



Direct Payments

Adult Social Care



1) What is a Direct Payment?

Instead of receiving care and support arranged by the local authority, you can choose to receive your personal budget as a direct payment. This will allow you to choose and pay for the support to meet your assessed needs.

A direct payment gives you more choice and control over how you arrange your care and support. It is possible to have a combination of council arranged services and a direct payment.



2) Am I eligible to apply for a Direct Payment?

A direct payment is available if you have been assessed by a social worker/assessor as having eligible care and support needs for Adult Social Care. If you are assessed as eligible for support under the Care Act 2014, you will receive a personal budget. Please see section 11 below for how to request an assessment.

You can then choose to receive your personal budget as a direct payment. There are some exclusions to receiving direct payments and this will be explained in your assessment if any exclusions apply.

3) How could I use my Direct Payment?

Your care and support plan will outline how the direct payment should be used to meet your assessed needs. This might include the following options:

- Employing Personal Assistants (PAs). This is somebody that you choose to work directly for you and maybe somebody that you know. You can arrange their working hours to suit you. A PA might provide support with personal care, such as: washing, dressing and support with meals. Also, they can help you to maintain your independence, for example by supporting you with activities in the community.
- Arrange and pay for transport to day activities.
- Arrange and pay for respite care so that your main carer can have a break from their carer responsibilities.

4) How do Direct Payments work?

Direct payments are paid monthly, and payments are made in advance. We will let you know your first payment date.

There are some things which direct payments cannot be used for:

- X Long-term or permanent residential care
- X Payment to a close relative living with you in the same house
- X Withdrawing cash
- X Gambling
- X Household and holiday expenses
- X Services and or equipment available from other public bodies

5) Managing a Direct Payment

You can choose to manage your own direct payment, or it is possible for a family member or friend of your choosing to help you manage your direct payment.

This person is called a **nominated person**.

A person might lack the capacity to manage their own direct payment, and an **authorised person** may be able to manage it on their behalf. This can be a family member or friend. For this to happen, a Mental Capacity Assessment and best interest decision will need to be undertaken by Adult Social Care.

The authorised person and nominated person must act in the best interest of the person and make sure the person has as much input as possible. The authorised person or the nominated person cannot be paid to provide the care and support.



6) Help in setting up a Direct Payment

There are some responsibilities involved in managing a direct payment and employing Personal Assistants (PAs). We will refer you to Disability Advice Service Lambeth (dasl) for support with getting everything set up and for any ongoing support you might need including:

- going through the Direct Payments Agreement with the person managing the direct payment. This agreement explains the responsibilities and conditions of the direct payment.
- providing information and support around recruiting PAs and helping you to understand your responsibilities as an employer. This includes information on being a good employer and mandatory requirements such as employment contracts, insurance and health and safety.
- providing information on how to get insurance to cover both you and your PAs and to receive payroll services which helps to pay your PA salaries.

To contact dasl or to find out more about direct payments -please see contact details below:

Telephone: 020 7501 8960

Email: direct.payments@disabilitylambeth.org.uk

Website: www.disabilitylambeth.org.uk



7) Safer recruitment

Advice and guidance on safer recruitment of Personal Assistants (PAs) is provided by dasl. This includes advertising, arranging interviews, reference checks and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

The council strongly recommends that you obtain a DBS check for your PAs. The DBS is a process that checks if the PA has a criminal record. It is compulsory to obtain a DBS if children live in the house or may be present. The council can assist in arranging a DBS check for your PA(s).



8) Is there anyone I cannot employ?

- Someone who is not allowed to work in the UK.
- Someone whose Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and or references indicate that they are not suitable to provide care.
- Anyone who lives in the same household (agreed in exceptional circumstances only).



9) Direct Payments Agreement

The Direct Payments Agreement sets out your responsibilities that you need to comply with.

You or your authorised person will need to review, agree, and sign the agreement before your direct payment can start.



10) Client financial contribution and direct payments

You may be assessed to pay a financial contribution (client contribution) towards the costs of your support. A Financial Assessment needs to be completed to work out how much you need to pay. If you are required to pay a contribution, you will need to pay the agreed amount into your dedicated direct payment account and dasl can support you to set up a standing order for this.

More information about paying for your care can be found here:

<https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/adults-and-older-people/paying-care/paying-help-home/charges-adult-social-care-services>



11) How do I apply for a Direct Payment?

If you are interested in a direct payment and you are not currently receiving any services, you can contact Lambeth Council's adult social care team by calling **0207 926 5555**, select Adult Social Care and then select **Option 1**.

If you are currently receiving services and you would like to change to a direct payment, you can contact Lambeth Council's adult social care team by calling **0207 926 5555**, select Adult Social Care and then select **Option 2**.

More information about contacting the Council can be found at this web address:

www.lambeth.gov.uk/adult-social-care-health/contact-adult-social-care-team

Also, more about direct payments can found at this web address:

www.lambeth.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/adults-and-older-people/paying-care/paying-help-home/personal-budgets-direct-payments



12) What if my care and support needs change while receiving a Direct Payment?

If your needs change while you are receiving direct payments, please contact your Social Worker. If you do not have an allocated social worker, you can call **0207 926 5555**, select Adult Social Care and then select **Option 2: Community Duty Team**.

Feedback from people in Lambeth who have a direct payment

“Direct Payment gives my son the choice to choose his own PA that he likes and trusts, someone that he can feel safe whenever they are around him.”

“Direct Payment has been great for me; the staff are very friendly and reliable. It has changed my life of stressing every day, and it also works well, and I can put my mind at rest. All I need to do is submit my assistant's timesheet to payroll.”

“My son would not be able to access the community as much without the support from Direct Payments”