

# PROGRESS NOTES



## **Progress Notes Toolkit: A guide for Personal Support Workers serving people with disabilities in Oregon**

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# About this Guide

Oregon uses Medicaid dollars to provide supports for people with disabilities. Progress notes are one way to be sure funds are used appropriately to meet the needs of people served. The goal of this guide is to help Personal Support Workers (PSWs) write useful progress notes. This document is online at the Office of Developmental Disabilities Services website for Provider Resources.

## Website

<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/DD/PROVIDERS-PARTNERS/Pages/index.aspx>

**Using this Guide:** This guide can be used as one complete document, or each section can be used individually. Quick reference pages, resources and learning activities are included.

## Progress Notes

A progress note is written information that describes what you did to meet the needs of the person you serve. You must document your PSW activities in progress notes.

### Purpose

#### *Paychecks*

You must turn in a progress note with each timesheet. Your payment could be delayed until missing progress notes are turned in.

#### *Billing*

Medicaid requires that PSW providers keep records to document “the extent of services the provider furnishes to recipients”. Progress notes are evidence that the service was provided. They are important for payment of service claims.

#### *Legal Record*

Your notes become part of the person’s permanent legal record. Progress notes may be used in legal proceedings, audits or investigations. They can also provide a paper trail in case of conflict or difficult situations.

#### *Monitoring*

Services Coordinators and Personal Agents review progress notes to see how supports are working. They document progress towards a person’s Individual Support Plan (ISP) goals and desired outcomes. Your progress notes are a valuable source of information.

#### *Quality Care*

Quality progress notes are important to a person’s care. The team gains information from your records. At times this may include support staff, medical staff, therapists, and others.

#### *A Person’s story*

Progress notes help map out a person’s progress. Your notes are part of their story.

Turn in progress notes with your timesheets. They can be on a separate page. Submitting progress notes in a timely manner helps keep the team informed. Please type or write clearly.

## What to Include



Progress notes are a summary of what occurred. Include your name, the name of the individual, date of service and date of progress note.

Progress notes also need to explain what activity you did. Make sure to describe the following:

- What actions you took and what specific **support** you provided.
- What you did to help meet the person's **health and safety needs**.
- What you did to help meet the person's other **support needs**.

(examples: managing medication, preparing food, guiding for street safety, using assistive devices, communication strategies, behavior supports, or safety plans)

- Any progress towards the person's ISP **goals and outcomes**.
- Is the plan working? Are there **any new needs**?

**NOTE:** Refer to your Service Agreement to see what tasks you are authorized to provide. The support you provide should address the needs and goals listed in the Service Agreement. You may also talk to your employer or the person's Services Coordinator or Personal Agent.

# Examples

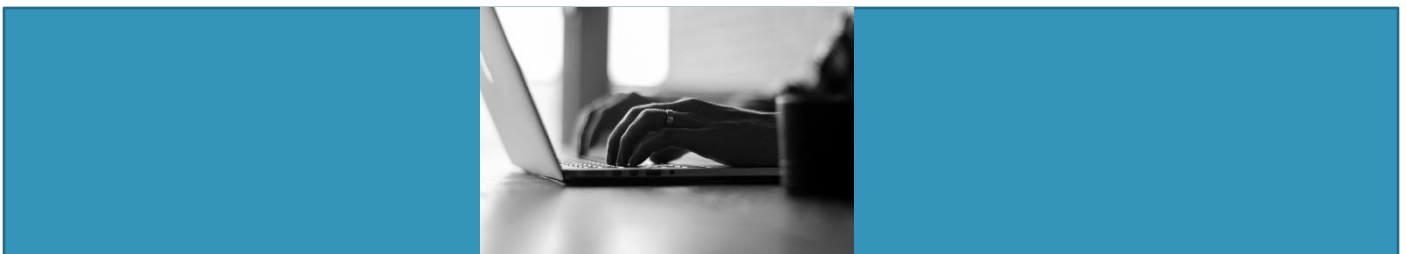
PSWs may help with a variety of activities at home and in the community. These could include:

- eating and drinking
- dressing
- grooming such as hair brushing
- bathing
- hygiene such as teeth brushing
- mobility such as walking or getting into bed
- bathroom supports
- communication
- cognition (thinking and understanding)
- social interactions
- behavior
- housekeeping
- laundry
- shopping and money management
- transportation
- medication management
- preparing meals

## Examples of supports that PSWs may provide:

- Giving cues to help a person complete an activity.
- Doing an activity because a person is unable to do so.
- Monitoring to see if help is needed.
- Offering encouragement and support.
- Redirecting a person.
- Taking care of personal items, supplies, or equipment.

**NOTE:** Be sure to use details. Be specific. Progress notes should be unique to the person served. Notes should never be copied or “cookie cutter”. Even if two people have similar support needs, their notes should be personal.



# Additional Considerations

## Privacy

Progress notes should not include the names of other people served. This is for privacy purposes. You can work with the Services Coordinator or Personal Agent to learn how to send in progress notes securely. The Oregon Home Care Commission offers free classes to PSWs. These classes cover many topics including confidentiality. Please see the Resources section for more information.

## Reporting Incidents

You must provide notification to the case management entity if unusual incidents occur. Be sure to report what happened before, during and after the incident.

An Incident Report is the written report of any:

- injury
- accident
- act of physical aggression
- use of protective physical intervention, or
- unusual incident involving an individual

An Unusual Incident is any incident involving an individual that includes:

- serious illness or accident
- death
- injury or illness requiring inpatient or emergency hospitalization
- a suicide attempt
- when an individual contacts the police or is contacted by the police
- a fire requiring the services of a fire department
- an act of physical aggression, or
- any incident requiring an abuse investigation

Per OAR 411-317 *General Definitions*

## Reporting Abuse

**Note: Personal Support Workers are mandatory abuse reporters.**

You can call **1-855-503-SAFE (7233)** to report abuse or neglect of any child or adult to the Oregon Department of Human Services. See the reference section for more information.

## Checklist

### Progress Note Checklist



#### The note describes:

- What occurred during the dates for that timesheet.
- What you did to support the person.
- What you did to help the person make progress towards ISP outcomes.
- How the person's needs are being met.
- Any new needs that may have come up.
- Any incidents that occurred.
- Any problems completing your work, including if someone does not want support.

#### Professional writing:

- State the facts. Avoid personal opinions.
- Use respectful language.
- Avoid slang or abbreviations.

**TIP:** Writing notes soon after service occurs helps you remember the details of the interaction. Submitting them in a timely manner helps keep the team updated.

## Resources

For more information, please see the following resources:

### *Person-Centered Language and Practices*

1. Core Competency eLearning modules for Direct Support Professionals  
*DHS - DD - DSP 106: Dignity, Respect, and Person Centered Language - C05231*  
<https://ilearn.oregon.gov/>
2. The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices  
<http://www.learningcommunity.us/>

### *Incident Reporting*

1. Core Competency eLearning modules for Direct Support Professionals  
*DHS - DD - DSP 127: Incident Report Requirements - C05242*  
<https://ilearn.oregon.gov/>

### *Abuse Reporting*

1. Oregon Department of Human Services  
<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/abuse/Pages/index.aspx>
2. Oregon Adult Abuse Prevention and Investigations elearning module  
*DHSOHA - OAAPI - Mandatory Abuse Reporting: People with Developmental Disabilities*  
<https://ilearn.oregon.gov/>

### *Confidentiality Practices and other PSW training opportunities*

1. Oregon Home Care Commission  
<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/HCC/PSW-HCW/Pages/OHCC-Training.aspx>
2. Developmental Disabilities Provider and Partner Resources webpage  
<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/DD/PROVIDERS-PARTNERS/Pages/index.aspx>

## References

Oregon Administrative Rule 411-375

*Independent Providers Delivering Developmental Disabilities Services*

Oregon Administrative Rule 411-317

*General Definitions and Acronyms for Developmental Disabilities Services*

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Code of Federal Regulations 431.107(b)(1-2)

*Documentation Requirements for Providers of Medicaid Services*

2015-2019 Collective Bargaining Agreement

*Article 8 - Payroll/Voucher Systems, Section 1. Properly Completed Voucher or Timesheet*



# Activities

Use the following activity descriptions to help guide discussions and learning sessions. The overall learning objective is for PSWs to be able to complete progress notes appropriately.

- 1. Fill in the Blank:** Lead a group brainstorming session. Share the statement below with participants and ask for words to fill in the blank. See sidebar for potential answers.

Progress notes should be \_\_\_\_\_.

*Learning Objective:* This activity helps PSWs find personal motivation for completing quality documentation.

- 2. Self Checks:** Individually or in groups, ask participants to address the following prompts.

- Describe why documentation is important. What are some examples in your own experience?
- Do you have a copy of your Service Agreement for the person you support? Describe what a Service Agreement is. What are some of the needs and goals/outcomes listed for a person you support? Why are these important?

*Learning Objective:* This activity helps PSWs connect broad documentation requirements with their individual work responsibilities.

- 3. Strengthening Progress Notes:** Share a scenario from the examples below. One by one, reveal each successive example of a progress note for that scenario. Facilitate discussion between each example. Individually or in groups, ask participants to think of ways to strengthen the progress note.

Discussion should highlight the best practices of documentation. For example, each additional progress note adds information about the Personal Support Worker's actions, how the individual's needs are being met, and progress toward the individuals goals. PSWs should try to add as much detail as possible, as shown in the third examples. You can repeat this activity with other potential scenarios of your own.

*Learning Objective:* This activity gives PSWs an opportunity to apply their knowledge and practice writing strong progress notes.

- Timely
- Clear
- Respectful
- Complete
- Consistent
- Individualized
- A person's story
- A legal record

## Strengthening Progress Notes activity examples

Scenario #1: PSW took Janea to the store.

### Progress note examples:

I assisted Janea with shopping.

*\*discussion\**

I assisted Janea with grocery shopping, budgeting, making change, talking with people, and transportation.

*\*discussion\**

I assisted Janea twice this month with grocery shopping. I helped her at the store with selecting needed items, staying within budget, counting correct change, communicating with the cashier and transportation to and from the store. Janea seems to be making progress on her goal of managing her money. She was able to stay within her budget this month. I reminded her to use her grocery-shopping list and helped her fill out her checkbook ledger.

*\*discussion\**

Scenario #2: PSW took Janea bowling.

### Progress note examples:

I supported Janea at the bowling alley.

*\*discussion\**

I supported Janea at the bowling alley. I provided social and communication supports while bowling.

*\*discussion\**

I assisted Janea with social integration and communication at the bowling alley once this month. I helped her prepare for conversation with the cashier. I also provided reminders for social rules at the bowling alley and safety rules when talking to people she meets. Janea said she was “nervous” about talking to people but later said she “had fun bowling.” She seems to get more comfortable each trip we take.

*\*discussion\**

Scenario #3: PSW helped Janea with getting ready.

Progress note examples:

I helped Janea every morning before work with hygiene.

*\*discussion\**

I helped Janea with hygiene in the morning before work. I helped with brushing her teeth, showering, brushing her hair and tying her shoes.

*\*discussion\**

I helped Janea in her home with hygiene every morning before work. I re-brushed her teeth after she brushed them to prevent cavities since she has a hard time reaching the back teeth. I also adjusted the water temperature in the shower and assisted with washing her hair. I reminded her to use soap for washing her body. I helped her brush and style her hair appropriately for work. I provided reminders to pick out clean clothes for work and I tied Janea's shoes.

Janea had two incidents of overnight incontinence this week. She has needed extra help with changing the bed on those days. This is less than last week (6 incidents) since she started her new medication. She has a follow up appointment with her doctor next month. I filled out the tracking sheet to be shared with the doctor.

*\*discussion\**

**Note:** This guide is intended to provide general information only and be used as a tool in developing strong documentation skills. This information is not a substitute for relevant regulations. Administrative rules and policies are subject to change and supersede information found in this guide.

