

Personal care registration for homecare agencies

Summary

This guidance is for homecare agencies (also called domiciliary care agencies) that need to register to provide personal care activities in England. Use this guide to help you complete your application correctly the first time.

It explains how to check:

- if you need to register
- what you need to register for

It also tells you what information you must include in your application, and what happens if your application has missing or incorrect information.



It is an offence to carry on a regulated activity without being registered

Before you apply

Many homecare agencies (also called domiciliary care agencies) send us applications to register for the regulated activity personal care that are missing important information.

We cannot register your agency if you send an incomplete application or include incorrect information.

Check if you need to register with us

Before you apply, read our [guide on who needs to register](#). It's called the Scope of registration and it will help you:

- check if you need to register with us
- decide which regulated activities you need to apply for.

Regulated activities are specific health or social care activities that are defined in law. If you are a health or social care provider in England, you need to register with us to legally provide that activity. Personal care is one type of regulated activity.

Understand your responsibilities

You and your managers must understand and have experience with relevant laws, including:

- [Health and Social Care Act 2008 and its regulations](#)
- [Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards](#).

You must be able to show how you'll meet (and continue to meet) the fundamental standards. We want to see evidence of this when we process your application, and when we interview you or your managers.

Make sure you have the right qualifications and experience

You must have the qualifications, skills and experience to provide care that meets the needs of people who use your service.

If you plan to be a:

- Provider
- Registered manager

You must show us that you're suitable for these roles.

Registered managers

To show that they can manage the service, your registered managers need to prove they have the right:

- qualifications (for example, a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Adult Care)
- training
- relevant skills and experience.

They must also show that they can meet the needs of the people who will use your service.

For homecare agencies, we expect a manager to have experience with:

- complaints
- mental capacity assessments

- safeguarding concerns
- medication errors.

Recent experience in a regulated care service, or homecare service will strengthen their application.

Additional guidance

- [Register as a manager](#)
- [Regulation 7: Requirements relating to registered managers](#)
- [Skills for Care](#) have helpful resources on skills and training for social care managers.

Apply for DBS checks

Once you've confirmed you need to register as a provider, you should get a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check for anyone applying to be:

- an individual provider
- a registered partner
- a registered manager.

You should do this as soon as possible, so they are ready before you apply. We cannot process your application without them.

The checks usually take around 14 days but can take longer.

Read our [guidance on DBS checks](#) for more information.

Make sure your premises are suitable

Your application must include information about your office or base in the 'locations' section of your application form.

Even if you provide care in people's homes, we need information about your main office. This is where you'll manage your service and keep records.

We might refuse your application if your premises aren't suitable. For example, if you cannot keep people's records safe and secure

Businesses based outside of England

We cannot accept addresses in:

- Wales
- Scotland
- Northern Ireland
- overseas countries

If your business is based outside England, you must still provide an address in England for your main office or base.

PO box addresses

A PO box address is only acceptable when it's part of a full physical address. That means it must include a full street address and postcode. This is because we can only inspect premises defined as 'regulated premises' under the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

Services for autistic people and people with a learning disability

If you want to provide services for autistic people and people with a learning disability you must read our [right support, right care, right culture](#) guidance before you apply.

Evidence we need

Important

This guidance is written for homecare agencies providing personal care only.

If you're also applying for treatment of disease, disorder or injury (TDDI):

- read the [Scope of registration](#) to check if you need to register for TDDI
- pay particular attention to the [Treatment of disease, disorder or injury](#) section in the scope guidance
- if you do need to register for TDDI, make sure your supporting documents provide information that is relevant to both TDDI and personal care

If you're planning to offer supported living services:

- your policies and procedures must be relevant to that service type.
- see the [Housing with care guidance](#).

- If you wish to provide services for autistic people and people with a learning disability, you will need to evidence that you can meet the requirements of [Right support right care right culture](#) Please refer to our guidance - [Services for autistic people and people with a learning disability: before you apply](#).

All other providers should read our [Supporting documents: provider registration application guidance](#) instead.

This information is for homecare agencies (also called domiciliary care agencies) that want to register to provide personal care. It tells you:

- what documents you need to include with your application.
- the standards they must meet for your application to be successful.

Supporting documents

All providers registering with us must submit the following supporting documents with their application:

- Consent policy and procedures
- Equality, diversity and human rights policy and procedures
- Governance policy and procedures
- Infection control policy and procedures
- Medicines management policy and procedures
- Recruitment policy and procedures
- Safeguarding policy and procedures
- Statement of purpose

- Complaints policy

You can find out more about what is needed for each one on our [Provider supporting documents page](#).

Additional supporting documents for homecare providers

Additional Form for Providers of Personal Care

All homecare providers must also complete this form. It gives us additional information about your company, including how you have recruited your director(s), your nominated individual and your registered manager applicant. This is also your opportunity to show that you have carried out market research in your local area to evidence there is a local demand for your specific service.

You must complete all sections of this form in full. If you cannot answer some questions, you may need to do some additional research before you submit your application.

If you are registering as a homecare provider you must also submit the following supporting documents with your application:

Business plan and financial forecast

Why we want to see this evidence

Your business plan helps us check that your service will be financially stable and well-managed.

What to include

Your business plan should show us how you'll meet the needs of the people who use your service.

You must include:

- a summary of your plan
- background information about your company
- details of your service
- market research
- who is responsible for each task
- your company structure
- financial forecasts

If your plan does not include enough detail your application may not be successful.

Summary of your plan

Tell us about your company's background and experience with this type of service. Explain how this experience is relevant for providing personal care in people's own homes. You should be clear about how your experience helps you meet the needs of people who will use your service.

About your company

Explain what your company does and how it stands out from your competitors.

Tell us about your management team's relevant experience and qualifications. We also want to know:

- why your team are suitable to manage the provision of personal care.
- how your team's experience is appropriate for the people who will use your service.

Make sure this information relates to the [service user bands](#) you've selected in your application form.

Details of your service

Describe:

- the services you will provide
- how you will provide it
- who your service is for
- why your service will succeed in the local market

Tell us how you will charge for your service. Give us details of your pricing structure. For example:

- Will you charge by the hour, 45 minutes or 30 minutes?
- How will you charge for evenings and bank holidays?
- Will you charge the same for Local Authority and private funding?
- What will you charge for double-handed calls?

Market research

You must show us that you understand the local market and that there is demand for your service. (This information should be relevant to the service user bands you selected in your application).

Include:

- recent market research carried out in your local area
- how you did this research
- evidence of local demand for your specific service

- information about local competitors
- markets you plan to target in the future
- research that shows how you decided your pricing and staff pay
- strengths and weaknesses of your business
- potential opportunities and threats to your business

Staff responsibilities

List all the main tasks and roles in your service, and name the person responsible for each one. Every significant task must have someone specific assigned to it.

Company structure

Provide details of:

- your ownership structure, including investors
- your company's structure

This information must be accurate and reflect the actual structure and roles in place.

Financial information

Provide a monthly breakdown of income and expenses for your first 12 months of business.

Include all costs and income associated with providing and managing personal care in people's homes.

Remember, your business plan should be supported by evidence and show how your service will remain financially viable.

Evidence of legal occupancy

Why we want to see this evidence

We need to confirm you have legal permission to use your premises. This helps us make sure your location is suitable for the service you want to provide.

What to include

You must provide evidence that you have legal permission to use your chosen location. If your application does not include this evidence, your application may not be successful.

The evidence you provide must:

- be valid at the time of your application
- clearly show you have legal permission to operate your service from this location
- include specific details about how the location is suitable for the type of service you plan to provide

Types of evidence we accept

Provide one of these documents:

- a copy of your title deeds (if you own the premises)
- a tenancy agreement
- a license agreement

If you don't fully own the premises, you must also provide written permission from either your landlord or mortgage provider.

Requirements for landlord or mortgage provider permission

The written permission must:

- clearly state that the property can be used for the type of service you plan to provide
- be signed and dated by your landlord or mortgage provider.

If the premises are owned by someone who isn't the provider or one of its directors (for example, a director's spouse or the registered manager), you must provide written permission from this person.

We cannot accept

- virtual offices
- PO Box addresses that do not have a full physical address
- mortgage statements without specific permission to operate a business
- general business use permission that doesn't mention your specific service type

How we assess your location

As part of our assessment of your application, we'll check that your location is suitable for your service type. We may ask you about:

- your office equipment
- accessibility
- meeting spaces
- how you'll maintain confidentiality

Related guidance

You can [read our guidance on what a location is](#) to understand how we define locations and the rules for identifying them.

Service user guide

Why we want to see this evidence

A good service user guide helps people understand what they can expect from your service. It helps them to make informed decisions and tells them how they can raise any concerns.

What to include

You must send us copies of any service user guides you have in place. If your guides do not include enough detail your application may not be successful.

Your user guide must be:

- specific to your business, and the services you want to provide
- suitable for people that will use your service.

Your service user guides should reflect the [service user bands](#) you told us about in your application form and Statement of purpose.

About your service

Your guide must clearly explain:

- what services you provide
- what services you do not or cannot offer
- how you decide if you can meet someone's needs.

Practical information

Explain how you:

- charge for your services
- monitor calls and make sure they happen on time
- handle complaints
- deal with safeguarding concerns
- set the contractual terms for your services.

Your guide must also include your contact details.

Staff training plan

Why we want to see this evidence

We need to be sure that you have identified the training your staff will need in order to provide safe, effective, and person-centred care in line with the aims and objectives you've told us about in your [Statement of purpose](#).

Regulations you must follow

Your training plan should identify how you will meet the Care Certificate standards and should be aligned with statutory and regulatory requirements -

- [Regulation 18: Staffing](#)
- [Related guidance](#)

Your training plan should reflect the service user bands identified within your application form and Statement of purpose. For example, if you will be supporting people living with dementia, sensory impairments or mental health, your training plan must include appropriate specialist training for each.

You must make sure all staff are trained to an appropriate level in order to communicate and work with autistic people and people with a learning disability. This may be Oliver McGowan training but does not have to be. Your training plan must include this or an equivalent.

You may wish to look at the [Skills for care website](#) for information and advice about training and development options.

What to include

This document must include the following items. If it does not your application may not be successful.

Induction and mandatory training

Explain what your induction process includes and what training new staff will receive. Also, describe the mandatory training and how it meets your business needs.

Role-specific training

Describe the training each type of job role will get, including managers.

Specialist training

Let us know about any specialist training your staff will receive.

Training providers

Tell us the name of the training provider you plan to use for each topic.

Refresher training

Say how often refresher training will happen for each topic, if applicable.

Support for overseas workers

Explain any extra support such as a longer induction or language support if needed.

Insurance plan

Why we want to see this evidence

We need to be sure that you have insurance and suitable indemnity arrangements for the services you provide. These must cover potential liabilities arising from death, injury, or other causes, loss or damage to property, and other financial risks.

What to include

You may send copies of insurance policies, insurance quotations or letters of intent from insurance providers as evidence of your insurance and indemnity arrangements.

Any quotes must be within their expiry date when you submit your application.

You must send one of the following which should be specific to your service. If you do not, your application may be unsuccessful.

- Public Liability Insurance Certificate of insurance, or quote, where your service has no employees.
- Public and Employer Liability Insurance Certificate of insurance, or quote when both are covered by one document.

Documents we may ask for when we assess your application

We may also ask to see the following documents during our assessment of your application:

- Duty of candour policy
- Person centred care planning policy (PCCPP)

- Quality assurance policy
- Risk management policy

How to apply

Before you start

Only send us your application when everything is ready to start providing your services.

Make sure you have:

- completed your [Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\) Checks](#).
- set up your premises
- recruited your staff

What you must include

Your application must contain your:

- completed provider application forms
- related registered manager applications (if needed)
- supporting documents.

We must receive everything at the same time, or we cannot process your application.

If your forms or documents are missing or incorrect, we will reject your application and email you to explain why. You can correct and resend it, but this will count as a new application and will not keep its place in the queue.

Application checklist

1. Get the forms you need

You need to download the right application forms for your needs.

Provider

[Download new provider application forms](#)

All homecare agencies (also called domiciliary care agencies) must complete these provider forms, regardless of your business structure.

Manager

[Download new manager application forms](#)

You must also submit manager application forms if you are:

- an organisation (like a limited company)
- a partnership
- an individual who won't personally manage the day-to-day running of the regulated activity

[Read our guidance on when you need to register a manager](#) for more information.

2. Get your evidence ready

Make sure you've got all the supporting documents we've asked for.

See [evidence we need](#) for the full list.

3. Final checks

Forms

Make sure you and your managers have:

- answered all questions in full
- signed and dated all declarations
- completed any additional forms needed for your application
- provided accurate and relevant information
- included evidence of your skills, qualifications and knowledge.

Check your managers have also:

- provided their full employment history
- explained any gaps longer than 4 weeks.

Supporting documents

Check your supporting documents:

- include everything we've asked for, such as your statement of purpose
- are correctly labelled
- contain accurate information
- are relevant to the service you want to provide.

4. Send us your application

Once you're confident that you have everything ready, email everything together to:
hsca_applications@cqc.org.uk.

Your email must be less than 10MB. If your email is bigger than that, send your documents in more than one email.

In the email subject line, include:

- your provider name
- application type (new provider application)
- how many emails you're sending (e.g. 1 of 2, 2 of 2)

Example subject lines:

- Oxtown Care Limited new provider application 1/2
- Oxtown Care Limited new provider application 2/2

Further help

If you need support to complete your application, [contact our general enquiries team](#).

After you apply

Important

This page is for homecare agencies (also called domiciliary care agencies) that want to register for personal care only.

[If you are registering to provide a different service you can read about the process here.](#)

How we process your application

We will check your application in two stages.

Stage one: initial checks

We check:

- your forms are complete, and the basic details are correct
- you have sent the right supporting documents

If your forms or documents are missing or incorrect, we will reject your application and email you to explain why.

You can make changes and submit it again, but it will be treated as a new application and won't keep its place in the queue. It must follow all the updated requirements that apply from 1 July 2025.

If your application passes our initial checks, it will move to stage two.

Stage two: assessment

At this stage, we decide if your application proves you can provide care that meets the regulations.

As part of this process, we may need to:

- interview you and your registered manager by telephone, online or face-to-face
- visit your premises.

We'll also assess your supporting documents in detail to decide if they show you can meet the regulations.

How long it takes

We conduct a rigorous registration assessment that can take a few months. You cannot manage regulated activities until we confirm your registration.

We assess all applications in the order we receive them. If your application is urgent, check our guidance on [making an urgent application](#).

How we'll tell you our decision

We will review your evidence, make a decision and email you the outcome. You can learn more about what the outcome could be on our [registration outcomes page](#).

Examples: personal care applications

These are actual examples, but all names have been changed.

Application we refused

Smith Care Limited applied as an organisation to run a new homecare agency (also called domiciliary care agency). The company had one director Mrs Eunice Smith. She was also the proposed nominated individual and proposed registered manager.

Registered manager application

Mrs Smith had worked for 18 months as a part-time carer for a homecare agency. She had never:

- managed, recruited or supervised staff
- been responsible for any quality assurance systems

- implemented policies and procedures on behalf of a provider
- assessed anyone as needing care.

Mrs Smith had NVQ level 2 in care and completed training with social care TV. She could not give examples of how she had applied this training in her previous work experience.

She felt she could get the experience and training needed once we had registered her.

Registered provider application

There was a small amount of money to start up the business but Mrs Smith could not tell us where this money had come from. She could not prove where the money was when we asked how she would finance the business. She had not looked at what money she needed to break even and was unaware of the real costs of running the business. The business plan did not consider essentials needed to run the service.

Smith Care Limited had bought a set of policies and procedures online, but could not tell us about their content or how they applied to the agency. Mrs Smith did not know how she would assure herself the service was safe or how to monitor and improve.

Mrs Smith did not have a firm plan for staff training.

Our decision

We refused this application on several grounds. We were not assured:

- the company had enough money to run the business

- Mrs Smith:
 - had 'the necessary qualifications, competence, skills and experience' to manage personal care
 - was competent, she lacked experience in a supervisory role
 - knew enough about the policies and procedures and how important they were to the safe running of the service

We will not register services where key people plan to get the training and experience they need after they are registered. This puts people at risk from unsafe care.

Application we registered

Jones Care Limited applied as an organisation to run a homecare agency. The company had one director, Mr Frank Jones. He was also the proposed nominated individual and proposed registered manager.

Registered manager application

Mr Jones had worked in a homecare agency:

- full time as an area manager for the last 2 years
- as a registered manager for 3 years, in day to day charge of the service employing over 30 care staff
- as a senior staff member.

He had also worked in a residential care home for over 5 years.

Mr Jones had:

- significant experience of managing and overseeing quality assurance systems

- a proven track record of implementing a provider's policies and procedures
- NVQ level 2 and 3 in care and a registered managers award (NVQ level 4)
- kept up to date with his mandatory training
- done extra training in mental health and was a dementia champion.

Registered provider application

Mr Jones had money to start up the business. He could tell us where this money had come from and had evidence of his business account. The business finance was sound and allowed for contingencies, such as loss of income. Mr Jones had looked at the local market very carefully including discussions with the local council and other commissioners. He was confident about running the business and understood the financial pressures put on DCA providers.

Jones Care Limited had bought some policies and procedures online. Mr Jones had reviewed and adapted these to the service and written others himself. He could tell us in detail how they applied to the running of the service.

Jones Care Limited had a clear staff induction, appraisal, supervision and training system that supported the aims and objectives of the service.

Our decision

We registered Jones Care Limited to run a homecare agency and Mr Jones as the registered manager.