[Your business name] — Business Plan

Home care agency in [Your city] · Startup plan

Executive summary

[Your business name] is a new non-medical home care agency in [Your city] offering personal care: bathing, dressing, grooming and toileting; companionship, conversation and supervision; meal preparation, light housekeeping and laundry; errands, shopping and rides to appointments; respite care so family caregivers can take a break; and overnight and 24-hour live-in care. The model is screened, trained caregivers matched to each client, every shift covered, and families who trust the agency enough to tell the next family.

Startup budget: $60,450 across 11 items, with funding still to be decided.

Twelve months from now, success looks like this: [What success looks like twelve months from now]

Products and services

[Your business name]'s core service is personal care: bathing, dressing, grooming and toileting. Every client starts with an in-home assessment and a written care plan, care is billed by the hour with a minimum shift, and the same small team of caregivers visits each client so the relationship builds.

- Personal care: bathing, dressing, grooming and toileting
- Companionship, conversation and supervision
- Meal preparation, light housekeeping and laundry
- Errands, shopping and rides to appointments
- Respite care so family caregivers can take a break
- Overnight and 24-hour live-in care

Market analysis

The customers are adult children arranging care for a parent, seniors who want to stay in their own home after a fall or a hospital stay, and families caring for someone with dementia who need regular respite — most paying privately, some through long-term care insurance, veterans' benefits or a state program.

- Adult children who live too far away, or work too much, to look after a parent every day
- Seniors who want to stay in their own home after a fall, a diagnosis or a hospital stay
- Families caring for someone with dementia who need a trained break a few times a week
- Hospital discharge planners, senior-living communities and elder-law attorneys who refer families
- Clients paying through long-term care insurance, veterans' benefits or a state Medicaid waiver program

---

Marketing strategy

Most clients will come from Google and word of mouth. A family in a hurry searches for in-home care nearby and calls the agency that looks trustworthy, so a Google Business Profile with reviews and a website that explains how caregivers are screened do the heavy lifting; discharge planners, social workers and families you've cared for supply the rest.

- Google Business Profile and Google — families search “home care near me” and “in-home care” plus the town, usually in a hurry
- Referrals from hospital discharge planners, social workers, physicians' offices and rehab centers
- Word of mouth from families whose parent you looked after well — the strongest channel in the trade
- Senior centers, churches, elder-law attorneys, financial planners and long-term care insurance agents
- A website that shows your services, service area, how you screen caregivers and a call-back form a worried family can fill in at midnight

---

Operations plan

The owner runs assessments, scheduling and the first shifts in year one, with a bench of part-time caregivers employed by the agency. Every caregiver is background-checked and trained to the state's rules, visits are checked in through a scheduling app, and a supervisor reviews each care plan on a set rhythm.

- An in-home assessment before care starts, a written care plan and a signed service agreement with the hourly rate and the minimum shift
- Caregivers hired as W-2 employees, background-checked and trained to your state's rules before their first shift
- One scheduler who matches caregivers to clients and covers every call-out the same day — a missed shift is the one mistake families don't forgive
- Visit check-ins through a scheduling app with electronic visit verification, which Medicaid-paid clients require
- A supervisor's visit or call at a set rhythm, and the care plan updated whenever the client's needs change
- Weekly billing to private-pay families, and claims to long-term care insurers, the VA or the state program for the rest

---

Startup costs

What it will take to open the doors, with funding still to be decided.

Startup costs

ITEM	AMOUNT
Working capital: payroll and costs while clients' payments catch up	$30,000
State home care license or registration and application fees	$3,000
General and professional liability, plus a fidelity bond (first year)	$5,500
Workers' compensation deposit for your caregivers	$1,750
Business registration and a health-care lawyer's review	$2,250
Policy and procedure manual	$3,500
A small office: deposit, furniture, computers and a phone line	$3,500
Recruiting and onboarding: background checks, drug tests, training and uniforms	$3,250
Scheduling, visit verification, billing and client records (first year)	$1,200
Website and Google Business Profile	$0
Marketing and branding: brochures, referral visits and local advertising	$6,500
Total	**$60,450**

Typical range to start a home care agency in the US: $34,700–$93,000. Your list is what you decided to spend — replace estimates with real quotes as you get them. Scheduling, visit verification, billing and client records (first year): Your Zarla plan includes client enquiries, bookings, invoicing and customer records — home care scheduling with visit verification is a separate tool you'll still want. Website and Google Business Profile: Your Zarla plan includes the website with your services, service area and a call-back form, and walks you through your Google Business Profile — a designer typically charges $2,000 or more.

Financial plan

The numbers below come from your own startup list and typical monthly costs for a home care agency in the US. The biggest cost is caregiver payroll, which grows with every client, and what needs planning is the cash gap: wages go out every week while some payers take a month or more.

Typical monthly operating costs for a home care agency: $12,950–$21,700 a month, before the owner's own pay.

Add a monthly sales target and the plan will show how long it takes to recover the startup budget.

Typical monthly operating costs

COST	TYPICAL RANGE
Caregiver wages for about 600 care hours a month (a dozen regular clients)	$10,200–$12,000
Payroll taxes and workers' compensation	$1,100–$1,900
Liability insurance and bond	$250–$500
Office rent and utilities	$0–$2,000
Scheduling, visit verification and billing software (included with Zarla)	$100–$1,000
Recruiting, screening and training new caregivers	$500–$1,500
Referral visits, local advertising and your domain	$500–$2,000
Phone, bookkeeping, payroll service and accounting	$300–$800

US ranges for a small operation; replace with your own figures as you learn them. Lines marked (included with Zarla) are what those tools cost separately — with Zarla they are part of one monthly plan.

Risks and honest downsides

Every home care agency plan should say out loud what can go wrong. For [Your business name], the real risks are:

- Caregivers are hard to hire and harder to keep — turnover across the industry runs around 75% a year, and every shift you can't staff is a family you may lose
- Payroll goes out every week while insurers and state programs pay a month or more later, so a growing agency can run out of cash
- One client depends on one caregiver: a no-show, an injury or a theft allegation lands on you, which is why the bond and the screening matter
- State rules on training, supervision and what non-medical caregivers may do are strict, and an inspection can find what you missed
- Overtime still applies to agency caregivers under the federal rule and many state laws, even with a 2025 federal rollback proposal pending, so live-in and 24-hour cases must be priced for it

Licenses, permits and insurance

What [Your business name] needs before it can legally trade in the US. Rules vary by state and city — confirm each item with your local licensing office and an accountant.

- Business registration, EIN and a local business license — Most agencies form an LLC; state filing fees and a city or county business license are usually a few hundred dollars. The EIN from the IRS is free, and you need one before your first hire.
- State home care agency license or registration, where your state requires one — In the US it depends on the state, and most license or register non-medical agencies. Texas licenses them as home and community support services agencies ($2,625 for three years); California requires a Home Care Organization license ($5,603 for two years); Illinois a home services agency license ($1,500 a year, paid with the application). Florida registers homemaker and companion services for about $50 but requires a home health agency license for hands-on personal care. A few states don't license non-medical care at all. Licensing can take a month or two in some states and six months in others — check your state health department before you take a client.
- Caregiver background checks and state-required training — Most states that license home care require criminal background checks, and many a registry and set training hours — California requires five hours before a caregiver meets a client and five more each year; Washington requires 75 hours and a certification exam. Keep the records — inspectors ask for them.
- Workers' compensation and payroll registration — Required once you hire in almost every US state. Caregivers employed by your agency are W-2 employees, not contractors. The Department of Labor's 2013 home care rule gives agency-employed caregivers minimum wage and overtime; in 2025 the department proposed rolling it back and paused its own enforcement while the proposal is pending, but the rule is still on the books and caregivers can still sue, and many states have their own overtime laws — so price live-in and 24-hour shifts with overtime in.
- Medicaid, VA or long-term care insurance enrollment, if you take those clients — Each payer has its own enrollment, and Medicaid-paid visits need electronic visit verification. Private-pay clients need none of it, which is why many agencies start there.
- A home health license and Medicare certification only if you provide skilled medical care — A home health care business plan is a different plan, because nursing, therapy and other skilled care is a different business: a state home health license, Medicare certification through a state survey or an accrediting body, a nurse to run the clinical side, proof of three months' operating cash before certification and, in about 15 states and DC, a certificate of need. Published startup budgets for a home health agency run $150,000 to $350,000. Non-medical agencies need none of it.

Milestones: the next 30 days

The first month's to-do list for [Your business name], in order:

- Check your state's home care licensing rules and start the application — in licensing states it is the longest step
- Register the business, take the free EIN and open a business bank account
- Get liability insurance, a fidelity bond and workers' comp quotes
- Write the policy manual: hiring, background checks, training, client rights, complaints and emergencies
- Set your hourly rate, the minimum shift length and the live-in rate, with overtime priced in
- Recruit and screen the first three to five caregivers and schedule their training
- Set up a free Google Business Profile with your service area and put your website live with a call-back form
- Visit ten hospital discharge planners, rehab centers and senior communities with a one-page sheet
- Take the first client's assessment, write the care plan and ask the family for a review after the first month

Appendix: what a lender will ask for

This plan tells the story and shows the numbers. If you take it to a bank, expect to be asked for these documents as well:

- Two years of personal tax returns and a personal financial statement
- Your state license or registration, or proof the application is filed
- A month-by-month 12-month cash-flow projection that shows payroll paid before clients' payments arrive
- Your insurance certificates and bond
- The owner's or administrator's care or health-care management experience
- Your credit report and anything you can offer as collateral

Template: replace every [bracketed] line and every estimate with your own figures. Written with Zarla's free business plan generator — zarla.com/business-plan-generator writes it from five questions.