



Personal Care Attendant (PCA) Policy

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Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended (ADA AA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. To participate in campus life, some students may require the assistance of a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) to support activities of daily living, including but not limited to dressing, bathing, feeding, transfers, laundry, and errands.

Because PCA services are personal in nature, it is the student's sole responsibility to follow the housing accommodation request process (outlined below), and to hire, train, supervise, and pay for their PCA.

Securing a PCA

PCAs are typically secured through licensed and insured medical or home care agencies but may also be hired privately. To support an independent college experience, students are strongly encouraged to hire a PCA who is not a family member or close friend. However, we recognize that in some cases, especially when other options are limited, a family member may be the most appropriate or available choice. In those situations, students must work with the Housing and Residential Experience Center (HREC) to request an exception to the residence hall access policy, and OAS will assist with that process.

Residence Hall Access

WPI may grant a student's PCA access to their residence hall and assigned room if needed, pending the successful completion of a background check. If the PCA is not approved for access, they must be escorted by someone who meets the HREC [guest policy requirements](#).

Statement on Family Members:

HREC policy does not permit residence hall access for family members. While discouraged, students who wish to hire a family member as a PCA must seek an exception from HREC. The Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) will support students through this process.

Student Responsibilities

The student is responsible for completing the following steps before PCA services can be approved or begin. WPI may delay or deny an accommodation request for a PCA if these steps are not completed in a timely manner:



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1. Submit a housing accommodation request to OAS with appropriate documentation to establish the need for a PCA.
2. At least four (4) weeks prior to the start of the term, submit a signed PCA Agreement for each PCA who requires card access to the residence hall to Residential Services.
 - All PCAs requesting access must complete a background check.
 - WPI staff cannot provide interim PCA support. If family members assist temporarily, they must follow the guest policy outlined in the housing contract.
3. Train the PCA on responsibilities, expectations, and timecard submission.
4. Create a contract with the PCA that:
 - Outlines the agreed-upon services; and
 - States clearly that the student (not WPI) is responsible for the PCA's conduct, safety, and compliance with all WPI policies while on campus.
5. Develop a backup plan in case the regular PCA is unavailable or sick.
6. Ensure timely payment to the PCA for services rendered.
7. Notify OAS of any personnel changes and submit an updated PCA Agreement, which will be shared with HREC.

PCA Responsibilities

PCAs are expected to comply with all WPI policies and complete the following requirements. Failure to do so may result in loss of access or removal from campus:

1. Complete all background check paperwork in a timely manner.
2. Submit a photo (against a white background) to OAS for card access.
3. Deliver services according to the agreed-upon contract with the student.
4. Follow all WPI rules and policies, including:
 - Using card access only for the approved individual (not sharing access with others).
 - Accessing residence halls only during approved hours while actively providing care.
 - Avoiding any behavior that could fundamentally alter academic services or activities.
5. Refrain from communicating with WPI faculty or staff on the student's behalf.



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6. Immediately report lost or stolen access cards to Campus Police.
7. Sign a PCA Agreement annually.

WPI's Responsibilities

1. Review accommodation requests and determine whether the need for a PCA is supported through appropriate documentation, in accordance with federal law and WPI policy.
2. Coordinate with campus partners, including HREC and Campus Police, to facilitate housing access and security-related needs (e.g., background checks, ID card access, parking passes) for approved PCA(s).
3. Provide guidance and support to students throughout the PCA accommodation process via OAS.
4. Protect the privacy and rights of all students while maintaining a safe and respectful campus environment.
5. Monitor compliance with PCA-related policies. WPI reserves the right to remove access or deny PCA services if policies are violated, in accordance with applicable laws.
6. WPI does not provide or pay for PCA services. Students are responsible for identifying, hiring, supervising, and compensating their PCA(s). WPI staff cannot serve in a PCA capacity under any circumstance.