

The Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services Program

Me? ... An Employer?

If you qualify for the RYPAS program, you will be able to hire a personal assistant of your choice. This will make you an employer. As an employer, you will have various legal and financial responsibilities.

If you cannot take care of these responsibilities, you may designate someone you trust to take care of them for you. If you think you can be an employer yourself, but don't know all the things you will have to do, you can receive training under the RYPAS program.

Local centers for independent living can teach you how to:

- write a job description
- run an ad
- interview people for the job
- hire, and/or dismiss a personal assistant
- develop a contract with your assistant
- manage your assistant
- manage legal and tax responsibilities of being an employer.

Who is Ron Yost?

Ron Yost sustained a spinal cord injury when he was 20 that resulted in quadriplegia. He was an active advocate for people with disabilities, and he fully understood how much difference having an attendant or personal assistant can make in the level of independence and quality of life for a person with a disability.

He helped develop the long-term attendant care program for people who work, which is administered by the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services. He also was involved in the initial discussions to create a program to provide personal assistance for people who could not get services through any existing program.

Although Ron died before the program was established in 1999, it was named in his honor by the legislators who sponsored the bill. Ron had a great impact on the disability community of Huntington and throughout West Virginia.

For more information, contact:

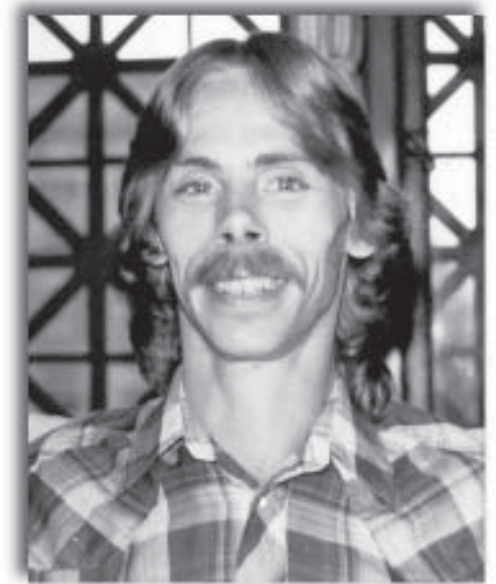
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Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services



WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE ARTS
DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES

The Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services Program

What is the Ron Yost Program?

In 1999, the West Virginia legislature passed the Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services (RYPAS) Act, creating a consumer-controlled program to enable people with severe disabilities to live in their own homes and communities. The RYPAS program provides resources for individuals with severe disabilities to hire a personal assistant to help them perform essential daily living tasks – including, but not limited to:

- getting in and out of bed, wheelchair or motor vehicle
- bathing and personal hygiene
- dressing and grooming
- meal preparation, eating and cleanup
- paying bills
- shopping and banking
- managing a daily schedule

Who manages RYPAS?

The RYPAS program is managed by a seven-member consumer-controlled board. Board members are people with disabilities, most of whom have their own personal assistants. The board makes all decisions about the program and the eligibility of applicants for services. Board members are not eligible for services while serving on the Board.

Can I receive these services?

You may receive services if you have a severe disability that affects one or more major life activity, and:

- you will always have your disability, or it will last for at least 12 months
- you need assistance to take care of the essential tasks of daily living
- you are not currently receiving personal assistance services through any Medicaid program
- you or a designee can meet your responsibilities as an employer
- you or a designee can manage your own financial and legal affairs
- you meet the income guidelines for adjusted annual income

How does the program work?

The RYPAS program provides money for you to hire a personal assistant. You may directly hire an assistant or purchase services through a health care provider or other agency. You will receive a reimbursement check every two weeks for the number of hours your assistant worked, not to exceed the number of hours approved by the RYPAS Board. The rate of reimbursement is calculated with a sliding scale based on your adjusted annual income. This income is calculated with deductions for dependents and all disability-related expenses. Reimbursement may range from 13% to 100% of the \$7.25 per hour rate. You are

responsible for paying your assistant and any applicable employment taxes. Although you may choose to pay your assistant more than \$7.25 per hour, your maximum reimbursement will be based on \$7.25 per hour.

How do I apply for services?

You may request an application packet by calling the number on the back of this brochure. The packet includes an application form, a financial survey and a short assessment form which provides an estimate of the number of hours of assistance you need.

The complete application packet should be returned to the RYPAS Board for review and eligibility determination. You will receive a letter from the Board explaining their decision.

As part of the application procedure, you will be required to apply for the Medicaid Aged and Disabled Waiver program (Title 19) and for the Medicaid Personal Care program through the Department of Health and Human Resources. An eligibility determination from DHHR regarding your Medicaid application is necessary before the RYPAS services can start. If you receive services through the A/D Waiver or personal care, you will not be eligible for RYPAS services.

When RYPAS services begin, you will file a reimbursement request every two weeks, and you will receive a check based on the timesheet(s) filed and your approved reimbursement rate.