



Division of Specialized Care for Children



Guidelines and Tips for Parents Working as Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs)

If you're a certified nursing assistant (CNA) providing care for your child at home, these guidelines and tips will help you understand the requirements, services and resources available to make the process easier and more manageable.

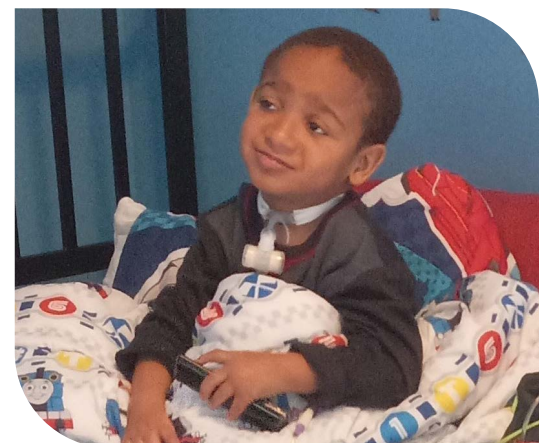
What You Need to Know:

What is an LRA?

- A **legally responsible adult (LRA)** is someone with the legal authority to make decisions for a child or adult.
- For children, this is typically a **parent** or **legal guardian**.
- In some cases, the **Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)** serves as the LRA. DCFS only allows foster parents to provide paid care at the agency's discretion. A **court-appointed guardian** can also be the LRA and may be paid for caregiving services.

What is a Trained Caregiver?

- A **trained caregiver** has the necessary skills to safely care for someone at home. Professionals, such as hospital staff or a nursing agency, have taught them.



Requirements for CNAs Caring for Their Children:

If you're a parent working as a CNA for your child, you must meet the following criteria:

CNA Requirements for Parents:

- ✓ **Certification:** You must be a certified CNA to be paid for providing care.
- ✓ **Background Checks:** You must pass the required background checks like other CNAs.
- ✓ **Employment:** You must be employed by a Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC)-approved home nursing agency and stay in good standing with them.
- ✓ **Care Documentation:** You must keep detailed records of the care you are paid to provide. For example, you'll only document CNA-level care.
- ✓ **Supervision:** A registered nurse from the employing agency must supervise your work every 60 days.
- ✓ **Electronic Visit Verification (EVV):** You must clock in and out to comply with agency EVV criteria using your Social Security number and GPS coordinates. These verify the care you provide happens in the home and community.
- ✓ **No Need for Additional Caregiver:** If you are both the LRA and a trained caregiver, you are not required to have someone else help with your child's care.

Agency Requirements:

- The nursing agency must follow DSCC's guidelines.
- The agency will use a unique billing code for paid LRAs.
- Before you begin working for a nursing agency, the agency must review these guidelines with you and submit a signed form to DSCC.



What CNAs Can Do:

We understand that, as parents, you are responsible for meeting all your child's care needs. However, it's important to recognize that not all these needs fall under the responsibilities of the paid parent CNA. As a CNA, there are specific caregiving tasks you will be paid to perform, but these tasks must be done under supervision and within the scope of your training.



Here are some of the tasks CNAs can help with:

- **Personal Care:** Feeding, bathing, dressing, grooming, oral hygiene and assisting with non-invasive toileting.
- **Mobility Assistance:** Helping lift, transfer and move your child or any medical equipment.
- **Vital Signs:** Recording temperature, pulse, respiration and blood pressure.
- **Cleaning Equipment:** Keeping medical equipment clean according to written guidelines.
- **Safe Environment:** Helping keep a safe and clean environment for your child.
- **Communication Assistance:** Helping with schoolwork, writing, phone calls, and reading.
- **Care Documentation:** Keeping accurate records of the care you provide using the CNA Documentation Template.

Important Service Limits for CNAs as Parents:

- **Respite Care:** You cannot be paid for providing respite care (a temporary break for the caregiver).
- **Nursing Hours:** The number of paid nursing hours cannot exceed what is approved. Overtime is allowed if it is within the monthly nursing hour amount approved through the Home Care Program.

Other Requirements:

- The nursing agency will continue to follow DSCC's requirements for participating nursing agencies.
- Any billing submitted to DSCC must include the name of the supervising registered nurse.

Supervision and Communication:

As a CNA, you must stay in regular contact with the supervising nurse. Every 60 days, the nurse will supervise your work. The nurse will send these reports to your DSCC Care Coordinator every month.

You must:

- ✓ Be able to read and understand your child's care plan.
- ✓ Be ready to communicate with the supervising nurse or emergency personnel if necessary.
- ✓ Follow directions and perform the care tasks to the satisfaction of the supervising nurse.

If you have any questions or need clarification on these guidelines, please get in touch with DSCC's Home Care Quality Improvement Team. They are available to support you as you provide care for your child. Please call (800) 322-3722 or email dscq@uic.edu.



Tips for Parents Working as CNAs at Home

Being both a parent and a CNA for your child with medical needs is a unique and demanding role. It requires intentional time management and clear boundaries. Setting structured work hours, using outside support and prioritizing self-care can help you successfully balance caregiving and family life.

These tips can help you navigate this dual role while protecting your well-being.

Create a Routine That Works for Your Family

Identify Your CNA Hours: Determine when you will officially provide paid care, balancing this role with your other responsibilities.

Create a Daily Schedule: Organize your day with care tasks, family duties and personal time to stay on track.

Use Planners: Stay organized with a calendar or daily planner to keep track of appointments and care schedules.

Allow Flexibility: Plan ahead but allow room for adjustments when unexpected situations, such as hospitalizations, arise.

Set Boundaries, Seek Support and Delegate Tasks

Set Clear Boundaries for CNA Time: Organize supplies, set reminders and create routines to streamline CNA tasks within your paid hours. These steps will ensure you have dedicated time for rest and self-care outside of your shifts.

Ask for (and Accept!) Help: Don't hesitate to get help with household tasks from family and friends. Delegate chores or arrange support so you can focus your energy on caregiving and self-care.

If Part of the MFTD Waiver, Explore Respite Care: If you receive services through the Home and Community-Based Services Waiver for Those Who Are Medically Fragile, Technology Dependent (MFTD), consider Children's Home and Community-Based Healthcare Centers to give yourself a break. You can contact your DSCC Care Coordinator anytime to discuss your options.

Take Care of Yourself, Too

Take Time for YOU: Rest, exercise and relax to support your mental health.

Find Community Resources: Join support groups or local programs to help manage caregiving's emotional and physical demands.

Seek Professional Support: Consider counseling or support groups to help manage stress and feeling overwhelmed.

Advocate for Your Needs: Talk to healthcare providers about accessing more resources for you and your child.

Understand Your Role as a Parent CNA

You Are Both a Parent and a Professional: Balancing these roles takes time and practice. Be patient with yourself and be open to support and advice.

Your Child's Dignity Matters: Always prioritize their privacy, rights and individuality.

Lean on Your Experience: You know your child better than anyone, so trust your instincts and knowledge while remaining open to learning.

Resources for Caregiving Families:

- **DSCC's Caregiver Mental Health Toolkit:** Find helpful websites, worksheets, apps and more to help you manage stress, prioritize self-care and build resilience at <https://dsc.uic.edu/caregiver-mental-health-toolkit>.
- **Emergency Planning Tip Sheet:** This tip sheet provides essential emergency planning guidance and resources for individuals with complex medical needs, including advice for pediatric, disability, and advanced healthcare needs: https://dsc.uic.edu/dsc_resource/dsc-emergency-preparedness-tip-sheet/.
- **Crisis Text Line:** Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a trained crisis counselor 24 hours a day. For Spanish, text HOLA to 74141: www.crisistextline.org/
- **Illinois Respite Coalition:** www.illinoisrespitecoalition.org/
- **The Arc Illinois:** www.thearcofil.org/
- **Medline Plus Caregiver Support:** <https://medlineplus.gov/caregivers.html>
- **Family Caregiver Alliance:** www.caregiver.org/caregiver-resources/
- **Caregiver Action Network:** www.caregiveraction.org/
- **Courageous Parents Network:** <https://courageousparentsnetwork.org/>
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) National Helpline:** A free, confidential, 24-hour, seven-days-a-week, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service (in English and Spanish) for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders. Call (800) 662-HELP (4357) or visit www.samhsa.gov/find-help/helplines/national-helpline.
- **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:** Provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress and prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones. Call 988 or visit <https://988lifeline.org/>.



More Considerations

- **Physical and Emotional Strain:** Caregiving can be physically and emotionally demanding. Take care of your health and seek support when needed.
- **Legal and Ethical Responsibilities:** Understand the scope of your role and follow care guidelines from your child's medical team.
- **Monitoring and Documentation:** Keep accurate records of your child's care, including medications and appointments.
- **Get the Right Equipment and Tools:** Ensure you have the proper medical equipment and home modifications for easier caregiving. If insurance does not cover the necessary equipment and supplies, remember to speak with your DSCC Care Coordinator. They may be able to help you find resources.
- **Stay Connected:** Keep social ties with family, friends or support groups to avoid isolation. If you need help, visit DSCC's Parent-to-Parent Support page at <https://dsc.uic.edu/browse-resources/parent-to-parent-support/>.
- **Know Your Limits:** Recognize when you need help and ask for assistance to avoid burnout.
- **Emergency Preparedness:** Always have an emergency plan and ensure other caregivers know how to respond in an emergency. Use the DSCC Emergency Planning Tipsheet at https://dsc.uic.edu/dsc_resource/dsc-emergency-preparedness-tip-sheet/.

Remember:

Taking care of your child as a CNA is an excellent opportunity, but it's important to maintain balance, take care of yourself and reach out for help when needed.

You're doing a fantastic job!

**Contact us at
(800) 322-3722
for more information!**

**Visit our website at
dscc.uic.edu.**

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