

Personal Care Assistant (PCA) Fact Sheet

NOVA makes every reasonable effort to accommodate students with disabilities who are otherwise qualified to attend college as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In keeping with this commitment, Personal Care Assistants (PCAs) may be necessary to address the personal needs of a student with a disability so he/she may participate in the College's activities, services, and programs. PCAs are NOT allowed to stay in the classroom unless given permission as indicated on the current Memorandum of Accommodation (MOA). The specific determinations in this area are made on an individualized and class-by-class basis, in consultation with the Disability Services Office.

A student who requires personal assistant services must make arrangements to provide for his/her own personal assistant service. It is in the student's best interest to hire an impartial PCA who is not a family member or close friend. However, NOVA recognizes that a family member or friend may be called upon to perform this service.

PCAs may perform one or more of the following duties:

- Carry or hold books, materials or personal items for the student
- Manipulate books, materials or personal items for the student
- Help the student move around in the environment
- Help the student transfer from a wheelchair to a chair
- Reposition a student in a wheelchair or a chair
- Address other needs as they arise, but which do not violate the policies outlined below

PCAs are expected to:

- Follow all NOVA regulations, including but not limited to standards and expectations outlined in the NOVA Student Handbook. This handbook can be reviewed at <http://www.nvcc.edu/students/handbook/>.
- Conduct him/herself in a courteous and professional manner while on campus and in the classroom.
- Allow the student to take responsibility for his/her own academic progress and/or behavior.
- Refrain from working on or completing any of the student's academic assignments.
- Not engage in disruptive or distracting behavior. Examples of such behavior include, but are not limited to, conversing with the student, personal use of electronic devices, reading, eating, etc.
- Refrain from contact with or asking questions of faculty, staff or others on behalf of the student.
- Refrain from discussing any confidential information about the student with faculty, staff or students, in or outside of class.

- Refrain from actively participating in the class.
- Refrain from actively participating in the testing or assessment process.
- Refrain from carrying on conversations with the student during class.
- Not photograph or record any classroom activity.
- Sign the Personal Care Assistant Agreement and return it to their Disability Counselor's office each academic year. <https://www.nvcc.edu/forms/pdf/125-338.pdf>