



City of Helsinki
Social work for people with disabilities

Guide for supporting the recruitment of personal assistants



Table of contents

BEFORE RECRUITMENT	1
PUBLISHING A JOB AD IN RECRUITMENT CHANNELS	3
1. CREATE A GOOD JOB AD	4
Working hours and location	5
Working conditions, requirements and non-discrimination	7
2. JOB INTERVIEW	9
Before the interview.....	9
Conducting the job interview	10
Considerations before hiring	12
3. ORIENTATION	13
CHECKLIST FOR RECRUITMENT	16
USEFUL LINKS	17

BEFORE RECRUITMENT

1. Carefully read the decision regarding your personal assistance and the conditions mentioned in it.
2. Consider how you will use the allocated hours of personal assistance in your daily life. Think about where the work will take place, what tasks will be done, and when.
3. Reflect on the type of personality and skills you expect from your assistant, and define the assistant's job description. You should also consider how many assistants you plan to recruit.
4. Choose the recruitment channels you intend to use. Various recruitment channels also presented in this guide.
5. Check whether you already have employees in an existing employment relationship or under the re-employment obligation to whom you should offer additional work before recruiting a new employee.
6. If you need support at different stages of the recruitment process, you can contact the social instructors specialising in personal assistance.

(tel. +358 9 310 45 939, tel. +358 9 310 22 279, tel. +358 9 310 39 373).



- Before starting the recruitment process, you must have a positive decision for personal assistance using the employer model. You cannot promise employment to applicants before receiving this decision or a definite confirmation from a social worker about an upcoming positive decision and its content.
- In the job advertisement and interview, you must be able to specify how much work is available to the applicants. Within the granted assistant hours, you can distribute the hours among several employees. The decision concerning the employer model also determines which days of the week and times of day assistance hours can be used. You should read the decision carefully and plan how the assistance will be arranged in your daily life.
- You may also choose a familiar person as your assistant. Please note that generally, you cannot choose a close relative as your assistant. If you have grounds for having a close relative act as your assistant, you must first seek approval from your social worker. A close relative means a spouse, child, sibling, parent, grandparent or cohabiting partner of the personal assistance user.



PUBLISHING A JOB AD IN RECRUITMENT CHANNELS

- You can independently search for an assistant through various channels such as the Job Market Finland website, which is managed by the Employment and Economic Development Office (= TE Office). You can submit an ad online by visiting Job Market Finland at [Tyomarkkinatori.fi/en](https://tyomarkkinatori.fi/en). Select 'Employers and Entrepreneurs' on the homepage and then 'Create a job posting' under that section. Creating a job ad requires strong authentication.

You can also inform the TE Office about the open position by phone or through an open online form. After this, the TE Office will contact you to arrange further details of the assignment. The customer service number for employers at the Uusimaa TE Office is +358 2 95 040 002 (Mon–Fri, 9.00–16.15).

- To create a job ad on Oikotie, go to [Oikotie.fi](https://oikotie.fi) > Työpaikat > Työnantajalle > Jätä ilmoitus. The Oikotie customer service can help with posting the ad and is available Mon–Fri, 9.00–16.00, at +358 10 808 850 (call cost 8.80 c/min) or via email at oikotie.tyopaikat@oikotie.fi.
- The Duunitori job board services are available at [Duunitori.fi](https://duunitori.fi). You can post a job ad by selecting 'Jätä ilmoitus' from the top menu of the homepage. Customer service is available Mon–Fri, 9.00–17.00, at +358 44 980 35 58 or asiakaspalvelu@duunitori.fi.
- On the Jobteaser portal, you can offer work to university students. Post a job ad by creating a user account at: [Metropolia University of Applied Sciences | Post a job ad \(jobteaser.com\)](https://www.metropolia.fi/en/working-at-metropolia/post-a-job-ad/jobteaser.com). Instructions for using the portal can be found here: [Instructions on how to use the JobTeaser service – Aarresaari](#)
- Through the Tiitus labour market service, you can recruit students from universities of applied sciences that use the service. Currently, you can recruit students from the Diakonia College of Finland and Stadin AO, the Helsinki Vocational College and Adult Institute, in the Helsinki area. Create a business account and post a job ad at [Tiitus.fi](https://tiitus.fi) > Työnantajille > Julkaise ilmoitus.

1. CREATE A GOOD JOB AD

- You can get ideas for creating a good ad by checking other job ads.
- Describe the nature of the open position truthfully and provide enough information.
- Explain your assistance needs and the most important tasks. You should also mention if assistance involves care duties or the use of assistive devices so that applicants understand the requirements and necessary skills.
- In the ad, provide information about yourself as an employer and the job you are offering. You should also specify whether you are looking for one or multiple employees.

Please note! Consider carefully how much personal information you wish to share in the job ad. Online job ads are publicly available, and your information may be widely spread.

- In the job description, it is a good idea to mention if there are pets or other family members present in the workplace.



Working hours and location

- Consider which factors appeal specifically to potential candidates and highlight them. For example, flexible working hours and the variety of tasks can be attractive to personal assistant candidates.

You can post your job ad anonymously if you do not want your name in public, and you wish to protect your privacy. For example, if you post your ad through the TE Office, you can select the 'anonymous employer' option when you enter the employer's information.

- Specify how much work is available, and whether the working hours are fixed or variable. If possible, clearly state the times and days when assistance is needed, and whether it is day or shift work.
- If you are recruiting more than one employee, define how the working hours will be divided between employees, and whether working hours can be negotiated between the employer and employee.



- According to section 3 of the Employment Contracts Act, an employment contract is valid indefinitely unless there is a justified reason for a fixed-term contract. A fixed-term contract cannot be offered at the employer's initiative without justification.
- Specify whether the employment contract is indefinite or fixed-term. If it is a fixed-term contract that may be extended, you can mention this in the ad as well.
- Indicate where the work will primarily take place. For example, specify whether the assistant will help you at home, with hobbies, at work or during errands such as shopping.



Working conditions, requirements and non-discrimination

- Indicate whether the employment relationship follows the collective agreement between the Heta Union of the Employers of Personal Assistants in Finland and the Trade Union for the Public and Welfare Sectors JHL or the labour laws and the pay terms defined by the Helsinki Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services. Only the assistants of employers who are members of the Heta Union are covered by the collective agreement between the Heta Union and JHL.
- Describe the type of employee you are looking for: what skills and strengths are needed for the job, and what qualities would be beneficial. Do not use discriminatory selection criteria (such as age, nationality, or religion).
- The Non-Discrimination Act prohibits discrimination in job advertisements. Under the Act, no one may be discriminated against based on age, origin, nationality, language, religion, beliefs, opinions, political activity, trade union activity, family relationships, health status, disability, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristic.



- Generally, previous work experience or education is not required for the role of a personal assistant. This should be considered when determining the necessary qualities of an assistant. Excessively strict requirements regarding work experience or education may exclude potential applicants. You can also mention that the candidate will be oriented to the job.
- If you can hire an assistant whose working language is another than Finnish or Swedish, this should be mentioned in the job ad. Finnish citizenship or native Finnish language skills can only be required if there is a justified reason related to the job.
- Write clear and detailed instructions and contact information in your ad: how to apply for the job, and how and from whom to obtain additional information. Indicate whether applications and additional inquiries should be sent by email or as a verbal application via phone, for example.



2. JOB INTERVIEW

Before the interview

- Handle and store job applications in a way that does not violate the applicants' privacy.
- Prepare the interview questions in advance before the interview.
- Clearly agree on when and where the interview will take place, and what you expect the applicant to bring to the interview (e.g. certificates, work permit).
- Choose a quiet environment for the interview and allow enough time for it.
- Dispose of unnecessary and outdated job applications appropriately and carefully to ensure the protection of personal data and information security.



Conducting the job interview

- Be prepared to provide the applicant with more detailed information during the interview than what was given in the job advertisement, such as details about the job content and working hours.
- Explain in more detail the type of employee you are looking for and the specifics of the job. For example, it may be necessary to clarify the division of roles between the user of personal assistance and the assistant. The employer directs the employee in work-related tasks, and the assistant should not direct the employer.
- During the interview, give the applicant the opportunity to ask questions and talk about themselves. This phase is important for the employer to get a better understanding of the applicant's suitability, and for the applicant to determine whether the job suits their needs and goals.
- Take notes of the interview questions and answers for reference.
- During the interview, inform the applicant about the next steps in the process, and when they can expect to receive information about the selection.
- Avoid asking questions that are not directly related to the job. Such prohibited questions include those related to military service, religion, sexual orientation, alcohol use or political beliefs, as well as personal questions about others. Questions regarding family relationships, marital status, family planning or pregnancy should not be asked either.



- According to the Employment Contracts Act, the employer must obtain the necessary information primarily from the applicant themselves. If the employer collects personal data from sources other than the applicant, the employee's consent must be obtained to collect such information. For example, you cannot search for information about the applicant on Google without their consent.
- The Act on the Protection of Privacy in Working Life stipulates that, as an employer, you may only process personal data that is immediately necessary for the employment relationship during the recruitment phase. As an employer, your right to collect personal data during the interview must be evaluated based on the job requirements, and this necessity cannot be bypassed even with the applicant's consent.
- The investigation of the criminal background of persons selected to work with minors is regulated by the Act on Checking the Criminal Background of Persons Working with Children (504/2002). The right to access criminal record information is provided for in the Criminal Records Act (770/1993).



Considerations before hiring

- Remember to consider any limitations imposed by current or former employees and legislation when selecting an employee.
 - Employees who have been laid off,
 - Part-time employees, or
 - Employees under the re-employment obligation have priority for available positions before they can be offered to external candidates. Employees on parental leave also have the legal right to return primarily to their contractual position.

- If a more qualified applicant is not selected, they may have reasons to challenge the selection process, if they believe that the employer discriminated against them based on gender, for example.

It is advisable to allow time for careful consideration before the hiring decision. It may not be possible to assess all the information provided by the applicant or compare them to other candidates during the interview itself.

- Before the employment starts, ensure that you have submitted the power of attorney for the employer's statutory insurance to the social work for people with disabilities and received confirmation that the insurance have come into effect.
- Remember to also arrange preventive occupational health care by entering into an occupational healthcare service agreement with Terveystalo. The agreement should be activated once you have hired your first employee.

3. ORIENTATION

- After selecting an employee, ensure that they are properly oriented. Orientation provides the foundation for performing work tasks successfully. The orientation process is based on legislation. Section 14 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (738/2002) obliges the employer to sufficiently orient the employee to their job and the working conditions in the workplace.
- Inadequate orientation or failure to provide it rarely results in motivated employees. Insufficient orientation also impacts the quality of assistance the client receives.
- Creating an orientation plan ensures that orientation is thorough and sufficient.
- If the job involves regularly recurring tasks, you can create a weekly calendar in which the tasks are listed. In this way, the assistant can anticipate what to do and when.
- After orientation, monitor the employee's performance and provide constructive feedback.
- Guide the employee on how to prevent work-related hazards and issues. It is also important to instruct them on handling any disruptions or emergency situations.
- Instruct the employee on safe working methods and the correct use of work tools.



- If necessary, direct the employee to a pre-employment medical examination and provide information about the current occupational health service provider (Terveystalo) and the contents of the preventive occupational health care. Information about the Occupational Health Care Act, related regulations and workplace inspection reports should also be available to the employee. The necessity of a pre-employment medical examination is determined by occupational health services.
- Supplement and repeat the guidance given during orientation as necessary.
- Keep in mind that the employee may not automatically perform tasks in a way that matches your expectations or preferences for how the task should be done. A personal assistant needs to adapt to being part of their employer's personal life and must act in the way that the employer prefers – this is also a sensitive matter for the employee. The employee cannot know the employer's wishes unless they are communicated clearly in everyday situations.
- If necessary, complete a length-of-service bonus application for the employee and send it to payroll. Attach copies of the assistant's employment certificates to the application. These certificates must indicate the nature of the work and the length of employment so that the starting date for the length-of-service bonus can be calculated.



- Orientation for the assistant includes practical guidance on tasks such as the use of assistive devices. However, it is important to remember that orientation is also needed for everyday matters such as the use of household appliances or taking out the trash. The assistant is working in an unfamiliar environment, where all routines are new to them. For this reason, even the simplest practical matters should be discussed together.
- Orientation also includes communication, which means open discussion in the workplace and providing opportunities to ask questions and clarify uncertainties.
- In its simplest form, orientation covers all the measures that help the employee become familiar with the operations and practices of the workplace, their work tasks and the related expectations.
- Successful orientation positively impacts the workplace atmosphere and promotes the quality of work, safety and good cooperation.



CHECKLIST FOR RECRUITMENT

- Read through the decision about the employer model carefully, including any restrictions it imposes on the use of a personal assistant, such as the number of hours, specific times and days of the week.
- Consider whether you have any employees already, or under the re-employment obligation. Do you have a legal obligation to offer them extra work firstly?
- Define the type of employee you are seeking, the main tasks, the duration of the employment, working hours and other key factors relevant to the position.
- You may also choose a familiar person as your assistant. NB! as a rule, you cannot select a close relative as your assistant. However, if you have grounds for having a relative act as your assistant, you can seek approval from your social worker before hiring an assistant.
- Draft an appealing job advertisement and publish it on the TE Services website, for example. Before writing the advertisement, you can review other listed jobs to get ideas on how to create a good ad.
- Review the applications you receive, plan the interview questions and invite potential candidates for an interview. At the interview, ask to see any necessary documents such as a work permit in the case of an employee with foreign background.
- When hiring an assistant for the first time, ensure that you have submitted the power of attorney for using the service to the disability services, and that you have received confirmation that the statutory insurance is in effect.
- Draw up a contract with the employee and ensure the necessary forms are sent to payroll. The employment contract and related documents should be sent to: Financial Management Services, Personal Assistance, P.O. Box 231, FI-00099 City of Helsinki, or by email to: talpa.suoratyo@hel.fi.
- Make a contract for the statutory preventive occupational health care with Terveystalo. If necessary, direct the assistant to a pre-employment medical examination. You can contact Terveystalo for an assessment of whether the pre-employment medical examination is necessary.
- If your employee has previously worked as a personal assistant or in related roles, send a length-of-service bonus application to payroll, along with copies of the assistant's previous work certificates.
- Ensure your assistant is well-oriented to the job and the work environment. Discuss the key and specific aspects of the employment relationship with the assistant (e.g. confidentiality obligations, annual and sick leave, occupational health care, layoffs).

If you need support at different stages of the recruitment process, you can contact the social instructors who provide support for clients using the employer model of personal assistance at: +358 9 310 45 939, +358 9 310 22 279, +358 9 310 39 373.

USEFUL LINKS

Orientation and work guidance – Proactive occupational safety.

[The Centre for Occupational Safety \(ttk.fi/en\)](https://ttk.fi/en)

Recruitment of an assistant (Heta Union of the Employers of Personal Assistants in Finland, in Finnish)

– [Heta-liitto.fi](https://heta-liitto.fi)

Employment Industry Finland –

[Henkilostoala.fi](https://henkilostoala.fi)



Legislation

Employment Contracts Act

[Employment Contracts Act 55/2001 – Legislation – FINLEX®](#)

Occupational Safety and Health Act

[Occupational Safety and Health Act 738/2002 – Legislation – FINLEX®](#)

Act on the Protection of Privacy in Working Life

[Act on the Protection of Privacy in Working Life 759/2004 – Legislation – FINLEX®](#)

Equality and non-discrimination (Occupational safety and health)

[Equality and non-discrimination – Website of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Finland](#)

City of Helsinki
Social work for people with disabilities
21 August 2024
www.hel.fi/en

