



Portsmouth CITY COUNCIL

Direct Payment Factsheet

This leaflet explains Direct Payments, how you can receive a Direct Payment, what the responsibilities are and what support is available to you.

What are Direct Payments?

A Direct Payment is an agreed amount of money given to you to organise the support that you need. It gives you more choice and control in the way you arrange your own day to day support, it will allow you to arrange your support more flexibly. You can choose who will help you and decide when and how they will do things for you.

How do I get Direct Payments?

When you make contact with us, we will arrange a visit to assess your needs and determine if you are eligible for support.

Next, we will work with you about how you want your support arranged. This includes the different ways you can spend your budget. One way of spending your budget to meet your needs is having a Direct Payment. This is not treated as income and does not affect your income tax and benefit claims.

What can I spend my Direct Payments money on?

The Practitioner will determine this, here are some examples:

- Support from a care agency.
- Employing a personal assistant.
- Support with daily living activities.
- Leisure and social activities with support.
- Short-term breaks away from home or respite care.
- Support for carers to help them continue in their caring role.

What can't I spend my Direct Payments on?

- Anything that is illegal.
- Alcohol, tobacco, illegal substances, gambling or debt repayment.
- Long-term or permanent residential care.
- Paying close family members and anyone that lives with the client, without prior consent from the Practitioner.

What support can I get?

A Direct Payments Support Worker will visit you to discuss your responsibilities and provide you with all the tools and information you need to manage your Direct Payment.

If you want to employ a Personal Assistant you can contact the [Portsmouth Personal Assistant Noticeboard](#). The Noticeboard can help with registering on the site and filling in the application form to advertise any vacancies. The Noticeboard also holds a list of available PAs.

How will my Direct Payments be paid?

Your money will be paid to you on a Prepaid Card, to be used solely for managing the money. Money will be loaded on to the card every four weeks in advance. The card cannot get overdrawn and payments can be made by phone and online.

Will I have to pay towards my support?

For chargeable services you will have a financial assessment to determine if you have to contribute towards your support. We will look at your total income and savings and then work out the amount you might have to pay. If you are assessed as having to make a contribution, we will invoice you on a monthly basis for this.

What are the responsibilities?

If you use a home care agency you need to make sure that they comply with current registration requirements.

If you employ a Personal Assistant you will be offered a payroll service who will work with HM Revenue and Customs on your behalf and this is funded from your Direct Payment budget. You will need to keep records of the hours worked and any holiday taken, and meet your responsibilities as an employer such as Employer's Liability Insurance, National Minimum Wage, employment contract, sickness, maternity and a safe working environment.

Please note that it is not permitted to pay the person that you employ cash in hand. A DBS check will need to be carried out on all Personal Assistants before they commence work where a child may be present in the place of work.

If you are unable to manage the Direct Payment budget yourself, there may be an option to have a managed account, this will need to be agreed by the Practitioner. The managed account provider will only be responsible for the budget and making payments so if you are employing a Personal Assistant you will still need to meet your responsibilities as an employer and be able to manage your employees.

How do I manage my budget?

If you choose to use a care agency you will have a choice of agencies and you can be flexible with the hours, for example if you are assessed for 7 hours a week you can use 4 hours one week and 10 hours the next.

If you are employing a Personal Assistant you need to ensure that there is enough in the budget to cover the wages, holiday cover, payroll costs, Employer's National Insurance contributions (if over the threshold), Employers Liability Insurance and any other additional costs. A summary showing a breakdown of these costs will be provided to you.

Getting in touch with Portsmouth City Council

Adult Social Care - 023 9268 0810 **Learning Disabilities** - 0300 123 4019

Portsmouth Carers Centre - 023 9285 1843

Adult Mental Health Carers - 02392 851864

Portsmouth Personal Assistant Noticeboard - 023 92437896

Visit www.portsmouthpan.co.uk or email pa.noticeboard@portsmouthcc.gov.uk