

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the second edition of “Managing Your Personal Assistance Services.” In the four years since we first published this Handbook to help IHSS consumers, there have been several important changes to the IHSS program. In response, the Public Authority staff has updated it to reflect current IHSS program requirements, Public Authority programs and services, and several consumer forms.

The Public Authority would like to acknowledge the authors of the Handbook’s first edition: Consumer In Action for Personal Assistance - CIAPA. Their time and dedication resulted in a unique resource written for and by consumers. The positive feedback we consistently receive about this Handbook results from the unique experience of its authors. This group of people with disabilities, writing from the perspective of having used and managed personal assistance services, is what makes our Handbook practical for every day use.

It is our hope that our Consumer Handbook will continue to be of use to the growing number of seniors and people with disabilities who use personal assistance services. It is part of our continuing effort to support and expand consumer programs that promote independence, dignity, and choice in the lives of users of personal assistance services.

### FIRST EDITION INTRODUCTION (1998)

As we reflected on our own experiences, we concluded that there is a need for a step-by-step manual that explains how to locate, hire, and supervise a personal assistant. While researching what was available, it became obvious that most manuals were put together by professionals who, although well intentioned, lacked the sensitivity that can come only from experience in using the system as a consumer. Although the intention of the system is to provide support services for people with disabilities, experience caused us to realize it is really set up in a manner that feels degrading, is not user friendly, and is built primarily around the needs of administrators.

We must take a proactive stance if we want to achieve maximum independence. It took many of us years to realize this, and longer to learn how to do it. With this manual we hope to aid you in doing the same, with less aggravation and more speed.

This manual is not only for people new to personal assistance services or who qualify for IHSS, but also for everyone whose independence depends on these services. Your personal assistant frees you from institutionalization. Finding and supervising your personal assistant may be the most important thing you do if you wish to remain independent and able to make your own choices.

We hope you find this manual useful in **Managing Your Personal Assistance Services.**

**Consumers In Action for Personal Assistance  
C I A P A (1998)**

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