



Learning Module for  
Supervisors

# Supporting Employees Who are Family Caregivers



A person is sitting at a desk, writing in a notebook. The scene is lit with a warm, orange-red glow, likely from a window. A potted plant is visible on the left side of the desk. The person's hands are visible, holding a pen and writing on the page. The overall atmosphere is calm and focused.

# Dual Responsibilities!

Supervisors play a key role in helping employees maintain a balance between work and home life.

# Supervisor tools

**Working caregivers are not uncommon in today's workforce. And their numbers are expected to keep growing.**

This module discusses issues facing working caregivers, and provides you with tools to support your employees who are also caregivers. Familiarizing yourself with benefits and resources available to DHHS employees who are also family caregivers is essential.

# Supervisor tools

**Dual responsibilities of working caregivers can be very demanding.**

**An employee in this situation requires extra support!**

**Support in the workplace for these employees can increase employee productivity and commitment to the agency.**



# Supervisor tools

## Objectives of this module:

1. Describe the dual roles and responsibilities of the working caregiver.
2. Identify the benefits and resources available to your employees who are also caregivers.

A person is sitting at a desk, writing in a notebook with a pen. The desk is cluttered with papers and a potted plant is visible on the left. The background shows a window with a view of a building. The entire image has a pinkish-red tint.

# Dual Roles and Responsibilities!

Challenges of a working caregiver



Working caregivers juggle two full time jobs:  
Providing care to a loved one, and working at  
DHHS.

A working caregiver may go from caregiving in  
the morning, working a full day, and then  
return to caregiving in the evening. This leaves  
little to no time to care for oneself or live one's  
own life.



# Challenges of a working caregiver

- ▶ Taking a loved one to the doctor or making some phone calls can often only be done during working hours.
- ▶ Coping with emotional stress of a loved one's decline and the grief that follows.
- ▶ Navigating the health care system when advocating for a loved one can be difficult and overwhelming.

They may feel resentful about being a caregiver, and then guilty for having felt resentful.



# Challenges of a working caregiver

- ▶ Managing the challenges of being a working caregiver can leave them exhausted and vulnerable to getting sick themselves.
- ▶ Worrying about how they can manage their work and caregiving responsibilities.

They may forego their own needs (showering, doctor's appointments, vacations, fun) because there is not enough time to do those things and maintain their caregiving responsibilities.



## Caregiver concerns

An employee might be thinking about asking questions, but not doing so for fear of losing their job. A supervisor needs to anticipate caregiver issues and be aware of what support you can offer!



## CAREGIVER questions

Are alternative work schedules available to me?

Is telecommuting or flextime an option?

Is there a way to shift the workload for a specified amount of time?

Where can I go for emotional support?

Are there resources and information that can help me?

Could our Employee Assistance Program help me?



# Ways to SUPPORT caregivers

**Accommodate** their inevitable need to handle caregiving responsibilities during normal working hours. Offer a flexible work schedule (4-day work week; long lunches; or reduction in hours).

**Recognize** their emotional needs and support them in every way possible. Encourage a sensitive environment. Encourage peer support groups. Offer personal gestures of support.

**Provide** information and educational materials to help caregivers deal with caregiving-related decisions and finding high-quality services.

## Flex Schedule Policy

The United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recommended in the *Handbook on Workplace Flexibilities and Work-Life Programs for Elder Care* (July 2015), that flexible work schedules be offered to staff so that they can select or alter their work schedules to better fit their needs and help them balance work, personal and family responsibilities. That document recommends five work schedules that provide varying degrees of flexibility within the 80-hour biweekly work cycle:

- Flexitour – employees elect start/stop times, which are then fixed.
- Gliding – employees vary start/stop times daily.
- Variable Day – employees may vary the length of the workday.
- Variable Week – employees may vary the number of hours worked each week.
- Maxiflex – employees may work fewer than 10 workdays biweekly.

The State of Nevada implements several of these already: Flexitour, Gliding, and Variable Day. In order to implement Variable Week and Maxiflex, state laws and administrative code may need adaptations.



## CAREGIVER resources



In addition to benefits and policies offered by DHHS, it would be helpful for you to know about local community-based resources outside the agency that might offer help to your employees.



# CAREGIVER resources

## **Talk**

with your employees to learn about issues of working caregivers and their situations.

## **Ask**

employees about the community agencies from which they currently receive services, as well as what help they might still need.

## **Learn**

about the caregiver resources in your community.





# CAREGIVER resources

Do local hospice programs, hospitals, or other community agencies offer caregiver support groups?

Is there a voluntary agency such as the Alzheimer's Association, that might be helpful to employees?

Do any faith communities to which your employees belong have caregiver support programs?

# Share information

Offered on our website as well as  
others about caregiver resources

Encourage caregiving employees to visit our Employee resource webpage at

[http://adsd.nv.gov/Programs/Seniors/Elder\\_Care\\_Toolkit/Caregiving\\_Employees/](http://adsd.nv.gov/Programs/Seniors/Elder_Care_Toolkit/Caregiving_Employees/)

(if link does not work, copy and paste it into the top of your internet browser)