

Direct Payments

Giving you greater choice, control and flexibility over how you receive support



What is a Direct Payment?

Following an assessment and written support plan, the Council will agree an amount of money that is reasonable to meet your needs. This is called a Personal Budget. To give you the greatest choice in how your needs are met you can take some or all of your Personal Budget as a Direct Payment. A Direct Payment is money that the Council pays you so that you can arrange and pay for your own care and support. In some circumstances and in consultation with you, the Council may arrange and pay for your services directly.

Why choose a Direct Payment?

Direct Payments give you greater choice and control because you can decide how your needs will be met, by whom and at a time that suits you.

Direct Payments help give you the opportunity to live as independently as possible.

Direct Payments can help you:

- continue to live in your own home
- remain fully involved in family and community life
- engage in work, education and leisure.

You can use Direct Payments on its own or alongside services provided for you.

What can Direct Payments be used for?

Direct Payments are for buying services and equipment to meet the needs described in your assessment. There is flexibility about how you can use the money, as long as it meets the outcomes identified in your support plan. Some people use the money to recruit and employ a personal assistant; others buy care from an agency. Other options can also be considered, including:

- community support (for example, outreach, daytime activities, transport)
- short breaks (respite care)
- leisure or recreational activities
- practical support if you are a carer
- getting out and about in the community
- maximising your independence and well being. – anything more creative

Direct Payments cannot be used to purchase services directly provided by the Council for example, Day centres run by the Council.



How will I receive my Direct Payment?

The best way to receive a Direct Payment is into a prepaid card. The council will set up a separate bank account for you to receive your Direct Payment.

If you are unable to manage this, the money can be managed for you.

Whether you choose a Direct Payment or not, you will have a financial assessment to establish whether you will need to make a financial contribution towards your care and support.

What support will I get with my Direct Payments?

The Council's Direct Payments Support Service can provide advice, information, and support to:

- manage your Direct Payment
- help you work out how to spend your Direct Payment
- understand your budget
- recruit the right person if you are employing a Personal Assistant
- understand your responsibilities as an employer

Their details can be found at the end of this factsheet.

You will be responsible for managing the way that the money is spent, keeping records, organising the services in line with your support plan, paying for your care and arranging back-up in emergencies. If you need help to manage your Direct Payments, you can also ask a family member or friend to be a nominated person.

Who can receive Direct Payments?

Direct Payments are for anyone who is over 16 and has been assessed as eligible for services or equipment. Direct Payments are also for carers aged 18 or over. There are a few legal restrictions where some people cannot receive a Direct Payment. These are detailed in the Tower Hamlets Direct Payments Policy; and is available on our website.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

How can I get Direct a Payment?

If you would like further information, please contact your social worker or your care coordinator.

If you do not have a social worker please visit:

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk and complete a self-assessment form to find out if you need one.

Useful information

Direct Payments Support Service

Contact Telephone: 020 7364 4166

Email: dp.support@towerhamlets.gov.uk

