

Towson University (TU) is committed to providing equal access to individuals with disabilities in accordance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Accessibility & Disability Services (ADS) engages in an interactive and collaborative process with students to determine eligibility for reasonable accommodations. The University recognizes that a qualified student with a disability may need the services of a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) as an accommodation, to assist them with fully participating in the University's programs, services, and activities. The purpose of these guidelines is to describe the key concepts involved in a request for a PCA and to clarify the various responsibilities of the student, the PCA and the ADS office in the process.

## I. Definitions

- A. **"Qualified Student with a Disability"** is a student with a Documented Disability who meets the academic and technical standards required for admission to Towson or participation in the programs, services, or activities offered by the University with or without Reasonable Accommodation.
- B. **"Personal Care Attendant (PCA)"** is a person hired by a qualified student with a disability to perform activities of daily living in Towson University's academic and nonacademic activities including residence halls. A PCA works directly for and is employed by the student. A PCA is not considered a student and does not act on behalf of the student with instructors, students, or staff, engage in instructional activities, provide academic support or in any way influence the student's learning during class time. A PCA should not ask questions, make comments, take notes, or record activities. A PCA's sole purpose is to address the student's disability-related personal care needs. The type of task performed by PCAs vary from person to person but may include the following:
- Provide help with activities of daily living, such as bathing, dressing, toileting, and grooming
  - Housekeeping
  - Meal preparation or assistance with eating
  - Positioning or transferring to and from a wheelchair
  - Monitoring medical conditions
  - Reminding to take prescribed medications
  - Transporting and/or escorting
  - Turning pages, getting out supplies
  - Taking off and putting on coats
  - Opening doors
  - Alerting to distracting repetitive movements or sounds
  - Alerting to dangerous environments/situations
- C. **"Classroom Assistant"** is an individual hired by Towson University to assist qualified students with a disability in academic settings. Classroom assistants are authorized by the University to help qualified students with a disability to access academic material presented in classrooms or computer/science labs. Personal care attendants are NOT classroom assistants and have no authority to assist in any academically related tasks in the classroom or other academic settings.

## II. Towson University Student Responsibilities

- Register with ADS by completing an online application and providing disability documentation that supports the need for a PCA on campus.
- Secure a PCA prior to attending any University activity.
- Provide ADS with the PCA's full legal name, birthdate, address, phone number, and email address.
- Provide the PCA with a copy of the Personal Care Attendant Guidelines and Agreement.
- Provide ADS with updated information if there is a PCA personnel change.
- Direct the activities of the PCA while at the University.
- Have an alternative plan of action should the regular PCA not be available to assist on a particular day.

- Establish a non-disruptive mode of communication between themselves and the PCA in the learning environment.
- Ensure the PCA abides by all TU policies, including by not limited to the Code of Student Conduct.

### **III. Personal Care Attendant Responsibilities**

- Obtain a Towson University OneCard prior to attending any University activity.
- Obtain TU Non-Affiliate Parking Permit, if applicable.
- Provide the ADS office with a copy of the required Criminal Background Investigation.
- Adhere to all applicable TU policies, including by not limited to the Code of Student Conduct.
- Act as a non-academic participant in the learning environment.
- Allow the student to take responsibility for their own behavior and assigned academic tasks.
- Conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner while on campus.
- Not discuss any confidential information about the student with faculty, staff or students.