



# HANDY HINTS FOR PARENTS HIRING A HOME TUTOR

NT ICPA State Council Inc

Re: your enquiry for more information on employing a Home Tutor.

Some rural and isolated women have little experience employing staff. As a response to many requests for advice and assistance prior to employing a Home Tutor, the NT State council ICPA has collated suggestions and ideas. Listed below are some handy hints, which may or may not be of some benefit you are more than welcome to use as a guide, remembering personal circumstances differ and some suggestions may not be suitable to our own situation.

## Issues to consider prior to interviews

Some of the issues to consider are listed below. It would assist to have an idea of what best suits your own situation although joint discussion and flexibility with applicant during interviews remain beneficial to both parties. Employing a Home Tutor can be an overwhelming experience for parents, you are asking a total stranger to live in your home, teach and sometimes care for your children, as well as get on well at a personal level with both you and your partner and other workers. The Home Tutor on the other hand, leaves their family and friends to live with people they do not know, in an isolated area, where no one else on the property does the same job as them. This is also a very daunting experience for often they are young women barely out of their teens.

1. **Wages** As there is no award for a Home Tutor/Governess, you will need to decide on a suitable wage, which will include board and keep and the compulsory superannuation levies etc. age and experience of an applicant will need to be taken into account. It would be beneficial to check around your local area as it is evident wages vary throughout the Territory. Stipulate when and how the wages will be paid, list the duties required to perform as part of wages (which may not be finalized until after interview), if employing for the first time, workers compensation insurance should be investigated.
2. **Holidays:** You will need to define holidays, for example how long, when is most suitable to you and the Home Tutor. Whether, you would like the Home Tutor to assist on the station during official school holidays. Mid term break as part of holidays or leave without pay etc.
3. **Travel:** Travel details should be considered. How would you get the Home Tutor to the property - you will have local knowledge to help arrange travel arrangements from nearest town. Who will pay the fare? Will you reimburse fuel for personal car usage or will you reimburse travel expenses after 6 months probation? Some employers pay a return bus fare home after the finish of a school year.
4. **Work duties:** You will need to have an idea of what duties you would like the Home Tutor to complete each day during school hours and after hours. Take the time to prepare a Duty Statement and fax/email it to the prospective employee *before employment*. Tasks to consider could include:

### Schoolroom:

- Preparation of each day's work
- Sighting of Sets or Modules both before and after School Of Air
- Cleaning and tidying schoolroom
- Schoolroom displays, design or set up
- Hours of school work: 8:00 am to 3:00 pm with 1-2 hours preparation for next day's activities.

### After hours:

- Assist with dishes, meal preparation or gardening,
- Assist with children, supervising, bathing, babysitting, etc.
- Maintenance of own living quarters
- Assist with general station work maybe on weekends
- Your commitments away from the station, how often, how long, how you want the Home Tutor to assist.
- In town School activities, (1 week each term in town, Alice Springs ONLY) - whether you expect the Home Tutor to attend, if so; consider travel arrangements, wages, meals, accommodation, babysitting and social activities whilst in town.

5. **Living Conditions:** You will need to have an idea of where the Home Tutor will reside, meal arrangements, smokos and after school snacks, access to TV/internet/email, laundry facilities, furniture supplied, bed linen & towels supplied or required etc. Maybe fax/email a map to the prospective employee and explain how often you go to town, would they go as well, if you expect them to care for the kids whilst you are away, how often mail/stores are delivered/picked up.

6. **Odd bits:** Are pets allowed, is alcohol allowed, dress standards, behaviour as a role model for children and other persons on station/around the workplace, whether personal visitors are welcome. Do they hold a current First Aid Certificate? Bronze Medallion, Occupational Health & Safety or any other certificates and qualifications that you feel they may require or you would like them to consider achieving either during their service with you or before. If you are going to encourage you workers to attend training then consider who pays?
7. **Referees:** Personal contact with applicant and referees offered has proved invaluable for many rural people employing staff. A referee usually knows the applicant very well; therefore some of the hints to follow during interviews may be directed towards referee. Seeking their opinion on isolation, hobbies and personal commitments have usually proved beneficial for deliberation.

### Topics to possibly discuss during interviews

8. **Health:** Smoker/non smoker, any medical problems e.g.: Asthmatic, any special dietary requirements, tetanus shots up to date, ambulance and health insurance. Make up a medical form to find out any illnesses/allergies etc.
9. **Isolation:** Does the applicant understand the term 'isolation'? Have they actually looked on a map to see where they are going? Depending on own situation, there probably will be no Takeaway or Convenience food stores, social life, disco's or regular trips to town. Explain your own local area, distance from town, weather conditions, and conditions of roads, other staff employed, social events during the year, availability of doctors, dentist, RFDS, white box and personal drug requirements, banking facilities, whether a store is on the station, mail services available, 24 hour power and suitable clothing, hat and good walking shoes / work boots.
10. **Length of stay:** Ask the applicant of their intentions, basically you need to ask them about their plans for the future. I.e. whether they are currently studying do they intend to return to study?
11. **Loyalty and Honesty:** Discuss two way loyalty and how important it is between both Mother and Home Tutor. Be honest during interviews re your own children, their academic levels, any learning difficulties (Special Educational needs? Backup and assistance available), any behavioural problems, their likes and dislikes and their own personalities.
12. **Personal Commitment:** Does the applicant have a boyfriend / fiancé, someone they will miss terribly or are they running away from any unfortunate situation? Don't be surprised if the Parents of the person applying wish to speak to you over the telephone – this is two way communication and quite acceptable. Try to ascertain how dependent the applicant is on family, especially parents.
13. **Working with Children (Ochre) card:**
  - Do they have one?
  - Do they need to apply for one?

Any person working with children in the NT needs to hold an Ochre card. You can find out more information and apply for one through [www.workingwithchildren.nt.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildren.nt.gov.au)

We hope this information has given you a clearer picture of what to expect or ask. Please do not hesitate to contact either of us if you have any further 'general' questions.

Yours sincerely,  
NT ICPA State Council

### ***Please read conditions below:***

"The Home Tutor Register is only an information service **for parents** looking for Tutors, to lessen and streamline employment agency and advertising costs. We do not match employer and employee. All employers are given the same list, and they choose to check references, details etc. themselves. Before accessing any names employers **MUST** provide us with their Duty Statement and be a financial member of the Isolated Children's Parents Assoc within the N.T.- if not then a donation of \$100 is acceptable (ICPA membership costs \$40/yr)"- employers only pay.

The NTICPA (Northern Territory Isolated Children's Parent's Assoc) does not accept responsibility concerning working conditions or employment contracts entered into between the Home Tutor and the employer. The NTICPA Home Tutor Register acts solely as an information provider.