

**Absolute Companion Care**  
Caregiver Job Description  
Levels I, II, III

**Overview:** Caregivers employed by Absolute Companion Care (ACC) have evidence of life experience or education in the field of elder care. Caregivers provide varying levels of at-home or in-residence care to elders who request companion services, home care services, errands and transportation, assistance with activities of daily living (bathing, dressing, feeding, etc.) and Alzheimer's or dementia care. Not all caregivers provide all levels of care. Geographic areas served include the northern part of Baltimore City, greater Baltimore County and neighboring northern areas of Carroll and Harford Counties in Maryland.

**Requirements:**

1. Education and Experience
  - a. Levels I and II: Education: High School Diploma or GED equivalent. Level III: Certified Nursing Assistant preferred but not required. In certain cases, under the direction of the RN, a noncertified caregiver may perform some types of Level III care.
  - b. First Aid and CPR (may be completed after initial hiring)
  - c. Work or Life experience: experience in caregiving for an elder or other family/friends, household management skills including activity planning, cooking and meal planning and preparation, use of appliances, knowledge of basic home safety information, organizational needs, etc.
  - d. Complete in-service educational requirements offered in order to improve caregiving knowledge, skills, and behaviors (ongoing during employment)
  - e. Maturity and evidence of sound judgment, courtesy, and professionalism
2. Background, Health, and Physical Requirements
  - a. Clean background check, driving record (obtain from MVA), drug and alcohol screen
  - b. Certificate of good health or letter from a physician including a negative TB test, free of communicable disease and Hepatitis series (or a letter of declination).
  - c. Level III services for non-ambulatory clients: must be able to use (or willing to be trained to use) medical assistive devices (i.e. Hoyer Lift) for patient transfer and must be able to lift patient from chair to lift, bed to chair, chair to car, etc.
  - d. Must be able to stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl, climb stairs or ladders, reach with hands and arms, talk, hear, and see.
  - e. Must be able to walk with normal gait, push client in wheelchair, assist with client exercises, assist client to bathroom and elsewhere, bear weight (leaning or holding) of 120 lbs for short periods of time, stand for extended periods of time.
  - f. Must have current driver's license, own vehicle with registration and proof of insurance, and be willing to use said vehicle for errands and transportation for care recipient.
  - g. Employees must maintain and provide proof of vehicle insurance with at least 100/300/100: \$100,000 bodily injury per person, 300,000 bodily injury per accident, and 100,000 property damage per accident. If lesser coverage is carried by the employee, that employee will NOT, under any circumstances, be covered under the excess basis auto liability insurance policy held by ACC.
3. Communication Skills
  - a. Must use English as a first language and speak in a way that clients will be able to understand.
  - b. Proper grammar and language use in verbal (including telephone) and written communication (skill in note-taking and correspondence) is essential and required. Speak slowly and patiently.

- c. Must be able to read aloud in a smooth and comprehensible manner.
- d. Must have excellent listening skills and the ability to organize daily activities and errands for a care recipient.
- e. Communication and courtesy with other caregivers to ensure continuity of care
- f. Ability to collaborate and communicate with supervisor or owner of ACC, client, and family members of client with regards to best care for client

4. Abilities

- a. Must dress in a professional, conservative manner as suggested by the wishes of the client and the policies suggested by ACC.
- b. Must maintain a neat and clean vehicle if used for client transport.
- c. Must demonstrate effective initiative, monitoring, and follow-up skills.
- d. Time management, detail oriented ability is essential.
- e. Demonstrate household management skills including meal planning and preparation, use of appliances, knowledge of basic home safety information, organizational skills
- f. Record daily activities and menus in the Care Notebook provided for each client

5. Additional requirements

- a. Willingness to be a team player and be willing to work flexible hours including weekends and holidays (when needed) and consider as needed assignments when necessary
- b. Willingness to participate in the activities of ACC including occasional conferences or meetings within the community
- c. Sign employment documents which include 1) a non-compete clause preventing solicitation of and/or working independently or privately for clients and their families, and 2) agreement not to disclose proprietary information that is the property of ACC, 3) provide identification documents, etc.

**Reporting relationship:**

The caregiver will report to ACC leadership depending on the issue at hand: team leader, Supervising RN, the Administrative Coordinator, Associate Director, or Director.

**Authority:**

1. Employee caregivers represent ACC as a Caregiver at the Level I, II, or III description, whichever has been accepted and/or assigned.
2. The caregiver has the authority to collaborate with the team leader and client (and client representative where appropriate) to plan, organize, schedule, and carry out the Plan of Care agreed upon by the RN based on initial assessment of need .
3. The caregiver has the authority to report and recommend safety hazards within the home and make recommendations for their elimination, correction, or improvement to the supervising RN or ACC leadership.
4. The caregiver has the authority to call for emergency assistance on behalf of a client.

**Responsibilities:**

1. Responsibilities include the planning, organizing, and implementation of the duties described below in accordance with the written plan of care individualized for each care recipient by the supervising RN.
2. Caregiver (or team leader if applicable) will record daily care notes and submit original copies to ACC at the end of each week.
3. Caregiver will report in and out each working day from the client's residence.
4. Caregiver will comply with ACC's Policies and Procedures (providing at training and orientation after hiring).

## **Principle Duties:**

### **Level I Home and Companion Services**

1. Level I services are basic tasks related to companionship and simple assistance with home-related activities and errands.
2. Become acquainted with the layout of the home. Use a checklist to perform a safety check and identify location of electrical panel, fuel supply, meters, water turn off, fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, etc.
3. Make note of safety issues and communicate to ACC leadership, client and/or client representative
4. Communicate and collaborate with client (and where appropriate, client representative) to carry out routine

#### Example of Level I Home Services:

- Answer door and phone and take messages; accept home deliveries
- Assistance with calendar planning and maintenance
- Meal and snack reminders and suggestions (or accompanying out to meals)
- Organize photo albums, scrap books, memory making
- Pet maintenance (simple): feeding, admitting in and out of house

#### Examples of Level I Companion Services

- Activity planning, appointment scheduling
- Accompany/transport out to meals and appointments
- Companionship, conversation, discussion of current and historical events, reminisce about the past
- Errands directed by the care recipient or family (as related to care recipient only: prescription pick up, dry cleaning, etc.)
- Exercise assistance and encouragement (accompany walking, assist with an exercise plan recommended by a health care professional)
- Offer suggestions regarding television use; rent/play videos and DVDs
- Offer suggestions and help plan activities (read books, magazines, library excursions, play cards, do crafts)

### **Level II Home and Companion Services**

1. Level II Caregivers provide assistance with instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs) <sup>1</sup> with greater activity and involvement than Level I services.
2. Level II services incorporate (are “in addition to”) the Level I Services
3. More physical tasks are undertaken and follow-through with planning occurs (e.g. process involves grocery list making, coupon clipping, and follow through with grocery selection and shopping, putting groceries away, etc.).
4. Communicate and collaborate with client (and where appropriate, client representative) to carry out plan of care determined by ACC RN.

#### Examples of Level II home services:

- Assist with pet care (may include visits to the vet)
- Assistance with telephone use & correspondence
- Bill organization, prioritization, assistance with check writing & and mailing; mail management
- Clothing selection; grooming and dressing guidance
- Grocery list making; coupon clipping, grocery shopping

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<sup>1</sup> National Center for Health Care Statistics: Definitions of IADLS. Available <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/datawh/nchsdefs/iadl.htm>

- Gather and take out trash and recyclables
- Health care/prescription plan claim filing assistance
- Light housekeeping; straightening up; houseplant care
- Laundry; bed linen change when requested/needed, ironing
- Meal planning and preparation (using client recipes when requested)
- Organization of closets, drawers, refrigerator
- Plan, prepare, clean up meals; prepare and label future meals
- Prepare stable bathing environment, make safety and equipment recommendations
- Supervise home and yard maintenance (where applicable); check batteries, make basic safety recommendations

Examples of Level II companion services:

- Assist with self-administered medication (coach, cue, remind, offer, and document whether or not taken).
- Airport assistance for departures and arrivals
- Assist with bedtime or morning wake-up
- Cognitive/mental stimulation activities individually suited to each client, where appropriate
- Diet and nutrition assistance and planning as directed by RN
- Errands accompanied or directed by the care recipient (as related to care recipient only: prescription pick up, dry cleaning, etc.)
- General shopping, (household, wardrobe, etc.)
- Social entertainment activities directly involving the care recipient (arranging for visits to or from family, friends, and neighbors, preparing and serving refreshments, accompanying care recipients on visits, encouraging conversation, etc. Note: this is not intended to be interpreted as assisting, preparing, catering, or serving for family members or their households). Includes caregiver escort.
- Transportation and accompaniment directly related to the needs of the care recipient (appointments, religious services, club activities). Caregiver will transport and/or escort.

**Level III Services**

1. Level III caregivers perform activities included in Levels I and II.
2. Level III care includes dementia-related illnesses and/or caregiving under the direction of hospice.
3. Level III care follows a personalized care plan devised by the RN and may or may not include direction from a physician.
4. Level III caregivers partially or totally assist with some or all activities of daily living (ADLs) as defined by the Katz Index<sup>2</sup> and consist of bathing, dressing, toileting, transferring, continence, and feeding
5. Depending on the results of a client assessment by the RN, we may assign caregivers 1) who are certified to perform certain nursing skills (CNAs or LPNs) or a 2) noncertified but trained caregivers who have demonstrated competence in these areas by the RN.
6. ADL Assessment of clients (using the Katz Index) determines level of care required and may include some or all of the following, depending on assessment determination:
  - Transfer (including use of lifts) of client
  - Assistance with dressing; completely dressing client
  - Bathing a single part of the body (back, disabled extremity, genital area)

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<sup>2</sup> Katz S. (1983). Assessing Self-Maintenance: Activities of Daily Living, Mobility and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*. 21(12); 721-726.

- Bathing entire body; assist or transfer client in and out of the tub or shower
  - Care for patient who is partially or totally incontinent of bowel and/or bladder (including dressing, changing, diapering, cleansing, clean-up)
  - Partial or total help with feeding
  - Toileting; transfer to toilet or bedpan/commode, assistance with pericare and cleansing
7. Level III services also include administration of therapies resulting from the use of durable medical equipment as prescribed and directed by a physician, therapist, nurse, or pharmacist.
  8. Alzheimer's and Dementia Caregivers will complete a certification course provided by the ACC.
  9. Dementia Care will follow the guidelines (provided) as recommended by the *Alzheimer's Association Campaign for Quality Residential Care: Dementia Care Practice Recommendations for Assisted Living Residences and Nursing Homes* by the Alzheimer's Association including
    - Food and fluid consumption – screening and planning for nutritional care, proper nutrition and hydration, promotion of pleasant and enjoyable mealtime
    - Pain management (in coordination with health care team recommendations – ease distress caused by pain and consider quality of life, treat pain as “fifth vital sign” by routinely assessing and treating in a formal, systematic way (just as one would pulse, blood pressure, temperature, and respiration), and tailor pain management to each client in collaboration with the health care team.
    - Social engagement – providing context with personal meaning, interactions to do “with” and not “for” the client, respectful toward client preferences

#### **Standards of Performance**

1. Employee will complete skill and knowledge assessments including situational examples prior to employment
2. Evaluation and skill assessment will occur for Level II and III caregivers every 45 days.
3. Employee will undergo a written, annual evaluation.
4. The supervising RN will provide a mentoring visit for the caregiver when assigned to a new client.
5. The RN makes a site visit every 45-90 days depending on Level of Care provided.
6. Performance standards include the following and the caregiver will:
  - a. Provide quality care in a consistent manner
  - b. Place the safety, comfort, and needs of the client before all else
  - c. Demonstrate evidence of a satisfied client (and family where applicable)
  - d. Dress and conduct him/herself in a professional manner compatible with the policies and procedures
  - e. Record efficient, legible, orderly care notes on a daily basis and return originals weekly to executive office
  - f. Make effective use of “downtime” (i.e. when client is sleeping, caregiver takes care of household/caregiver needs first and devotes minimal time to caregiver personal phone calls or tasks)
  - g. Demonstrates follow-up action to all requests or problems
  - h. Consults supervisor and asks questions when in doubt on how to more appropriately perform and complete the assigned tasks or responsibilities
  - i. Provides assistance with ADLs in a consistent, compassionate, and organized manner.
  - j. Care follows the guidelines (outlined under Level III services Section 4) as recommended by the *Alzheimer's Association Campaign for Quality Residential Care: Dementia Care Practice Recommendations for Assisted Living Residences and Nursing Homes*
7. Knowledge and skills
  - a. Knowledge of client environment
  - b. Knowledge of client routine and preferences

- c. Interface and communication with clients and colleagues
  - d. Initiative, monitoring, and follow-up skills with both client and household
  - e. Demonstrates efficient organization and operation of client's place of residence (where applicable)
  - f. Performs safety check and recommendations for improvement
  - g. Shows familiarity with layout of client residence regarding safety and medical procedures, location of utilities, etc.
  - h. Demonstrates evidence of household management including (where applicable) organization, maintenance, budgeting and bill payment, shopping, etc.
  - i. Demonstrates proper use of nutrition and menu planning, cooking and advanced meal preparation; grocery shopping
  - j. Demonstrates coordination and collaboration with the health care team for each client (health care providers, family members or health agent, client, and Absolute Companion Care) (where applicable)
  - k. Demonstrates knowledge of client's medications (reason for use, side effects, dosage, prescribing physician, etc.) (where applicable)
  - l. Performs universal precautionary procedures and maintains durable medical equipment appropriately
  - m. Demonstrates skill in assisting with ADLs (bathing, dressing, feeding, toileting, and transferring)
8. Teamwork
- a. Follows and complies with the Policies and Procedures of ACC
  - b. Communicates and collaborates with other caregivers and colleagues with the intent of providing a consistent continuum of care
  - c. Treats colleagues, caregivers, employer, and clients (and families) with respect and courtesy
  - d. Checks in and out each day as required, reports on time
  - e. Willing to work flexible hours including weekends and holidays (when needed)
  - f. Willingness to participate in the activities of Absolute Companion Care including occasional conferences or meetings within the community
  - g. Provides adequate notice of inability to work and schedule changes
  - h. Follows appropriate procedures for conflict resolution
9. Continuing Education
- a. Attends in-service educational opportunities provided by ACC
  - b. Pursues outside continuing education (seminars, workshops, symposia, conferences, internet resources, applicable literature) opportunities where available

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE ONLY.

I hereby acknowledge that I have read my above assigned Job Description and I hereby make my commitment that, to the best of my ability, I will apply myself and try my best to achieve the responsibilities, duties, and the excellent standards for performance rating criteria of my job description.

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Employee printed name

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Employee signature

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Date

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Supervisor printed name

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Supervisor signature

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Date

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President, Absolute Companion Care

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Date