
- Unless you use a registry such as JFS A+ Personal Care, you are responsible for screening candidates and checking references – if your relative has some cognitive impairment, he or she may be particularly at risk and great care must be taken with your final selection.

Hiring through an agency– things you need to know:

- When you hire through an agency, the agency is the employer and will pay all taxes as well as carry liability insurance and/or a bond.
- Typically, agency caregivers receive training and have had a background check including fingerprinting.
- If for any reason the caregiver does not work out, the agency will usually send a replacement. They may also provide a pool to choose from, so you can interview different caregivers before selecting.
- Generally, hourly fees are higher, but vary from agency to agency, so it is wise to shop around.

Your S.O.S. Care Manager can help you choose which route makes most sense for you and help you select the caregiver, if you wish. Our staff is highly experienced in this area and knows how to identify the best caregivers to suit your needs.

For more information on employer responsibilities, what to look for in a caregiver, and what to ask in an interview, you may also refer to www.caring.com.

This information is brought to you by Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles, the community’s leading agency in providing care for the elderly. To learn more call: **(323)932-0316** or visit www.jfsla.org/sos.