



Professional Family Teaching is not just a job.

It is a way of life.

As a way of life, the Professional Family Teacher's (PFTs) most important role is being a teacher, above and beyond a caregiver for the person in their home. PFTs are an instrumental part of the person achieving and experiencing the life they want and deserve to have. Accomplishing this requires time and effort to build a trusting, meaningful, positive relationship with the person and a willingness to learn teaching skills, receive coaching, patience and commitment to the many responsibilities associated with this relationship and role.

At GoodLife, we understand the enormous responsibility of being a PFT and are committed to supporting the creation of a stable and comfortable home environment where everyone involved can flourish. To ensure understanding of what this role and lifestyle are, we want to be transparent about the wide scope and nature of the responsibilities of a PFT throughout the process. As an independent contractor, PFTs are solely responsible for the management and coordination of services that are delivered in their home - - - with the support of GoodLife.

Initial Support

The first several months of a new Shared Living arrangement can be quite an adjustment for everyone involved. GoodLife provides help during this time so that everyone in the home learns about and is comfortable with the person's physical health conditions & support needs, behavioral support needs and so that schedules and lifestyle preferences of all parties are considered and blended rather than the person simply adjusting to the PFT home.

Time Commitment

PFTs must balance the expectations that come with their own schedule as well as the schedules of the family and person served and for some, this includes a work-related schedule. It is important for PFTs to fully understand the time commitments involved with this lifestyle and that by signing the contract to support an individual in their home, they are agreeing to fully participate in each. These can and often do occur during all times of day and any day of the week. They include, but are not limited to:

- **Support and coaching visits in the home.** Initial supports include a visit at least every other week and then monthly visits that last between 1 to 2 hours. PFTs are also subject to unannounced visits on a random basis.
- **Full participation in Person Centered Support Planning.** A PFT is expected to support the person served to determine and achieve the vision for their life through teaching, advocating and assisting as needed to help fulfill those goals. This is an ongoing process and takes an active commitment and a lot of care that involves participation in team meetings, daily teaching and ongoing evolution of their and the PFTs lifestyle.
- **Transportation.** PFTs are responsible for any and all transportation needs of the person served. This includes, but not limited to health care appointments, participation in community activities, visiting and spending time with friends and family, transportation to/from work, volunteer and/or day services.

Health Care Oversight

PFTs must be vaccinated against Covid-19 as they are in daily contact and responsible for health care oversight and support. PFTs are often the best and most reliable source of information for doctors so that the person(s) they support receive the best care possible. In addition to general knowledge about

the person, providing timely care when needed there are three areas of responsibility for which PFTs are contractually bound: managing medications, managing health related appointments and ensuring up to date documentation.

Contractual Practices in the Home

One of the many benefits of the PFT Program is that it allows for a more natural and normal lifestyle. GoodLife values this and wants to support the PFT home to be as much like any other home as possible. With this dedication also comes a responsibility to ensure full compliance with all federal, state and local requirements so that GoodLife can continue to offer this program. As contractors, PFTs are responsible for ensuring all requirements are implemented and fully documented. Some of the expectations are not what most people do in their households, however, they are important for compliance, safety and to ensure full participation of the person served in their home.

- **Documentation** - PFTs are responsible for a variety of documents for themselves and the person served and a large amount of daily data collection for activities such as finances of the person served and documentation of behavior, medical related teaching and supports and monthly fire and tornado drills. Documentation is kept up to date and submitted to GoodLife on time monthly or prior to expiration.
- **Training** - PFTs and others living in the home involved in care are subject to completion and renewal of minimum training standards. Additionally, PFTs participate in ongoing training and coaching to become and remain Certified Professional Family Teachers annually.
- **Technology Use** - GoodLife utilizes several web-based platforms for information sharing, documentation and to provide PFTs the resources to be successful. As contractors, PFTs are required to have a secure desktop or laptop computer that is capable of accessing the internet; printing capabilities and a reliable residential grade internet connection. GoodLife knows that people have varying degrees of skill and comfort with technology and will provide the training and support as needed. In general, PFTs can expect to utilize on-line data entry systems daily as well as the following systems as needed to meet requirements:
 - Google Workspace
 - On-line Meeting & Training Platforms
 - Online Clinical Records Systems
 - Smartphone (video, pictures)
 - Internet, Email, Scanning & Printing

Respite for Both Parties

An essential component of this lifestyle for both the PFT, their family and the person served is to ensure sufficient respite from each other. Anyone living together and spending so much time together needs and benefits from time apart and with other people. This is especially true in a setting where there is a responsibility for provision of 24/7 direct support. Good Life recognizes the importance of respite and as such, encourages the team to identify an amount of respite that would be supportive for all parties as a condition of the PFT contract. This occurs through:

Natural support - time spent with and the help and care that the person(s) served gets from their friends, family or community for free.

Respite - temporary paid care that relieves PFTs from their teaching and direct support responsibilities. PFTs are responsible to secure and pay for respite.

Daytime Support

PFTs are instrumental in supporting those served to be active members of their community, whether it is through providing community based day supports themselves, supporting the person as they volunteer or work or by being a positive and engaged advocate for the person as they participate in day services through GoodLife or another similar agency. Some of the ways that a PFT is expected to participate are:

- Regular, frequent and effective communication with entities where the person served spends their time during the day
- Transportation to and from day service locations
- Providing and/or securing care when the person is sick, on holidays or when the day support entity is closed.

The PFT Support System

We are not interested in dictating the time of a PFT, but we want to help with a successful arrangement. But, don't worry! As PFTs provide the appropriate services, manage the many requirements and balance schedules, they won't be on their own. The team at GoodLife is here to help PFTs succeed. Our team will provide PFTs with all the resources they need to be successful as a PFT contractor. Each PFT has a PFT Consultant who serves as the primary contact and support. They are the go-to person for any questions and can connect PFTs to other resources and GoodLife supports as needed.

Let's Do This!

Understanding the scope of the PFT role and the responsibilities that come with it are an important first step. For those still interested and willing to make the commitment, there are other important steps to making the PFT lifestyle a reality. Becoming a PFT can take time, in some cases up to 9 months depending on how ready the PFT and/or individual is for taking this step. First is ensuring that both parties know each other and begin to develop a relationship such that they can make an informed decision about this shared lifestyle. Additionally, ensuring that the home and vehicle are appropriate and ready, managing the startup costs for insurance, moving expenses and safety equipment (if applicable) can also take time.

GoodLife recognizes the potential of the PFT program and has seen how lives are enriched when caring and committed people choose to share their lives and serve as a teacher and bridge for people needing help achieving their own, meaningful lives. If you are interested in learning even more, please continue working with GoodLife towards a Professional Family Teaching arrangement.

