

Personal Care Attendant (PCA) Policy

Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Amendment Acts of 2008 (ADA AA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In order to fully participate in campus life, some students may require assistance of a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) to aid a student in completing activities of daily living, including but not limited to dressing, bathing, feeding, transfers, laundry, and errands. The services that a PCA provides are of personal nature and, therefore, it is the student's sole responsibility to hire, train, supervise and pay for such PCA services, in accordance with the housing accommodations process outlined below. PCA services are typically secured either through licensed and insurance bonded medical/nursing agencies, but may also be hired privately. In order for students to have the same independent experiences as peers, we usually recommend that students hire a PCA that is not a family member or close friend.

Student's Responsibility:

The student is solely responsible for following the below process prior to hiring a PCA. Should the student not follow this process, WPI may decline an accommodation request for a PCA until such time as the student completes this process. It is within WPI's authority to decline a request for a PCA, subject to applicable laws and regulations. The student must:

1. Submit a housing accommodation request with appropriate documentation to establish the need and gain approval from the housing accommodation review committee for a PCA.
2. Develop an advertisement and job description for requested PCA services.
 - Should assistance be needed in advertising the PCA position through the Office of Accessibility Services, the student may submit a copy of the advertisement to accessibilityservices@wpi.edu.
3. Train the PCA on their responsibilities, expectations, and your planned payment process.
4. Develop a contract with PCAs that, at minimum (i) outlines the services rendered prior to the start of the need for services; and (ii) contains appropriate language that the student (not WPI) is responsible for the safety, health, behavior, and actions of the PCA while on campus or at a WPI-owned property (including ensuring the PCA abides by all applicable WPI policies, rules and regulations).
5. Establish a contingency plan should the regularly scheduled PCA be unavailable or sick.
6. Provide payment to PCA for services rendered.
7. At least four (4) weeks prior to the start of the term, share a signed copy of WPI's PCA Agreement for the PCA(s) who will require access (WPI ID Card & room key) to the residence hall, with Residential Services. Typically, Residential Services can grant access a maximum of three (3) PCAs per student.
 - For security purposes, any individual requesting access to a residence hall to provide PCA services will be subject to a background check.
 - Should PCAs not be identified prior to the start of WPI-related activities (including but not limited to early arrival programs, orientation programs, and the start of term), WPI staff are not authorized to provide PCA services on an interim basis. If family members provide PCA services on an interim basis, they must follow the guest policy as outlined in the WPI housing & dining contract.
8. Inform the Office of Accessibility Services and Residential Services of any personnel changes that occur and submit an updated PCA agreement.

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PCA's Responsibility:

The PCA is solely responsible for the below items. Should the PCA not follow this process, WPI may decline an accommodation request until such time as the PCA completes these items. It is within WPI's authority to decline a request for a PCA, subject to applicable laws and regulations. The PCA must:

1. Fill out necessary background check documents (sent via email) in a timely manner.
2. Send a photo of themselves against a white background to Residential Services for creation of a WPI ID.
3. Provide personal care services in accordance with the pre-established contract between the student and PCA (see point #4, above, under "Student's Responsibilities").
4. Uphold [WPI policies](#), rules, and regulations as expected of all WPI community members. PCAs who have violated this expectation will be asked to leave campus regardless of any established contractual agreement made between the student and the PCA. This includes ensuring that:
 - Issued access is only used by the approved recipient and not shared with any other PCA(s), family members, or unauthorized individuals to grant access to the Residence Hall;
 - Issued access is only intended for use during agreed-upon hours in which personal care assistance is being provided; and
 - Academic services, programs or activities are not fundamentally altered.
5. Refrain from contact with or asking questions of faculty, staff, or others on behalf of the student.
6. Immediately report any lost or unaccounted for WPI ID and/ or room keys to Campus Police.
7. Sign PCA agreement annually for services that will be provided.

WPI's Responsibility:

1. Reviewing and determining approval for a student's need for a PCA. It is within WPI's authority to decline an accommodation request for a PCA until such time as all of the above processes are completed by the student and the PCA.
2. Assist in advertising student's PCA on-campus when requested.
3. In conjunction with Campus Police, provide parking passes a student's PCA(s), if needed.
4. Provide the PCA with a WPI ID and/ or room key, as needed.