



# CalGrows Program Overview 2024





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## CalGrows Program

CalGrows is a program of the California Department of Aging that provides direct care workers access to free training courses and up to \$6,000 in incentives to help increase worker satisfaction and retention.

Paid direct care workers in the home and community as well as unpaid family and friend caregivers are able to participate in the innovative program that brings together dozens of training providers offering 100s of courses.

 <h3>Free Training Courses</h3> <p>Enhance career growth opportunities and on-the-job skills to better care for your recipients.</p> <p><a href="#">Search The Catalog</a></p>	 <h3>Incentive Payments</h3> <p>If you are an eligible paid direct care worker, you can earn up to \$6,000 for completing free training opportunities.</p> <p><a href="#">Learn More</a></p>
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CalGrows is grounded in the recognition that direct care jobs can be a doorway into a variety of personal and professional advancement opportunities. CalGrows builds individual skill sets, satisfaction, retention, and opportunities to advance on career ladders for caregivers of older adults and people with disabilities.

**\* Note unpaid friends and family caregivers are not eligible for incentive payments**








## Overview and Context

At some point, most Californians will seek care from family, friends, or paid caregivers. Likewise, most Californians will also have the privilege and responsibility of caring for an older or disabled person in their circle of family and friends. Supporting caregiving is essential for family life, the economy, and realizing an inclusive California for all ages and abilities.

- Unpaid Family or Friend Caregivers:** Across California nearly five million unpaid family or friend caregivers help their parents, spouses, relatives, and friends needing assistance with everyday tasks to live well in their homes and communities. Of these, almost 1.7 million are caring for someone with Alzheimer’s Disease or dementia, usually with little support or training. Women are providing a disproportionately large share of this care, often while simultaneously caring for children and working.
- The Paid Direct Care Workforce:** California’s Direct Care Workforce provides the critical hands-on care and support needed to ensure older adults and people with disabilities can live in the setting of their choice, according to their needs and preferences. This care can be provided in many settings - in private homes, through community-based services like adult day centers, or in residential care homes, such as assisted living facilities. The paid direct care workforce includes many different job classifications, like personal and home care aides, direct support professionals, and nontraditional roles such as activity coordinators, care coordinators.

		
Personal Care Aide	Home Health Aide	Direct Support Professional
<p><b>(PCAs)</b>, personal attendant, personal assistant, caregiver, companion). Assistance with ADLs (eating, dressing, bathing, and toileting), often with IADLs (housekeeping chores, meal preparation, medication management), sometimes help individuals go to work and remain engaged in their communities</p>	<p><b>(HHAs)</b> provide essentially the same care and services as CNAs, but at home or in community settings under the supervision of a nurse or therapist. <b>HHAs</b> may also perform light housekeeping tasks.</p>	<p><b>(DSPs)</b> support persons with ID/DD with ADLs/IADLs, including at time administering medication, developing behavioral management plan, and managing medical records.</p>
Varies by Program	120 hrs	70 hrs
Home, Congregate, Community	Home, Community	Congregate, Community
CA Department of Social Services (CDSS) Department of Health Care Services (DCHS)	CA Department of Public Health (CDPH)	Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

[Direct Care Workforce CalHHS & LWDA](#)

For the CalGrows programs, certified nursing assistants working in hospitals and other institutional settings are not part of the eligible population. Other program entities (HCAI, LWDA) are focusing on this population.





## The Challenge

In the coming years, [California will face a labor shortage up to 3.2 million paid direct care workers](#). In particular, Black, Indigenous, Latino, and Asian/Pacific Islander people are providing a disproportionately large share of both paid and unpaid care; many are immigrants and are twice as likely as other Californians to live in low-income households.

Caregiver retention is low with more than 21% leaving the field each year, with 40% transitioning out of the labor force and around 22% unemployed when they leave the field (Collaborative Consulting Research, 2022). Training is well accepted across the field as a successful way to advance caregiver skills and thus improve the quality of care for clients.

Further, direct care workers earn less than half of California's median annual income and one in four falls below the federal poverty line. Caregivers for older adults and people with disabilities are paid an average hourly rate of \$13.51 or an annual salary of \$20,200 (Collaborative Consulting Research, 2022), lower than many entry-level jobs.

Low wages, high stress, an elevated risk of job-related injury combined with a lack of career advancement and financial stability opportunities are contributing to a higher rate of leaving the direct care workforce. Low morale and high turnover contribute to poor quality of care and increased costs of workforce recruitment and training.

### Gaps and challenges that CalGrows can address

- The lack of a standard, systematic approach to training and oversight of the direct care workforce leads to gaps and duplication in training.
- Many employers lack the capacity to provide training and incentives.
- Direct care workers face many barriers to accessing and completing relevant training.
- Fragmented systems create barriers to recruitment, retention, and advancement.





## CalGrows Courses

Caregivers of older adults and people with disabilities will have access to a full catalog of hundreds of virtual and in-person courses. Courses cover a range of topics from English language learning to dementia care. Topics include, but are not limited to:

Physical Aspects of the Job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body mechanics</li> <li>• Emergency response</li> <li>• Activities of daily living (ADLs)</li> </ul>
Emotional Aspects of the Job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural competency</li> <li>• End-of-life care/grief</li> <li>• Managing stress</li> </ul>
Complexity of Population Served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dementia and Alzheimer's disease</li> <li>• Understanding aging</li> <li>• Physical and developmental disabilities</li> </ul>
Workplace Readiness & Professional Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication skills</li> <li>• Behaving professionally and ethically</li> <li>• Documentation - delegation - reporting</li> </ul>

The CalGrows website ([calgrows.org](http://calgrows.org)) will have a course catalog searchable by topic, location, language, and for which incentives (if any) they qualify. Courses will be provided by multiple training partners each with unique registration processes. The course catalog will provide information on how to register for each course and incentives.







## CalGrows Incentive Structure

All paid direct care workers are eligible for the Learn and Earn and Career Builder Incentive Program that offers up to \$6,000 in incentives. Caregivers must live in California and be employed providing care either in-home or in community-based settings for a minimum of two months.

Track 1: Learn and Earn Program	Track 2: Career Builder Program
<p><b>Level 1: Learn</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Incentive: \$30/hr Up to \$1500</b></span></p> <p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of employment as a direct care worker</li> <li>• Up to 50 hours of Learn and Earn courses</li> </ul> <p><small>* You may submit an incentive claim once a month to gradually get paid for your hours of training</small></p>	<p><b>Level 1: Training</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Incentive: \$500*</b></span></p> <p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of employment as a direct care worker</li> <li>• 15 hours of Career Builder courses</li> </ul> <p><small>* You may complete and claim incentives twice to earn a total of \$1000 maximum for the Training Level 1</small></p>
<p><b>Level 2: Learn Bonus</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Incentive: \$500</b></span></p> <p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of employment as a direct care worker</li> <li>• A one-time bonus after completing 15 hours of courses from Level 1: Learn</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level 2: Practice</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Incentive: \$500</b></span></p> <p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of employment as a direct care worker</li> <li>• Worked as a direct care worker 40 hours in the last month</li> <li>• Completed Level 1: Training</li> </ul>
<p><b>Level 3: Earn</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Incentive: \$500</b></span></p> <p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of employment as a direct care worker</li> <li>• Worked as a direct care worker 40 hours a month for 3 months</li> <li>• Completed 15 hours from Level 1: Learn</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level 3: Pro</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Incentive: \$2500</b></span></p> <p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of employment as a direct care worker</li> <li>• Worked as a direct care worker 40 hours a month for 5 additional months</li> <li>• Completed Level 1: Training and Level 2: Practice</li> </ul>

*\* If a caregiver's employer offers courses under the CalGrows Employer Partnership Program, they are not eligible to participate in the Learn and Earn Incentive Program.*





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<p><a href="#">View Courses</a></p>	<p><a href="#">View Courses</a></p>
<p><small>*If your employer offers courses under the CalGrows Employer Partnership Program, you are not eligible to participate in the Learn and Earn Program Incentive. To learn more, click <a href="#">here</a>.</small></p>	

## Incentive Eligibility

We encourage caregivers to submit claims early before funds are exhausted.

Unpaid family and friend caregivers do not qualify for incentive payments.

In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program providers or direct care workers providing care in institutional settings such as hospitals or skilled nursing facilities are also not eligible. IHSS Providers can qualify for incentives through the IHSS Career Pathways program. Learn more at <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/cdss-programs/ihss/ihss-career-pathways-program>.







## CalGrows Support & Help

If you need support or need additional help, you can contact [help@calgrows.org](mailto:help@calgrows.org) and the PCG team will reach out to you shortly.

Check out the [Partner Outreach Toolkit](#) for supporting resources for all of your communication needs.

## About Us

### California Department of Aging (CDA)

The California Department of Aging (CDA) is under the umbrella of the California Health and Human Services Agency. It administers programs that serve older adults, adults with disabilities, family caregivers, and residents in long-term care facilities throughout the State. These programs are funded through the federal Older Americans Act, the Older Californians Act, the Medi-Cal program, and state General Fund.

### Public Consulting Group (PCG)

Founded in 1986 and headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, PCG helps primarily public sector health, education, and human services organizations make measurable improvements to their performance and processes. PCG believes in the power of the public sector and knows that good results mean healthy, empowered, and successful individuals, families, and communities.

