

Helsinki

**Services for
the elderly**



**Informal
care support**

This brochure provides an overview of informal care support, including how to become an informal caregiver and the support available to caregivers.

Helsinki

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What is informal care support?

You may be eligible for informal care support if you are a relative or close family member providing care at home for someone with a memory disorder or an elderly person who requires constant care and attention.

Support consists of financial compensation for caregiving, statutory holidays to provide caregivers with essential breaks, and tailored services designed to meet the specific needs of both the caregiver and the person receiving care. The amount and type of support are determined by the level of demand and restrictions posed by the caregiving responsibilities.

You can evaluate your informal caregiving situation by using the assessment tool at omaolo.fi. This assessment is for guidance only and does not determine eligibility for support.

How to apply for informal care support

1. The care recipient must apply for informal care support. Applications can be submitted orally, via an application form, or through the maisa.fi website. The application form is available on our website at hel.fi/informal-care or can be collected from Senior Info, Siltasaarenkatu 2.
2. Attach a health care statement to the application, detailing the care recipient's situation, including diagnoses, current state of health, and functional capacity. The statement must be no older than one year.
3. Submit the application and its attachments to the client assistance service in your area. Contact details are provided at the end of this brochure.
4. You may also be asked to provide an assessment of your own state of health and functional capacity, completed by a doctor or another health care professional.
5. Before a decision is made, a staff member will visit your home to assess the care needs with you and the care recipient. This assessment evaluates how demanding and constraining the care is and will be recorded in a care and service plan. The plan outlines the services the care recipient will receive.



Informal care support agreement

Before starting as an informal caregiver, you must sign an informal care support agreement with the city. This agreement outlines the organisation of informal care.

You have a statutory insurance covering accidents that occur during care situations.

You will receive coaching when you start as a new informal caregiver.



Care groups for informal care

The complexity of informal care determines the care group and the corresponding care compensation. There are three care groups, classified based on the level of care required and the demands placed on the carer. The care compensation provided by the city depends on the care group assigned to the person receiving care.

1. First care group (highest care compensation)

The person being cared for requires extensive assistance 24 hours a day. They need help with nearly all activities and can only be left alone for short periods. In these cases, the informal caregiver is unable to work outside the home.

2. Second care group

Caregiving is physically or mentally demanding. The person being cared for requires care and supervision several nights a week, as well as constant monitoring and anticipation of their needs. Without proper supervision or guidance, their safety – or the safety of others – could be at risk.

3. Third care group (lowest care compensation)

The person receiving care requires assistance and attention multiple times a day. At night, they may need occasional care or none at all. They do not necessarily need to live with the informal caregiver, as the caregiver can visit daily and provide support at night if needed. The informal caregiver retains primary responsibility for care, even if services like daily home care are also in place.

Care compensation

Care compensation is paid on the last working day of each month and is subject to taxation. Additionally, as an informal caregiver, you accrue a pension from the compensation under the Public Sector Pensions Act.

Care compensation can be paid starting from the beginning of the month when the application for informal care support is submitted. It may also be paid from the day the care recipient is discharged from the hospital, for example.

If you receive other benefits, such as those from Kela, ensure you check how they are affected by the care compensation.

Regular services received by the care recipient, such as home care, may reduce the care compensation. However, the informal caregiver's statutory days off do not affect the care compensation.



Statutory leave for an informal caregiver

As an informal caregiver, you are entitled to 2–3 days off per month, depending on how constraining and demanding the care responsibilities are.

During your time off, care for the recipient will be arranged in the following ways:

- Substitute care
- Care at home using a service voucher
- Care provided outside the home

Substitute care

You must arrange a substitute for your time off, and the city will pay the substitute a fee for their work. The substitute can be a family member or a close relative over 18 years of age. The City of Helsinki will sign an agreement with the substitute, who will also have statutory accident insurance in case of an accident during care.

The care recipient will not be charged a copayment for using substitute care.

Care at home using a service voucher

If you choose to arrange your time off with care provided at home, you will receive a service voucher for this purpose. One day of leave is equivalent to 12 hours, but it can also be divided into smaller periods, such as two 6-hour days.

The care recipient will pay a copayment for care provided at home.

Care provided outside the home

Care for the care recipient can be arranged in the city's 24-hour care unit or at a private care facility approved by the city, using a service voucher.

Day activities can be organised to provide care during your leave, or the care recipient can also receive short-term or part-time family care.

The care recipient is responsible for paying a copayment for the care.



Other services to support informal caregivers

Coaching for informal caregivers

New informal caregivers will receive coaching to familiarise them with the various forms of support available and factors that promote well-being.

For more information about the coaching, you can contact the informal care support client advisor in your area or the social instructor for informal care.

Digital health check

A digital health check offers insights into your health and well-being. You can complete this electronic health check at omaolo.fi. Following the health check, you can access a variety of online coaching sessions.

Day activities for the elderly

Day activities for the elderly are intended for the care recipient.

The aim of day activities is to:

- support the ability of a client or a care recipient with a memory disorder to live at home
- maintain self-reliance
- maintain independent or supported coping
- support the coping of relatives and caregivers.

Informal care home-help service

The informal care home-help service is designed to support your well-being. The need for this service is assessed by the client assistance employee. Families receiving informal care support are eligible for up to eight hours of home-help service per month, typically provided in sessions of 1 to 4 hours at a time.

Social guidance for informal care

Informal care social instructors provide guidance and advice to families of informal caregivers and offer up-to-date information on available services. They also organise coaching courses for new caregivers and Life after Informal Care (Omaishoitajasta omaiseksi) groups for caregivers whose loved ones are transitioning to, or have already moved to, a care home. This service is free of charge.

For more information on the content and schedules of the groups, please contact an informal care social instructor.

Southern informal care social instructor, tel. +358 9 310 74208

Western informal care social instructor, tel. +358 9 310 24213

Northern informal care social instructor, tel. +358 9 310 46818

Eastern informal care social instructor, tel. +358 9 310 73995

Short-term care

Short-term care helps maintain and promote the functional capacity and well-being of elderly people living at home. It is provided as service housing or inpatient care and can be

arranged in the city's own care facility, a care service unit, or a private care facility using a service voucher.

Part-time care

Part-time care is a form of short-term care provided during the day or at night. The duration of care is up to 12 hours during the day and up to 13 hours at night. Short-term care can be provided up to six times a month.

Service centres offer recreational activities

Helsinki's service centres offer a variety of group activities. Located throughout the city, each service centre features a gym and a lunch restaurant. The activities are free of charge, unless stated otherwise.

For more information, please call the service centre or visit our website at hel.fi/service-centres

City sports services

Informal caregivers have free access to the City of Helsinki's indoor swimming pools, sports halls, gyms, outdoor swimming pools, and sports courses. The informal caregiver status is verified with a pay slip or pay certificate that is no more than three months old. Proof of identity must also be provided upon request.

Contact details for informal care support

Submit the application for informal care support and its attachments to the client assistance service in your area.

Southern client assistance

P.O. BOX 7160,
00099 CITY OF HELSINKI
Postal code areas: 00100,
00120–00220, 00240–00260,
00500–00530, 00600–00610

Southeast client assistance

P.O. BOX 6220,
00099 CITY OF HELSINKI
Postal code areas: 00540–00590,
00800–00880, 00960,
00980–00990

Eastern client assistance

P.O. BOX 6220,
00099 CITY OF HELSINKI
Postal code areas: 00790,
00890–00950, 00970

Western client assistance

P.O. BOX 30866,
00099 CITY OF HELSINKI
Postal code areas: 00250–00440

Northern client assistance

P.O. BOX 70763,
00099 CITY OF HELSINKI
Postal code areas: 00620–00780



You can also always contact Senior Info.

seniori.info@hel.fi • +358 9 310 44556
Siltasaarenkatu 2, 00530 Helsinki
hel.fi/senior-info

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