



# Portsmouth CITY COUNCIL

## Direct Payment Factsheet

This leaflet explains direct payments, how someone 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 far 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. For example, 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 Portsmouth City Councils social care service, we will arrange to visit you to assess your needs, find out if you are eligible for support and look at what you may need help with using Your Assessment and Support Plan. We will work out how much the support you need is likely to cost. This is a sum of money called a Personal Budget it will be used to meet your needs.

Next, we will work with you and your relatives or friends about how you want your support arranged. This includes the different ways you can spend your Personal Budget and is written down in a Support Plan.

One way of spending your Personal Budget to meet your needs is by having a direct payment. Direct Payments can be made to adult service users of any age, carers over '16 years and parents of disabled children. Direct Payments are not to be treated as income and they do not affect income tax and benefit claims.

### What can I spend my Direct Payments money on?

Direct Payments can be used to pay for anything that has been identified and agreed in your Support Plan such as:

- support from a care agency of your choice
- employing a personal assistant to help with personal care
- support with daily living activities like getting out and about to do your shopping, meet family and friends or take up educational, leisure and social activities
- short-term breaks away from home or respite care
- buying daily living equipment
- support for carers to help them continue in their caring role

### What can't I spend my Direct Payments on?

You cannot use the money to buy anything other than meeting the care and support outcomes as well as:

- anything that is illegal
- alcohol, tobacco, drugs or gambling (including bingo)
- long-term or permanent residential care
- pay a close relative who lives with you unless, in exceptional circumstances, prior approval has been sought from a Senior Manager

## **What support can I get?**

Our Direct Payment Support Team provides practical assistance with planning your support. You can also arrange to get help from someone you know such as a relative or a friend.

If you want to employ a personal assistant/s you can find one/them through the [Portsmouth Personal Assistant Noticeboard](#). It allows you to search for personal assistants in your local area and you can advertise your support role. You can write the job description and employ someone on your own terms. You can get support from the Direct Payments Support Worker with-recruitment, using a payroll service, arranging employer's liability insurance as well as meeting your obligations as an employer.

## **How will my Direct Payments be paid?**

Your money will be paid to you on a Prepayment Card, to be used solely for managing the money. It is important not to mix your personal finances with direct payments because you need to keep separate records of how you spend it.

## **Will I have to pay towards my support?**

You will have a financial assessment and this will determine if you have to contribute towards your support. We will look at your total income and your savings and then work out the amount that you might have to pay. If you are assessed as having to make a contribution, we will expect you to make payments to the prepayment card for that amount

## **What are the responsibilities?**

You will have to show that you are using the money to meet your assessed needs and keep simple records such as receipts and bank statements. We can ask to see these records on a regular basis.

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

If you decide to employ your own personal assistant, you will need to be fully aware of your responsibilities as an employer and make sure you cover things like tax, National Insurance and employer's liability insurance.

However we will give you help, information and advice with these obligations. We also offer external information and support from [Skills for Care](#), a national charity that support people just like you, wishing to hire their own care and support. You can also avail of a payroll service; a payroll service means you can pay an organisation to arrange your staff/s pay, tax, and national insurance contributions, so you don't have to.

## **Getting in touch with Portsmouth City Council**

***Adult Social Care - 023 9268 0810***

***Learning Disabilities - 023 9268 4600***

***Portsmouth Carers Centre - 023 9285 1843***

***Adult Mental Health Carers - 02392851864***

***Portsmouth Personal Assistant Noticeboard - 023 92437896***

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