

Home Care Comparisons and Questions to Ask

Consumer Cost Comparison

	Employment Agency	Placement Agency (Registry)
Employer	<i>The agency is the employer</i>	<i>You are the employer</i>
Hourly Rate	\$23.50	\$17.50
Payroll Taxes	<i>Included in the rate</i>	<i>You Pay</i>
Worker's Comp	<i>Included in the rate</i>	<i>You Pay</i>
Agency Fee	<i>None</i>	\$22 per shift
Total Cost		
Five-Hour Shift	\$118	\$122
Eight-Hour Shift	\$188	\$182

* Quoted rates are for illustration purposes only. Actual rates vary by provider.

Questions You Should Ask Before Deciding on an Agency

- How does the agency recruit, select and train caregivers?
- Should a scheduling conflict occur, are their trained back-up caregivers?
- Are your caregivers bonded and insured?
- What type of background checks and screenings does the agency perform?
- Does the agency have written personnel policies, benefits packages, and malpractice insurance? You're more likely to get a committed and dedicated aide when the company selects its staff carefully and supports them with the proper policies, protections, and incentives. The extent of the background check varies state to state.
- Are nurses or therapists required to evaluate your loved one's home care needs? If so, would they consult with his or her physicians and family members? The various caregivers serving your loved one need to communicate effectively with each other; for example, if a doctor prescribes physical therapy, all the caregivers should be working together to further this goal. Medicare-certified agencies are required to have this sort of coordination.
- Does the agency include the client and his or her family members in developing the plan of care?
- Does the agency assign supervisors to oversee the quality of care that clients are receiving in their homes? If so, how often do these individuals make visits?
- Who can the care recipient and his or her family members call with questions or complaints?

- How does the agency follow up on and resolve problems? This helps ensure that the caregivers are performing the services correctly, and responding to the care recipient's changing needs.
- What are the financial procedures of the agency?
- Do they furnish written statements explaining all of the costs and payment plan options associated with the home care services it provides?
- What procedures does the agency have in place to handle emergencies?
- If the client decides, at any time, to terminate the services without notice, what procedures are in place to notify the family member who hired the agency?