



SMITH PREMIER

HOME CARE

WHERE COMFORT MEETS QUALITY CARE

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Company-Wide Policies and Direct-Care Requirements

This handbook applies to Smith Premier Home Care, LLC employees, including administrative and management personnel and, where specifically stated, direct-care employees such as CNA and PCA staff. It operates together with the agency's detailed policies, job descriptions, service plans, training materials, and procedures.

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1. Handbook Purpose, Scope and At-Will Employment

This handbook provides general employment expectations and summarizes key workplace policies and employee rights. It applies company-wide unless a section is specifically identified as applying only to direct-care employees.

Employment with Smith Premier Home Care, LLC is at will to the extent permitted by applicable law. This means that either the employee or Smith Premier Home Care, LLC may end the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause and with or without advance notice, subject to applicable law. Nothing in this handbook, an agency policy, a verbal statement, a schedule, an assignment, or a disciplinary practice creates a contract of employment or guarantees employment for any particular duration.

No employee or representative has authority to alter at-will status except through a written agreement expressly doing so and signed by an authorized representative of Smith Premier Home Care, LLC. The agency may use coaching, warnings, retraining, reassignment, suspension, or other corrective action when appropriate, but it is not required to follow progressive discipline in every situation.

2. Agency Overview and Employment Classifications

Smith Premier Home Care, LLC is an Illinois Home Services Agency providing non-medical in-home support. The agency may employ direct-care personnel and administrative and management personnel.

Direct-Care Employees

Direct-care personnel may include Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA), Personal Care Aides (PCA), and other individuals who meet applicable home-services-worker requirements. Their Smith Premier duties are non-medical and are limited to authorized services in the client's service plan.

Administrative and Management Personnel

Administrative and management personnel may include the Agency Manager/Administrator, Alternate Agency Manager, payroll, billing, scheduling, intake, office administration, quality/compliance, and other non-direct-care business or management functions. Direct-care-specific requirements apply to these personnel only when their actual duties include direct client services or otherwise make the requirement applicable.

3. Equal Employment Opportunity and Illinois Employee Rights

Smith Premier Home Care, LLC provides equal employment opportunity and prohibits unlawful discrimination in recruitment, hiring, assignment, compensation, scheduling, training, promotion, discipline, termination, and other terms and conditions of employment.

- Employment decisions will be based on legitimate, consistently applied, job-related qualifications, performance, experience, and operational needs.
- The agency prohibits unlawful discrimination and harassment based on any status protected by applicable federal, Illinois, or local law.
- Employees have the right to be free from unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment, to file a charge with the appropriate government agency, and to request reasonable accommodations when required by law.
- Retaliation is prohibited for making or supporting a good-faith complaint, participating in an investigation or proceeding, requesting an accommodation, or otherwise exercising a protected right.

Employees may contact the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) for information regarding discrimination, sexual harassment, reasonable accommodation, retaliation, and filing a charge. The Illinois Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Helpline is 1-877-236-7703.

4. Sexual Harassment, Retaliation and Annual Training

Sexual harassment is prohibited. It includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, written, or visual conduct of a sexual nature when the conduct affects employment, is used as a basis for an employment decision, substantially interferes with work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

- Examples may include unwanted touching; repeated unwanted requests for dates; sexual jokes, comments, gestures, messages, images, or innuendo; comments about a person's body or sexual activity; or offering or threatening employment consequences in connection with sexual conduct.
- Harassment may involve supervisors, coworkers, clients, client representatives, vendors, contractors, or other persons encountered through work.
- An employee may report a concern verbally or in writing to the Agency Manager/Administrator or, when appropriate, the Alternate Agency Manager. The employee is not required to confront the accused person first.

- The agency will review complaints promptly and fairly and may take interim or corrective action as appropriate.
- Retaliation for reporting, participating in an investigation, or exercising protected rights is prohibited.

Employees must complete sexual harassment prevention training at least annually as required by Illinois law and agency policy. The agency will document completion.

5. Reasonable Accommodation

Smith Premier Home Care, LLC will consider reasonable accommodations as required by applicable law, including accommodations related to disability, pregnancy, childbirth or related conditions, and sincerely held religious practices. Employees should contact the Agency Manager/Administrator. If the request concerns that individual or the employee is uncomfortable reporting there, the employee may contact the Alternate Agency Manager. The agency will engage in the legally required process and will not retaliate against an employee for requesting a lawful accommodation.

6. Hiring, Screening and General Onboarding

All employees must complete applicable employment and onboarding documents and satisfy lawful screening, eligibility, training, and job-specific requirements before performing duties that require such clearance. Requirements vary by position.

Direct-care employees are subject to the additional screening, registry, health, training, competency, and assignment-specific requirements described in the Direct-Care Employee Requirements section.

7. General Workplace Conduct and Professional Standards

- Maintain professional, respectful communication with clients, families, coworkers, management, vendors, and the public.
- Perform assigned duties honestly and accurately and comply with applicable agency policies and lawful instructions.
- Do not falsify time, payroll, service, personnel, training, or other agency records.
- Do not engage in theft, fraud, threats, intimidation, violence, harassment, retaliation, or serious safety violations.
- Do not report to work impaired by alcohol, cannabis, illegal drugs, misused medication, or another substance that prevents safe performance.
- Personal cell-phone use must not interfere with work responsibilities, safety, privacy, or client supervision.
- Employees who work in client homes must comply with agency dress, identification, fragrance, footwear, and professional-boundary expectations.

8. Attendance, Scheduling and Call-Offs

Employees are expected to report to scheduled work on time and remain for the authorized work period unless directed otherwise. When the need for an absence is foreseeable, employees should provide notice as required by the applicable leave policy and as early as reasonably possible.

For an unforeseeable absence, the employee must notify Smith Premier as soon as practicable. When circumstances reasonably permit, employees are expected to provide at least two hours' notice before the scheduled shift or assignment. An emergency that makes advance notice impossible must be reported as soon as reasonably possible.

Employees must notify Smith Premier management through the designated agency process rather than relying solely on notice to a client or coworker. Employees may not arrange their own substitutes or exchange client assignments without agency approval. A seven-minute grace period applies under agency attendance procedures; repeated lateness, early departure, missed work, or failure to follow reasonable notification procedures may result in corrective action, subject to legally protected leave and other applicable rights.

9. Timekeeping, Payroll Records and EVV

Employees must accurately record all compensable time worked. Working off the clock and falsifying time or payroll records are prohibited. Employees must promptly report missed punches, incorrect entries, or system problems so records can be corrected.

When Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) applies to a direct-care assignment, employees must use the approved system to record required visit information. EVV may verify the date, time, location, worker, client, and services provided. Required service notes, timesheets, client signatures, and related documentation must be truthful, accurate, and timely.

10. Paid Leave and Other Legally Protected Leave

Smith Premier Home Care, LLC provides paid leave required by the law applicable to an employee's covered work location. Because employees may work in different Illinois jurisdictions, the applicable accrual rate, waiting period, permitted use, carryover, notice rules, and other requirements may differ.

Illinois Paid Leave for All Workers Act - When Applicable

For employees covered by the Illinois Paid Leave for All Workers Act, paid leave accrues at a minimum rate of one hour for every 40 hours worked, up to the applicable annual statutory limit. Accrual begins when employment begins, and accrued leave generally becomes available for use after 90 days. Covered paid leave may be used for any reason, and the agency will not require an employee to disclose the reason or provide documentation establishing the reason for the leave.

Cook County - When Applicable

For employees covered by the Cook County Paid Leave Ordinance, the agency will provide paid leave in accordance with the County's applicable accrual, use, carryover, notice, and recordkeeping requirements.

City of Chicago - When Applicable

For employees covered by the City of Chicago Paid Leave and Paid Sick and Safe Leave Ordinance, the agency will maintain and administer the required leave categories according to Chicago law. Chicago-covered work may be subject to different accrual and eligibility rules than work performed elsewhere.

Request and Notice Procedures

For foreseeable use of statutory paid leave, employees should provide up to seven calendar days' advance notice when permitted by the law that applies. When the need is not foreseeable, notice must be provided as soon as practicable. Employees are not required to find their own replacement as a condition of using protected statutory paid leave.

Smith Premier may maintain reasonable written procedures for requesting leave and may address operational needs only to the extent permitted by applicable law. Protected use of statutory leave will not be treated as a negative factor in employment decisions.

Other Protected Leave

Other paid or unpaid job-protected leave may apply depending on the employee's circumstances, work location, length of service, and the agency's employee count. Smith Premier Home Care, LLC will administer legally required leave in accordance with applicable federal, Illinois, Cook County, and City of Chicago law. Employees should contact the Agency Manager/Administrator for the policy applicable to their circumstances.

11. Meal Periods and Hours Worked

Smith Premier Home Care, LLC will comply with applicable Illinois requirements governing meal periods, rest days, overtime, and compensable work time. Employees must accurately record all time worked and may not perform unrecorded or unauthorized work before or after a shift or assignment.

12. Confidentiality, Privacy, Records and Social Media

Client, employee, business, financial, service, and health-related information must be protected according to applicable law and agency policy. Employees may access, use, or disclose confidential information only as necessary for authorized duties or as otherwise permitted or required by law.

- Do not photograph, record, livestream, or post clients, client homes, family members, client documents, schedules, service plans, or client-related information on personal devices or social media.
- Do not discuss confidential client, employee, payroll, billing, assignment, incident, complaint, family, or agency information with unauthorized persons.
- Protect paper and electronic records from unauthorized access and return agency records as directed.
- Immediately report lost records, misdirected communications, accidental disclosures, or suspected privacy breaches.

13. Safety, Emergency and Incident Reporting

Employees must follow applicable safety, infection-prevention, emergency, and incident-reporting procedures for their position. In an emergency requiring immediate medical, fire, or police assistance, call 911 and then notify the agency as soon as safely possible.

Work-related injuries, safety hazards, threats, violence, exposure incidents, privacy incidents, and other significant workplace events must be reported promptly. Direct-care employees have additional client-specific reporting responsibilities described later in this handbook.

14. Complaints, Concerns and Non-Retaliation

Employees are encouraged to promptly report workplace concerns, suspected policy violations, discrimination, harassment, retaliation, safety concerns, wage/timekeeping concerns, client-care concerns, or other compliance issues to the Agency Manager/Administrator. If the concern involves that person or the employee is uncomfortable reporting there, the employee may report to the Alternate Agency Manager.

Reports may be verbal or written unless a specific law or procedure requires another form. Good-faith reports and legally protected participation will not result in unlawful retaliation.

15. Personnel Records and Equal Pay

Current employees and certain former employees may have rights under the Illinois Personnel Record Review Act to request qualifying personnel records. Written requests should be submitted to the Agency Manager/Administrator and will be handled according to applicable law.

Smith Premier Home Care, LLC will comply with the Illinois Equal Pay Act and applicable recordkeeping requirements. If and when the agency meets the statutory employee-count threshold for Illinois pay-transparency requirements, covered job postings and promotional-opportunity notices will be handled in accordance with then-current law.

DIRECT-CARE EMPLOYEE REQUIREMENTS

The following sections apply to employees assigned to provide non-medical services directly to clients.

16. Direct-Care Employee Requirements

CNA and PCA staff assigned to clients provide non-medical home services only. Duties may include authorized bathing assistance, grooming, dressing, toileting support, mobility assistance, meal preparation, companionship, supervision, respite support, approved errands/accompaniment, light housekeeping, and other authorized ADL/IADL support included in the client's service plan.

- Do not independently diagnose, assess, treat, prescribe, administer medication, perform injections, provide wound care, or perform skilled nursing or clinical procedures.
- Medication assistance is limited to medication reminding permitted by Illinois home-services rules and agency policy. Employees may not independently administer medication or handle prescription bottles or unmarked medication containers.
- Employees may accompany clients on approved errands or appointments when authorized, but may not transport clients in the employee's personal vehicle under agency policy.
- Do not perform tasks outside the service plan. Report requests for additional or changed services to the agency before performing them.

Pre-Employment and Pre-Assignment Requirements

Before a direct-care employee is cleared for a client assignment, Smith Premier Home Care, LLC will verify and document all requirements applicable to that employee and position. These requirements may include:

- Health Care Worker Registry (HCWR) inquiry/verification and compliance with the Health Care Worker Background Check Act and 77 Ill. Adm. Code 955, including fingerprint-based criminal-history screening when required.
- No disqualifying background-check result unless the individual has a legally effective waiver or other lawful eligibility.
- An initial health evaluation/physical for each new employee who will have client contact, together with TB/communicable-disease screening and other employee-health documentation required by agency policy or applicable law.
- Required employment eligibility and identity documentation and any personnel-file documentation required for the position.
- Verification of an active State professional license, certification, or registration when the position requires one.
- Required agency orientation and initial home-services training.
- Successful competency evaluation before the first client assignment and additional competency evaluation as required after training or when duties require it.
- Dementia training when applicable to the employee's assignment.

- Review of the client's current service plan and completion of assignment-specific instruction before providing services.

Direct-care employees must continue to comply with the agency's employee-health policy after hire, including reporting health symptoms or exposure to communicable or infectious disease and following agency instructions regarding removal from and return to client contact.

17. Direct-Care Training and Competency

The agency provides or arranges the training required for home services workers. The agency requires a minimum of 10 hours of initial training, with at least 5 hours completed before the first client assignment and the remaining 5 hours completed within the first 30 days of employment, subject to applicable Illinois rules and permitted recognition of qualifying prior training.

Before the first assignment, the employee must successfully complete the agency's required competency evaluation covering the initial training and the tasks required for that assignment. Competency may be evaluated through methods permitted by agency policy and applicable law.

Training Content

- Job responsibilities and limitations, communication, observation, reporting, and documentation.
- Authorized ADL assistance, ambulation, transfers, positioning, toileting, feeding, grooming, bathing, medication reminding, and applicable adaptive equipment.
- Hygiene, infection prevention, safety, emergency recognition, basic first aid, and client emergency preparedness.
- Confidentiality, dementia awareness, abuse/neglect prevention and reporting, and other authorized assignment-specific tasks.

Annual Training and Documentation

Home services workers must complete ongoing training required by applicable Illinois rules and agency policy. Training records will document required information, including the date, time spent, content, instructor/qualifications when applicable, and employee completion/acknowledgment.

18. Dementia Training

Employees assigned to clients with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia must satisfy the dementia-training requirements applicable to their role and assignment before providing services when required by law or agency policy. Training addresses dementia understanding, communication, behavior response, safety, wandering risk, dignity, ADL support, and meaningful engagement.

19. Client Service Plans, Transfers and Positioning

Direct-care employees must follow the client's written service plan and agency instructions. Employees may not independently add services, change schedules, accept unauthorized tasks, or change an approved service in a manner inconsistent with the service plan or safety instructions.

For transfers, positioning, or adaptive equipment, the employee must have documented training and competency appropriate to the assigned task. Unsafe conditions, inability to safely perform the task, changes in client ability, or needs beyond the approved plan must be reported immediately.

Respite assignments involving a client who requires complete repositioning and cannot communicate discomfort may proceed only when required worker training and competency are documented and the assignment is approved under agency policy.

20. Client Rights and Professional Boundaries

- Treat every client with dignity, respect, privacy, and consideration and support independence, choice, and self-determination.
- Do not discriminate, threaten, intimidate, exploit, abuse, neglect, or retaliate against a client.
- Do not borrow from or lend money to clients, solicit inappropriate gifts, misuse client property, become involved in client finances without lawful authorization, or use the relationship for personal gain.
- Do not bring unauthorized visitors to a client assignment or conduct personal business while responsible for a client.
- Immediately report client complaints, rights concerns, safety concerns, changes in condition/functioning, or requests that conflict with the service plan.

21. Abuse, Neglect and Financial Exploitation Reporting

Smith Premier Home Care, LLC has zero tolerance for abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, misappropriation of property, and prohibited mistreatment. Direct-care employees must follow all mandatory-reporting requirements applicable to the circumstances.

- If a person is in immediate danger, call 911 first and then notify agency management.
- Suspected abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, or self-neglect involving an adult age 60 or older, or an adult age 18-59 with a disability living in the community, may require reporting to Illinois Adult Protective Services/Illinois Department on Aging at 1-866-800-1409.
- If suspected child abuse or neglect is observed or disclosed and a reporting duty applies, report through the Illinois DCFS Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873).
- Employees must also promptly notify the Agency Manager/Administrator or designee according to agency policy.
- Retaliation for good-faith reporting is prohibited.

22. Supervisory Visits and Performance

Direct-care employees must cooperate with supervisory visits, field monitoring, client satisfaction checks, performance evaluations, competency reviews, investigations, retraining, and corrective-action plans. Supervisory review may address service quality, client safety, compliance with the service plan, documentation, attendance, professional conduct, and agency policy.

23. Policy Administration and Updates

Employees are responsible for reviewing and following this handbook and all separate policies, procedures, job descriptions, service plans, training requirements, and lawful instructions applicable to their duties.

Smith Premier Home Care, LLC may add, revise, interpret, suspend, or discontinue policies when appropriate, subject to applicable law. If this handbook conflicts with a current law or regulation, the current law or regulation controls. If a more specific lawful agency policy applies to a particular subject or assignment, employees must follow that specific policy.

Nothing in this handbook is intended to interfere with or restrict any employee right protected by applicable federal, state, or local law.



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CCP ADDENDUM TO EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

This addendum applies only to employees assigned to the Illinois Department on Aging Community Care Program (CCP). The existing handbook remains in effect. For a CCP assignment, the requirements below control when they are more specific than the general Illinois Home Services Agency requirements stated in the handbook.

CCP Homecare Aide Qualifications

Before assignment, a CCP homecare aide must meet one qualification pathway in 89 Ill. Adm. Code 240.1535(b)(2): a high school diploma or GED; one year of comparable human-service employment or experience caring for a dependent child or adult family member; or documented progress toward a GED as specified by the rule.

CCP Homecare Aide Training

A CCP homecare aide must complete 24 hours of initial pre-service training and the required competency evaluation before providing CCP services unless the agency documents that the aide qualifies for an exemption allowed by 89 Ill. Adm. Code 240.1535(b)(3)(B). Each aide must complete 12 hours of documented in-service training during each calendar year, including two hours of required dementia training.

CCP Homecare Aide Responsibilities

The aide shall follow the participant's written person-centered service plan and the Homecare Supervisor's assignments; observe participant functioning and report observations; provide receipts for authorized shopping and errands; maintain records of daily activities, observations, and direct-service hours; and attend required training and staff conferences.

CCP Homecare Supervisor Requirements

A CCP Homecare Supervisor must have a high school diploma or GED and the skills and experience necessary to perform the required supervisory activities. The supervisor must complete Department-sponsored CCP supervisor training within 90 calendar days after employment in the supervisor position and 26 hours of documented in-service training each calendar year, including two hours of required dementia training.

Required CCP Supervision

The Homecare Supervisor shall conduct and document quarterly conferences with each assigned homecare aide, evaluate each assigned aide annually, and conduct and document semi-annual in-home supervisory visits for each assigned aide. Additional home visits shall be made when necessary for hands-on training and assistance. The supervisor shall perform the other service coordination, documentation, and staffing activities required by 89 Ill. Adm. Code 240.1535(a)(1).

Authority: 89 Ill. Adm. Code 240.1510(d)(2) and 240.1535(a)-(b).

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

EMPLOYER NOTICE

Under the Illinois Human Rights Act (Act), all workers have the right to employment free from unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment.

In Illinois, it is a civil rights violation under Article 2-102(K) of the Act for an employer to fail to include in a posting on the premises, **AND** in an employee handbook, information concerning the rights of employees to:

- 1** - Be free from unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment in the workplace;
- 2** - File a charge of discrimination or sexual harassment; and
- 3** - Obtain certain reasonable accommodations such as those based on pregnancy and disability.

The required poster is available for download on the Illinois Department of Human Rights' website. The poster includes language suitable for inclusion in an employee handbook.

The poster also includes information on the Illinois Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Helpline, which provides additional resources and information.

Everyone has a right to be free from illegal discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace and is protected from retaliation for reporting incidents of discrimination, participating in an investigation, or helping others exercise their rights.

IDHR can investigate charges of employment discrimination filed against an employer, public contractor, employment agency, labor organization or union.

For further information, contact IDHR at:

Website: dhr.illinois.gov

Chicago:

555 W Monroe St., 7th Floor
Chicago, IL 60661
(312) 814-6200
(866) 740-3953 (TTY)
(312) 814-6251 (Fax)

Springfield:

524 S. 2nd St., Suite 300
Springfield, IL 62701
(217) 785-5100
(866) 740-3953 (TTY)
(217) 785-5106 (Fax)

Illinois Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Helpline

1-877-236-7703 or TTY: 711
Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

24. EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge that I received, reviewed, and understand the Smith Premier Home Care, LLC Employee Handbook.

I understand that the handbook contains company-wide policies and that additional direct-care requirements apply when I am assigned to provide services directly to clients.

I understand that I must comply with applicable agency policies, procedures, training and competency requirements, confidentiality and privacy requirements, attendance and timekeeping requirements, safety standards, professional-conduct expectations, and lawful reporting duties.

I understand that I may report concerns without unlawful retaliation and that I have rights under applicable employment laws, including rights relating to discrimination, sexual harassment, reasonable accommodation, filing a charge, statutory paid leave, and other protected workplace activity.

I understand that employment is at will to the extent permitted by applicable law. Nothing in this handbook creates a contract of employment or guarantees a particular assignment, schedule, number of hours, or duration of employment.

For direct-care positions, I understand that I am not cleared for a client assignment until Smith Premier Home Care, LLC verifies all applicable onboarding, screening, training, competency, and assignment-specific requirements.

Employee Name: _____

Position: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Agency Representative: _____

Date: _____