



Direct Payments

Factsheet – Getting Started

What are direct payments?

Direct payments are money payments paid to you by the council to pay for your care and support. They are an easy and convenient way of receiving the council's part of your personal budget, which is the amount of money you need to pay for your care and support.

Direct payments mean that you are in charge, they give you more choice and control over the care you receive and allow you to decide who gives the care and how and when they work with you.

Direct payment summary:

- A direct payment is a cash amount based on the amount agreed in your support plan so that you can arrange and pay for social care support instead of the council arranging services for you.
- Direct payments offer greater flexibility, choice and control than support arranged for you by the council.
- It is your choice whether you want to have direct payments. The council must be satisfied that you understand what it involves and that the way you choose to use the cash will meet your needs and achieve the agreed outcomes. The way you use the payments must be legal and keep you safe and well.
- For example, you may want to employ your own Personal Assistant (PA) providing you with the support at the times you want. You can use *find-apa*, a digital Personal (care) Assistants (PA) Platform. <https://www.find-apa.co.uk/haringey/haringey/>
 - Alternatively, you may decide you want to buy support from a care agency. Alternatively, you may want to find an alternative to the types of respite support the council could arrange for you.
- Direct payments can be used in a wide range of creative ways as long as it is safe and legal to do so.



4 Who can have direct payments?

You can receive direct payments if you are:

- A disabled person aged 16 years and above.
- A parent of (or have parental responsibility for) disabled children.
- A carer aged 16 years and above, for services to meet the carers own assessed needs
- A disabled person with parental responsibilities for a child, for services to support their parenting role; or
- An appointed or authorised person for someone who lacks capacity (the council must agree who the appointed or authorised person is)

In most cases the council must offer direct payments but for some people who are subject to some mental health legislation or aspects of criminal justice legislation the council can decide whether or not to offer direct payments. Please ask the council if you need more information about this.

Some people who are placed under certain conditions by the courts in relation to drug/alcohol dependencies are excluded from receiving direct payments.

What must happen before you get direct payments?

- We will work out how much your personal budget is, which will pay for services to meet your care needs, as assessed by your social worker.
 - We will work out your financial contribution for your care needs if applicable.
 - We will then create a support plan showing the areas in your life that you need support with and how your direct payments are going to be used.
 - You will have to sign a written agreement with us to say that you will spend the money on the services you have been assessed as needing.
 - You will then be in charge of organising your care and paying for it. You can either pay a care agency or employ workers yourself.
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