

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 not allowed. 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 has moved. Visit our [updated guide to supporting documents](#) for details of what evidence you need to send with your application.

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.

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 directors, 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.

Additional information for providers of personal care

[2026 Additional form for providers of personal care \(2a\).docx](#)

File title

Additional form for providers of personal care

2. Get your evidence ready

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

See our [supporting documents guidance](#) 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: hsc_a_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.