



Information Sheet

ADVICE & SUPPORT FOR DP USERS ENGAGING A SELF-EMPLOYED Personal Assistant (PA) / Carer

DIRECT PAYMENT

Direct Payments are cash payments given to people who are assessed as needing help from social services and who choose to arrange and pay for their own care and support services instead of receiving them directly from the Council.

The Direct Payment will be paid monthly in advance. Payments are based on the number of days in the month that support is required so the payment amount may fluctuate slightly from one month to the next.

CHOICE OF CARER

If the person (s) you have decided to use to provide the care you need are self-employed, you are strongly recommended in the first instance to check that H.M.Revenue & Customs (HMRC) agree with this. Please see our separate information sheet on *Employment Status of Carers*.

You should also check they have the right to work in the UK (see our separate information sheet *Right to Work in the UK*) and we would recommend you ask them for evidence that there is an up-to-date Disclosure & Barring Service certificate in place.

ENGAGING A SELF-EMPLOYED CARER

Apart from carrying out the due diligence process described in our Employment Status of Carers information sheet, you should request the following:

- evidence that they have public liability insurance
- evidence of their Unique Tax Reference number
- details of their terms and conditions including the holiday they intend to take and, eg whether they can work bank holidays.
- we would also recommend that you obtain written confirmation that they agree to supply the support you require.
- Monthly/4 weekly invoices detailing the hours that they have worked.

BANK ACCOUNT

You will need to open a separate bank account for the receipt of the Direct Payment money. This account should provide monthly bank statements and, unless you are going to make payments electronically, a cheque book. If you are unable to open a bank account, please let us know and we will be able to help.

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KEEPING FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Wiltshire Council will also require you to keep copies of your bank statements and invoices and you may need to produce these at any review or reassessment by the Council.

Invoices should show: your name and address, the name of the PA, the date(s) and number of hours care was provided and the hourly rate charged by the PA

BUDGETING

Check the rates your PA is to charge and whether these increase at weekends or bank holidays and whether or not you have to pay mileage.

If the PA charges more than the agreed Direct Payment amount, you will need to pay the shortfall yourself.

We can assist you by providing a sample budget once you know what your PA's rates are so that you can see how much you can afford.

Some self-employed PAs invoice every four weeks, some monthly and you can arrange to pay them by direct debit or by cheque but in all cases you should keep copies of the invoices for your records.

If their rates change, you should check that you can still afford the hours you are receiving. Please get in touch with the Direct Payment Adviser team if you are not sure what you can afford.

FURTHER HELP

Websites

Our own website contains a wealth of information for Direct Payment recipients

www.wiltshirecil.org.uk

If you have any queries about the information provided or you would like further information, please contact the DP Adviser Team at Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living on **0300 1233 442** or **admin dp@wiltshirecil.org.uk**.

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