

# CHAP

COMMUNITY HELPERS  
FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

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Part of: *respiteservices.com*

## please note:



This guide is not financial or legal advice. It is intended to provide general information to help you learn more about the contracting with an independent provider. For legal, financial or other professional advice, contact a lawyer, accountant or other appropriate professional. People who hire Providers are required to follow all the laws and rules related to the employment process. If there is any conflict between the laws and this guide, the laws will prevail. Respiteservices.com and the CHAP program is not responsible or liable for any problems that come up when people employ or contract with their own Providers.

## Is this information for me?

Are you a person with a developmental disability in Ontario? Do you get money from a job, a direct funding program, the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) or another source? Would you like to use some of that money to hire someone to support you and your life in the community? Are you a friend or family member of someone who wants to hire their own provider?

If you answered yes to these questions, this guide may help you or someone you know find a support provider. Contracting with a provider may give you more choice and control. But contracting with a provider also involves many responsibilities or things you'll have to do. For example, when someone starts providing support for you, you are responsible for training, paying and managing that person.

As you read through this guide, consider the responsibilities carefully. Contracting with a provider can be complicated. This guide does not provide all the information you need, but can introduce you to the responsibilities and help you get started.

If you want to contract with a provider, you may want to talk to a family member, friend or someone else you trust. They can give you advice and help you. Professionals, such as lawyers and accountants, may also be able to give you advice and help you get the information you need.

# What is in this manual?



This manual is divided into sections to act as a resource for families, caregivers or individuals who wish to find an independent service provider for support and relief in their home and daily life.

Here is a list of the sections in the guide:

<b>What is the CHAP Program?</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>How does the CHAP Program work?</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>How can I afford a CHAP service provider?</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>How do I interview people?</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>How do I decide who to work with?</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>How do I make an agreement?</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Employee or Self-employed Status</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>What do I do when my provider starts working?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>How can I build a relationship with my provider?</b>	<b>16</b>

# What is the CHAP Program?

The Community Helpers for Active Participation (CHAP) Program connects individuals with disabilities and CHAP independent service providers through an online registry. A service provider can assist with part-time caregiver relief, one-to-one work in the community and programming designed to build new skills.

When a caregiver requests assistance from the CHAP Program, information about the family, the individual, and their needs are collected. Following this, a profile of each CHAP provider who matches the request is sent to the caregiver. The caregiver can then select, meet with, and sign an agreement with a service provider to work within their household.

New service providers are added to the database frequently. Since many are university students or recent graduates looking for an opportunity to get practical experience, their skills and availability may vary, and they should not be considered trained therapists. All CHAP providers have:

- submitted a resume and application
- a Police Reference Check
- 2 verified references, and
- attended a meeting to become active on the CHAP Database.

**The CHAP Program is part of *respiteservices.com*.**

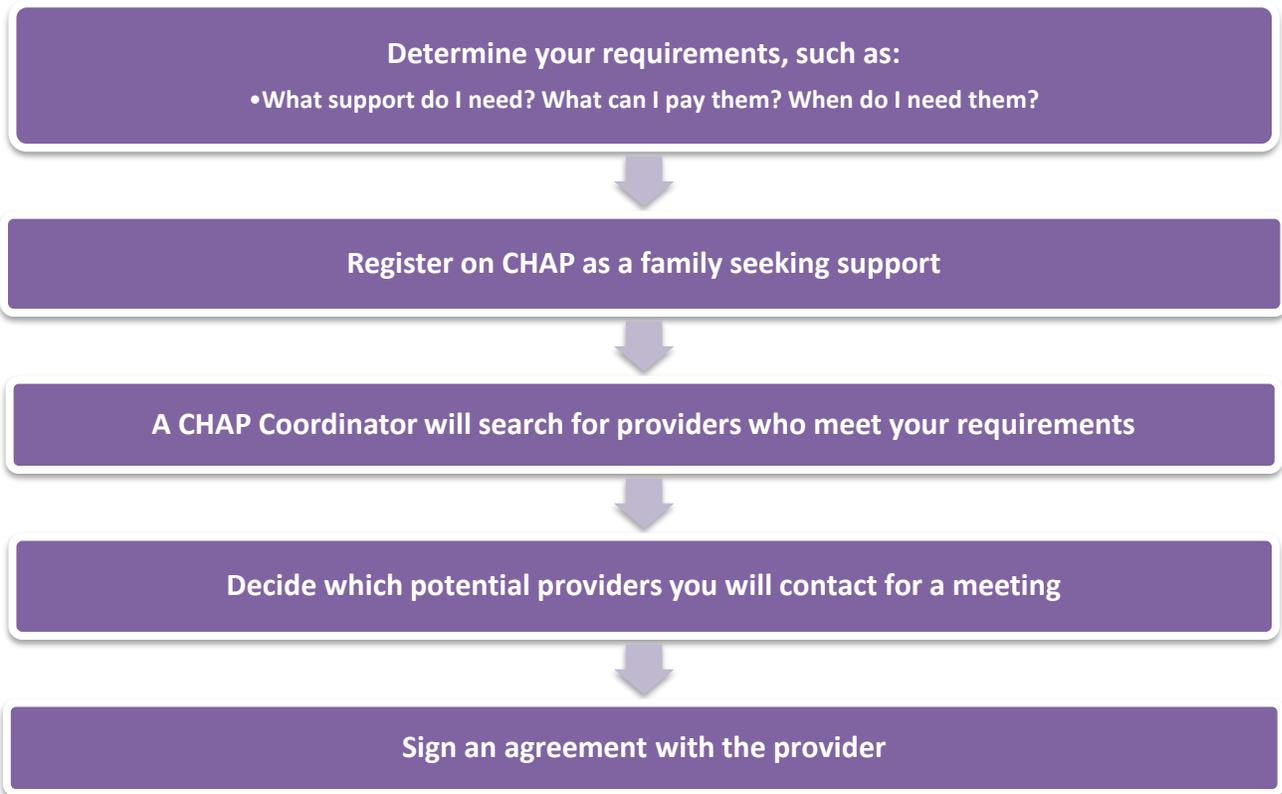
*respiteservices.com* consists of agencies funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington (CMHA WW) and Family Counselling and Support Services (FC&SS) agencies are collaborating to develop a more dynamic respite network for both children and adults in Wellington County. The programs involved in this collaboration are the Family Support Options Service (from CMHA WW) and Access Information and Referral (from FC&SS).

***The guiding principles of respiteservices.com are:***

- *To develop a comprehensive respite system in Wellington County.*
- *To develop and maintain a coherent access process for families of children and adults requiring respite options.*
- *To facilitate respite options for individuals that match their identified needs.*
- *To help with service providers to advocate for appropriate service options to meet the needs identified.*

# How does the CHAP Program work?

To use the CHAP Program to find an independent service provider, these simple steps can be followed:



Once you have registered with the CHAP Program, the CHAP Coordinator will search for service providers who meet your requirements. New providers are continuously added to the database, but wait times will vary depending on the support you need. After receiving profiles that match your requirements, you can decide which providers to meet with. If you find a service provider who can provide the support you need, create an agreement containing the provider's duties and set a meeting to sign the agreement.

There is no fee to use CHAP Program services. Because we cannot guarantee a match between a CHAP provider and an individual needing support, we encourage caregivers to also look for a provider through schools, churches, libraries, and community centres. If a caregiver recruits their own provider, they can have the person screened by the CHAP Coordinator.

## **Important Notes about the CHAP Program:**

- It is the responsibility of the caregiver to call, meet, contract with, arrange payment and supervise the CHAP provider. The CHAP Program does not provide supervision.
- Although the CHAP Program does some screening of the potential service providers, we do recommend that families also complete their own screening such as references and reviewing a copy of the provider's police check.
- CHAP providers are not CHAP Program employees. Payment to the CHAP provider is organized by the family who contracts them. The CHAP Program will not assume any responsibility for disagreements over fees, payments or services provided. Any problems in this regard must be resolved between the CHAP provider and the family.
- Some parts of the Wellington County are difficult to recruit service providers for, and some requests are difficult to fill due to the travel time or the number of support hours requested. We appreciate your patience in finding the right provider for your family.
- The CHAP Program Coordinator recruits on an on-going basis and a CHAP service provider will be connected with you as soon as they are available following the family request.
- The Ministry of Community and Social Services and Ministry of Children and Youth Services states that independent service providers be 18 years of age or older. If funding is from other sources, there may be other eligibility requirements.

# How can I afford a CHAP service provider?



These are the funding programs available to caregivers or individuals seeking an independent service provider:

- Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD)
- Special Services at Home (SSAH), and
- The Passport Program.
- ODSP

## **Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD)**

The Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities Program helps caregivers with some of the costs of caring for a child with a disability. If a child is under 18, lives at home and has a severe disability, a caregiver can be eligible to receive help. Caregiver can get between \$25 and \$440 a month depending on:

- the family's income
- the severity of the disability
- the difficulties the child has with walking, communicating and caring for themselves, and
- the extra costs related to the disability.

The program can help pay for costs besides an independent support provider, such as wheelchair repairs, hearing aids and eyeglasses. To apply, you will have to contact your regional Ministry of Children and Youth Services office and ask for an application form. To find your regional office, please turn to page 6. After completing the form, return it to the regional office and your application will be reviewed. You will receive a letter saying if you qualify for the program and how much funding you will receive.

## **Special Services at Home (SSAH)**

The Special Services at Home Program helps caregivers who are caring for a child with a developmental or physical disability. If the child lives in Ontario, needs more help than their family can provide, and is not being assisted by a residential service, the caregiver can receive funding depending on:

- the type and amount of service the child needs
- what other help is available in the community, and
- what kind of support the family already receives.

The program can pay for someone to help the child learn new skills or provide caregiver relief in day-to-day care. To apply, you will have to complete an application form and attach a medical statement or psychological assessment explaining the disability, the services needed, and the cost. The completed application can then be mailed to your nearest regional office of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. To download the application or discover your regional office, please see the box at the bottom of this page.

## **Passport Program**

The Passport Program helps adults 18 years or older with a developmental disability to participate in their community, get support from a service provider or give a break to their caregiver. It is run by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, and can provide funding up to \$35,000 annually. To apply for the services, individuals must contact Developmental Services Ontario to complete an application package and discover if they are eligible for the program. Please see the box at the bottom of the page for more information on the Ministry of Community and Social Services and Developmental Services Ontario.

- **To find your regional Ministry of Children and Youth Services office:**  
<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/about/regionaloffices.aspx>
- **To access the Special Services at Home application form:**  
<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/specialneeds/specialservices.aspx>
- **To learn more about the Passport Program:**  
<http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/en/mcscs/programs/developmental/serviceSupport/passport.aspx>
- **To apply for support with Developmental Disabilities Ontario:**  
<http://www.dsontario.ca/applying-for-services-supports>

## How do I meet providers?



Once the CHAP Coordinator has provided you with names of potential service providers, you need to meet with them to find the best people to provide support for your family.

### What do I do before the meeting?

Before you connect and meet with providers, you need to:

- decide on the maximum length of the meeting
- call the potential service provider to schedule a meeting time that is convenient for you and the CHAP provider
- discuss with potential service providers to see if they are a fit for the support you need, the availability you want and the rate of pay you are wanting to pay only meet with those providers who fit your requirements.
- prepare questions, and
- have details of the support you would need the provider to give.

### How do I prepare questions?

To figure out what to ask the potential service providers, you need to look at what abilities and qualifications you want the CHAP provider to have. Ask questions that will help you find out if the potential service provider has the right experience, skills and attitude. Some questions you should ask are:

- Can you tell me about yourself?
- Can you expand on your experience working with children/adolescents/adults?
- Why are you interested in providing respite care services?
- Describe your strengths and weaknesses.
- Why are you the right person to provide this service?
- What would you do if we disagreed about something?

- If the person you are caring for gets upset, how would you handle the situation?
- If the person you are caring for has to be taken to the hospital for an emergency, what steps would you take?
- What would you do if the person you are caring for did not respond to a request you made?
- What hours are you able to work? Are there specific times when you are unable to work?
- How do you manage difficult behaviours?
- Are you willing to take the person you are caring for out to activities?
- Describe a difficult problem you have had to handle with an individual. How did you handle it?
- Do you have any special training or experience you would like me to know about?
- Do you have a valid driver's license? Would you use your own vehicle when working?

## **What to do when you meet the provider?**

At the meeting, you are the lead and responsible for guiding the conversation. If you are unsure of what to do, here is a step-by-step list of how to question a potential service provider:

1. Welcome the potential service provider and introduce yourself
2. Review the person's skills and experience with them
3. Review your requirements for the position and ask if they have any questions
4. Ask your prepared questions and take notes on the answers you get
5. Ask the person if they have any questions
6. Thank the person for coming and tell them when you will be in touch with your decision

## How do I decide who is a fit?



After you have finished meeting with people, you will need to consider your potential service providers. You should look at the notes you made during the meetings and decide which answers are closest to what you are looking for. If someone else took part in the meeting, you can ask their opinion about the people you met together.

Before making a decision, you should contact references and look at the Criminal Record Check document they provided. While the CHAP Program does check references, you should check them for yourself to make sure the people you met with have the skills and experience you need. References can be either personal or work related:

- Personal references can include an adult friend, a priest, a teacher or a neighbor
- Work-related references may include employers or a family that the applicant has provided care for in the past

## What should I ask references?

When you call a reference, introduce yourself and explain why you are calling. After your questions are answered, thank the person for their time. Here are some questions you should ask a reference:

- What is your relationship with the applicant?
- How long have you known this person?
- Describe the position you are recruiting for and ask the referee if he/she has any concerns about the person's ability to perform such duties
- Would you work with the person again?
- Is the applicant reliable? Punctual? Honest?
- Is there anything else you would like to comment on?

# How do I make an agreement?



After you have decided which service provider you are going to work with, contact the person to ask if they are still interested in providing support and if they would be willing to meet to discuss the position. It would be best to meet at your house because you can show them where they will be providing support. During the meeting, you will need to have them sign a service agreement.

## What is the service agreement?

The service agreement outlines responsibilities specific to both you and the CHAP provider. The agreement should be signed at the meeting and before the service provider starts providing their service to you. Having an agreement will protect you if there are any conflicts about your separate duties and responsibilities later on.

## What do I have to put in the service agreement?

Service agreements include details like the work schedule, if there is a trial period, rate of pay, supervision, length of the agreement, information about taxes and government rules, and how the service can be ended. You may want to talk to a lawyer about making an agreement to make sure you obey employment laws and human rights. Here are some important sections:

- The schedule (What do you want the service provider to do? Where? How? Is this time period for developmental programming, social skills training, just plain respite, or all of the above? Indicate your expectations and ask the service provider if they have any questions or suggestions.)
- Rate of pay (The rate of pay should be established at the first meeting with a service provider. Be sure to include how you will pay and when you will pay. It is up to you to decide how much you will give them for their services, but you also must obey Ontario's Ministry of Labour's laws regarding minimum wage.)

- **Trial Period (Many families try out their new provider for a short period of time, such as three months, to see if they are a good fit. The service provider is paid the agreed upon rate during this period and, at the end of the trial, you can decide if you want to keep them or let them go.)**
- **There are a number of factors that would be considered to determine weather a service provider is an employee or independent contractor. No single factor will make the case it will be determined on a number of things. Families are encouraged to obtain legal advice before entering contractual relations with any service provider.**
- **Length of Agreement will be determined by the family and service provider. The average length of an agreement is one year. Other information, such as how the service provider can end the agreement and how much notice they have to give, should be included.**
- **The service provider, upon agreement of service, should agree to maintain confidentiality regarding disclosure of personal information about individuals participating in the CHAP Program.**
- **Transporting Individuals. You may request that a service provider drive or use their own vehicle to provide support. If the CHAP provider agrees, make sure they have a valid driver's license, a safe vehicle, and insurance. You are responsible for the cost of transportation when the provider requires a vehicle to complete their duties.**

- **To find out more about the Ministry of Labour's minimum wage laws:**

<http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/es/pubs/guide/minwage.php>

- **To find out how to pay wages:**

<http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/es/pubs/guide/paywage.php>

# Employee or Self-employed Status



Making employment contracts and agreements for service providers can be complicated. The information you include in a contract or agreement can depend on the employment status of the provider.

There are two types of employment status:

1. employee, and
2. self-employed.

Whether your provider is an employee or is self-employed can depend on many factors.

For example, if you control when your provider works for you and what your provider does for you, your provider could be an employee. Self-employed providers have more control over what they do. Self-employed providers usually can work whenever they want to work. Self-employed providers could also take the money you are paying them and hire someone else to do the work.

A lawyer can help you decide if a provider is an employee or is self-employed. Consulting a lawyer could cost you money. If you can't afford to pay for legal costs, Legal Aid Ontario gives low-income people access to a range of legal services. For more information about Legal Aid Ontario, visit its website: [www.legalaid.on.ca](http://www.legalaid.on.ca).

Also, the Canada Revenue Agency created a guide to help people find out if a provider is an employee or is self-employed. You can read the guide online [www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/rc4110/rc4110-e.html](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/rc4110/rc4110-e.html).

# Sample Agreement

## AGREEMENT FOR SERVICES

Between

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian

And

\_\_\_\_\_

Independent Service Provider

The Independent Service Provider (ISP) agrees to provide services as a respite provider to \_\_\_\_\_ and carry out caregiver relief, as well as developmental programming, which may include social skill training, orientation and mobility training, behaviour management, recreation and leisure time pursuits, community integration, personal care and supervision, and/or other related duties as required. These services will be provided for a specified and agreed upon time period, beginning: \_\_\_\_\_ and ending \_\_\_\_\_.

The agreed upon rate is: \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

It is agreed that any damage to special equipment incurred during the time the ISP is working will not be the responsibility of the ISP and proper use will be demonstrated.

It is agreed that this is a service agreement for independent service and the provider shall acknowledge responsibility for declaring this income related to this agreement and paying all statutory deductions in accordance with Canada Revenue Agency.

If considered eligible to enter a service agreement with families, the ISP agrees to keep confidential any or all information about individuals and/or families and is compliant with current provincial privacy legislation (Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)).

The parties have agreed to the foregoing terms and conditions on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of the month of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Independent Service Provider

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# What do I do when my provider starts supporting?



When your CHAP provider starts providing their services, you will need to provide them with information about your family routines and any important information they will need.

## What should be included?

- The name of the place you can be reached at, the phone number and the expected time of your return
- The phone number of a neighbour or relative to call for assistance if you cannot be reached in an emergency
- A tour of the house, pointing out and explaining telephones, door locks, security systems, the thermostat, circuit breakers, water shut-off, and the location of a flashlight
- Medical information, including allergies, medical conditions and the administration of medications
- Review of special instructions and equipment/adaptive devices
- Knowledge of your family rules, such as disciplining, television viewing, stereo and phone use, and visitors to your home
- Meal instructions, snacks, and feeding schedules or food sensitivities
- Location and instructions for clothing
- Information about routines and needs, such as stories, teeth care, bathing, nightlights, and bedtime
- Suggestions for activities
- Homework and chores
- Information about any family pets

# How can I build a relationship with my provider?



Once you have chosen a service provider, it is important to establish a good relationship with them. Here are some tips that can help you build and maintain a good relationship with your service provider:

- Identify and discuss problems as soon as they arise. Be prepared to negotiate a solution to the problem.
- Keep communication open and ongoing. You may want to maintain a communication book to keep everyone informed and be responsive to any suggestions.
- Discuss specific strengths and needs of the individual requiring care and any strategies used to support him/her.
- For quality programming or therapy services, invite the CHAP provider to accompany you to a therapy session to observe the therapist at work with the individual requiring care. In this environment, the CHAP provider can ask the therapist questions and implement ideas under the watchful eyes of an expert. This also allows you to observe the CHAP provider in action.
- Discuss activities, any costs associated with activities and travel expenses with the provider. A service provider is not expected to pay for activity fees or travel during the time he/she is providing support. Many places in the community offer discounts, on entrance fees and activities, to support providers or individuals with a disability.
- Ensure service providers have clear direction on proper use of any communication aids, assistive devices or equipment.