

Direct Payments

Factsheet - Frequently Asked Questions

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

Isn't a Direct Payment just another benefit?

Direct Payments are not Social Security benefits - the money comes from the City of Wolverhampton Council to meet your assessed social care needs and is an alternative to services which are organised for you. Unlike benefits there are restrictions on how the money can be spent.

How will having Direct Payments affect my benefits?

Direct Payments will not be counted as income, and they will not affect your benefits.

Can I employ someone who lives with me as a Personal Assistant?

You may be able to employ someone who lives with you, but you will need permission from us to do so. Please talk to us about this first as we need to be satisfied that it is necessary to meet your care needs in this way. There could be implications on any household benefits. Please talk to your social worker first.

How quickly do I have to decide whether I want to have Direct Payments?

You can take as long as you want to decide if you want to use Direct Payments. While you decide the Council will arrange interim services to meet your needs.

What about if I want to buy more services that are not covered by the Direct Payment?

You can add your own money to top up a Direct Payment to make it even more flexible.

Direct Payments sound complicated. What happens if I cannot manage?

It may sound like a lot of work but do not panic, there is a lot of support to help you manage the scheme and succeed. The most important thing is that you are in control, but this does not mean doing everything on your own.

Can I continue to receive any services from the Council?

You can mix your care arrangements by choosing some services which will be arranged by the Council and some Direct Payments - a mix and match of services, you choose.

If I decide to employ a Personal Assistant, do I have to deduct Tax and National Insurance payments from their wages?

You do not have to calculate Tax and National Insurance if you employ someone. Barrie Bookkeeping, our payroll provider, will provide a payroll service for you free of charge.

Do I have to fill in a lot of difficult forms to have a Direct Payment?

There are no forms for you to fill in for the Council, however, if you employ a Personal Assistant you will need to complete forms to ensure your staff are signed up to Payroll and you will need to sign timesheets on a regular basis.

I know someone who I think needs Direct Payments but would not be able to ask for it themselves. Is it still possible for them to have a Direct Payment?

If you are considering direct payments for someone who lacks mental capacity, please refer to our Factsheet – Acting as an Authorised Person and discuss this with your social worker.

Can I employ a relative to help me?

You may be able to employ a family member but please talk to your social worker about this first as you will need permission from the Council to do so.

What happens if I start having Direct Payments and they do not work for me?

If direct payments do not work for you, we can arrange services for you instead.

What are the benefits of Direct Payments for me?

Most people who use Direct Payments say they would never go back or choose to have services arranged for them again. The most important thing is they want to be in control of their life. Direct Payments means you have freedom, choice, control, and flexibility in your life to have the help you need by making the arrangements yourself.

Can I use the money for other purchases relating to care?

You can use the Direct Payment to meet your assessed needs. If you require additional support or items, discuss this with your social worker who will assess if additional funds are required.

Will the Direct Payment cover PA expenses such as travel etc?

A Direct Payment will pay to meet your assessed needs. Any additional costs will need to be agreed by a social worker.

Can I use the Direct Payment to pay my care contribution?

A Direct Payment will pay to meet the cost of your care. If you have been financially assessed to contribute towards the cost of your care, this should be made from your own personal bank account.

I have chosen to employ an Agency, but their charges are higher than what the Direct Payment covers, what should I do?

You would need to take into account, hourly rates, charges for weekends and bank holidays when choosing to employ an agency. If their charges are higher than what the Direct Payment pays, you will need to top up the Direct Payment account from your personal funds.

Can I change between using a PA and an agency?

You can choose between using a PA or an agency however if the arrangement you want is different to what was originally agreed in your care and support planning, you will need to notify your social worker who can ensure that the correct amount of Direct Payment funds are paid into the account.

Who to contact

Barrie Bookkeeping - Tel: 01902 912895
Email: DP@barriebookkeeping.co.uk

Adult Social Care - Tel: 01902 551199

Disabled Children and Young Person's Team - Tel: 01902 550911

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