

# ← DIRECT PAYMENTS →

## Support

### A Guide to Direct Payments Support

It might feel overwhelming, deciding whether to use Direct Payments to arrange your own care and support or if you would like the Local Authority to arrange this for you instead, or if you would like a little bit of both.

This decision should not be taken lightly, and someone should never be made to feel they have to use Direct Payments.

To help you decide if you would like to have a Direct Payment, each Local Authority has a dedicated Support Team which can provide you with information and advice about Direct Payments and you will also have the opportunity to ask any questions.

If you choose to receive a Direct Payment, then you will be referred to, by social services, as a Direct Payment Recipient.

### What does the Direct Payments Support Service do?

The level of support and advice you will receive may vary depending on how you choose to use your Direct Payment. For example, support and advice will be different if someone is:

- Employing staff (Personal Assistants) directly to help with care and support.
- Purchasing the services of a registered care agency or micro carer.
- Arranging day care, a social activity, respite care or residential care.
- Purchasing equipment.
- Mixed care and support (partly arranged by Social Services, and partly arranged by you) meeting identified, agreed and eligible needs in an individual bespoke way.



The support service enables you, the Direct Payment Recipient to become independent, develop skills, knowledge and confidence with the administration of the Direct Payment. You can expect the following from the team:

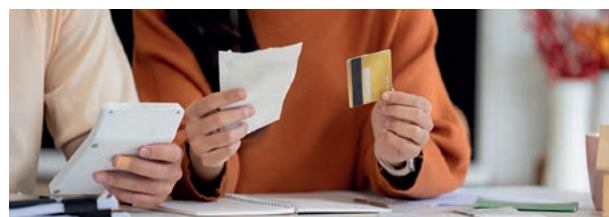
- A can-do approach that promotes: *Voice, Choice, and Control.*
- Friendly, helpful support: *Working in partnership with a variety of people and organisations.*
- Good quality accessible information: *Information provided in different formats.*

Where a Direct Payment Recipient employs Personal Assistants, support provided ensures that all parties understand employment responsibilities.

It is important, that if you choose to be a Direct Payment Recipient then you are committing to working with the support service and other appropriate third-party organisations where relevant.

Employing Personal Assistants directly can be the most rewarding arrangement for many people. If employing a Personal Assistant, the support team will provide support that is right at every step:

- Initial support with information.
- Support with recruitment, job descriptions, advertising etc.
- Choosing a payroll provider, Liability Insurers.
- Developing an induction and identifying training for PAs.
- Initial support on issuing employment contracts and other documentation.
- Facilitating the completion of relevant employment checks including Disclosure and Barring checks.



**Managing the Money:** This is discussed in detail and options explored to ensure that you are confident and comfortable before proceeding.

**Ending Support:** Support is always available. However, after an initial period the Direct Payment Support Service will step back and allow each Direct Payment Recipient to flourish in their new role. The ongoing support from payroll and liability insurers is always available.

## Responsibilities of the Direct Payments Recipient

Direct Payment Recipients choose Direct Payments because of the choice, control, and flexibility it provides. However, Direct Payment Recipients must commit to the following:

- Work in partnership to get the most from Direct Payments.
- Understand the terms and conditions of receiving Direct Payments outlined in the agreement between the Direct Payment Recipient and the Local Authority.
- When employing Personal Assistants develop a good understanding of the employment responsibilities.
- Agree to seek help and advice in a timely manner.

## Useful Contacts

Each Local Authority has an experienced Direct Payments Team if you have any queries, or you require information. They will provide you with as much help and reassurance as needed. There is also additional support provided from the Insurance Liability companies, payroll companies and other external sources.

**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Direct Payments Team Office**  
directpayments@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

**Caerphilly County Borough Council Direct Payments Team Office**  
directpayadvisors@caerphilly.gov.uk

**Monmouthshire County Borough Council Direct Payments Team**  
mccdirectpaymentteam@monmouthshire.gov.uk

**Newport City Council Direct Payments Support Team**  
direct.payments@newport.gov.uk

**Torfaen County Borough Council Independent Living (Direct Payments) Team**  
independentlivingteam@torfaen.gov.uk