



## Summary of the Direct Payments Scheme and Direct Payment Agreement

This document gives you information about your responsibilities when using Direct Payments, what you can use your Direct Payment for and what support you will receive from the Council.



You should make sure you and/or anyone who is going to support you, have also read and understood the Direct Payment Agreement.





## 1. What is a Direct Payment?

A Direct Payment is an amount of money paid to you so that you can organise your own services rather than those organised by the council. It allows you to employ people directly, such as a personal assistant or to organise support through an organisation. You can deal with them directly, so it puts you in more control of your support.



## 2. How much money will I receive as a direct payment?

The 'Direct Payment Agreement' tells you how much money you will receive to meet your needs as written in your Support Plan.



The 'Direct Payment Agreement' also tells you how much you will be asked to pay towards this. The Council will send you a bill for this amount every 4 weeks.

## 3. What do I have to do?

- Ensure you have services to meet your assessed care and support needs and you **only** spend your Direct Payment on this.
- Open a separate bank or building society account.
- Keep records of income and expenditure and send these to the council at the appropriate time.
- Fulfil your obligations to your staff if you are employing and do not employ a relative or partner if they live in the same house as you unless otherwise agreed by the Borough Council in writing.

## 4. What we will do for you.

Check you are managing your direct payment at least once a year and that it is sufficient to meet your needs.

## 5. Can I get help to manage my Direct Payment?

If you cannot manage the Direct Payment on your own, you can ask family or friend.

Darlington Association on Disability (DAD) offers a support service which provides you with as much or as little support as you need, from help setting up and managing your direct payment to doing payroll if you want to employ someone.





## 6. What can I use the money for?

You should use the money to pay for people to be Personal Assistants (PAs) or to buy agency or other services including short breaks to meet your needs as written in your 'Support Plan'. You will be given a copy of your 'Support Plan'. Ensure you **only** spend your Direct Payment on services that meet your need.



You **must not** use your direct payments to make payments for anything that does not meet your needs identified in your Support Plan.



**If you are not sure whether you can use the money in the way you would like, please ask your Social Worker/Community Assessment Officer for advice.**

The Council has to make sure that you use your direct payments to meet the needs written in your Support Plan. This is done through a review when you and a Social Worker/Community Assessment Officer:



- Talk about your Support Plan.
- Look at how you are managing.
- Check that the Support Plan still meets your needs.
- You need to make sure that you, or someone else, fills in the forms that the Council needs to check that you are using your direct payment money properly. You will also need to keep your bank statements and receipts.

DATE	DESCRIPTION	DEBITS	CREDITS	BALANCE
6 May	CDOT High St	10.00		10.00
8 May	DCBT Post Care Pk	3.00		7.00
11 May	BACS Regular Pmt		40.00	47.00
12 May	CHBT	2.70		44.30
18 May	SDI Day & Co	18.00		26.30
22 May	SDI 72 Services Company	21.00		5.30

## 7. What can't I use the money for?

For anything other than meeting the needs agreed in the support plan and associated outcomes, some examples of what they CANNOT be used for are listed below: -

- For buying services or equipment that we are not responsible for e.g. health or housing services.
- For buying long term residential or nursing home care
- to pay for household bills or other personal expenses
- to pay for holidays
- to pay for meals/coffee etc
- to pay for gifts
- to purchase alcohol
- for gambling



## 8. What if I have money left over?

You may find that over time, the money in your direct payments bank account builds up. If this happens, the Council will talk to you about whether you need the money. If you don't, the Council will ask you to pay the money back.

More details are given in the 'Direct Payment Agreement'.



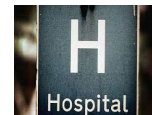


Advice can also be obtained from the Direct Payments Support Service.

If you think you are going to run out of money, please contact your Social Worker/Community Assessment officer as soon as possible.

### **9. Can my Direct Payments be stopped?**

If for any reason you do not need your direct payment, for more than four weeks, for example, if you are in hospital, you must inform the Council.



The Council will talk to you about this and consider your contractual agreement and continuing needs. If you do not need the direct payment for this period, the Council will stop payments for this time.



If the Council believes that your direct payment is not working as it should, or that you have not used it properly, they will try to assist you to sort out the problem with the help of the Direct Payments Support Service. If this is not possible, the Council may stop making payments to you and will arrange services to meet the needs written in your Support Plan instead.



If your needs change, or you are finding it difficult to manage your Direct Payments, or you want to stop them, please contact your Social Worker/Community Assessment Officer or the Direct Payments Support Service as soon as possible.



If you stop receiving direct payments for any reason, any unspent money belonging to the Council will need to be returned. The Direct Payments Support Service will help you, or anyone who supports you, to sort this out.

### **10. If you have difficulties**

#### **For help with managing your Direct Payment: -**

During normal office hours, contact DAD Direct Payments Support Service on 01325 360524 who will be happy to advise you.

#### **Things can go wrong and you may find yourself without personal assistance or other support: -**

Contact your Social Worker/Adult Contact Team. If it is an emergency outside of office hours, contact the Emergency Duty Team on 01642 524 552.