



# Supports



## How to find a support worker?

Finding the right support worker can help the quality of care and assistance for yourself or your loved one.

There are a few different ways that you can find a support worker (SW), each with its own advantages and disadvantages. Be sure to consider costs associated with some advertising platforms. Also, keep in mind the options that require you to be self- or plan-managed (e.g. having choice to hire your own independent SWs).

From word-of-mouth recommendations to online platforms and registered providers, there are plenty of options. To make sure you find the right match – the right kind of person for you and a support worker, be clear in communication, especially with expectations and to set an understanding of responsibilities for your support worker.

Here's a guide to navigating the process and ensuring a good match.

You can ask by word of mouth (personal recommendations): other families you may know a good support worker.

You can use a platform like Hire Up, Mable or Humdrum – these agencies have many support workers to choose from. Typically, you can choose your workers through their online process.

Alternatively, you can advertise using recruitment websites like Seek or Indeed, but keep in mind that these platforms have upfront costs.

Facebook groups can also be useful to find a support worker. Some useful Facebook groups that you can join to find support workers include:

- **WA Families and Support Workers Job Network:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/181116518735285/>
- **Student Support Workers:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/976935296380116/>
- **Support workers, carers and families in Perth:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/348046945404021/?ref=share>

**National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS):** The NDIS is a key avenue for accessing support services for people with disabilities across Australia, including Western Australia. To access support workers through the NDIS, you need to be eligible for the scheme and have an approved NDIS plan. Once you have your plan, you can work with your NDIS planner to include support worker services in your plan in the Core Supports budget.

**Registered NDIS Providers:** Once you have your NDIS plan, you can search for registered NDIS providers in your area who offer support worker services. These



# Supports



providers have met certain quality and safety standards set by the NDIS Commission, ensuring you receive high-quality support. These providers usually have availability for in-home care and community access. However, you will be charged agency prices.

**Support Coordination:** If you have Support Coordination included in your NDIS plan, your support coordinator can assist you in finding and engaging suitable support workers. They can also help you manage your budget effectively to ensure you get the most out of your funded supports.

## **Self- or Plan Management option:**

Independent workers are another option. These could be people that you know and have good skills and attitudes, and you employ them as your employees. You might find independent workers that run their own businesses as independent contractors.

However, you can only choose independent support workers if you are self- or plan managed. This option allows more control in choice of person and scheduling. It also allows you to negotiate rates of pay with independent workers.

Remember, when engaging support workers, it's essential to communicate your needs clearly, discuss expectations, and ensure compatibility between yourself and the support worker. Consider providing a written Job Description so there is full understanding of duties and expectations.

It's important to clarify expectations around what is acceptable work behaviour including:

- Mobile phone use during shifts,
- Social Media posts regarding or depicting your loved one,
- How participant's money spent is documented,
- How travel time and kilometrage is paid/claimed,
- Manual handling agreement, and
- Training for specific disability needs for the client.

Regularly review your support arrangements to ensure your support workers continue to meet your evolving needs and goals. A support worker becomes an extension of your family in the best cases.

By exploring these options and keeping communication open, you can find a support worker who fits your needs and makes your life better.

For further information please contact us: [ddwa@ddwa.org.au](mailto:ddwa@ddwa.org.au) or (08) 9240-7203.

*Written by DDWA's Leticia Grant, Advocacy Manager, and Maggie Visser, Side by Side Manager.  
(last updated May 2024)*