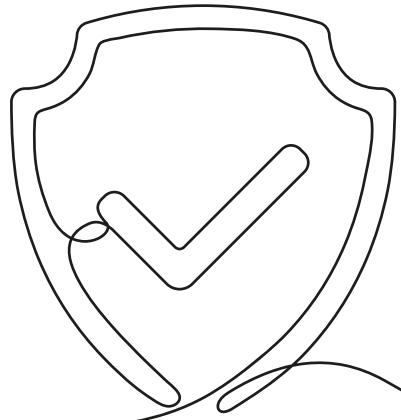


Adult Social Care

Direct Payments Guidance



**Isle of Wight
Council**

This guide is for any adult who has been assessed by Adult Social Care, as having eligible Care Act needs and is/will be in receipt of a direct payment.

Adult Social Care staff are here to empower you with the support you need to stay safe and achieve what is most important to you.

Direct payments offer you greater choice, flexibility and control over how your eligible needs are met, how your support is provided and who provides it. This includes purchasing and arranging assistance or services for things that are important in your life.

You can use direct payments to:

- Pay for services from independent providers. When you buy services, such as a personal assistant, especially in your own home, it is important to ensure you remain as safe as possible.
- Pay a family member, who does not live with you, to provide you with care, subject to their suitability and capability to meet your care needs.

Benefits of having a direct payment

Control over your care and support

You have the freedom to make choices about how your support is arranged to meet your eligible needs.

Flexibility

You can choose to change when and how you receive your support.

Choice of provider

You can select who provides your support, whether it's someone of the same gender, someone with specific skills, or someone with similar hobbies and interests.

Adaptability

If you are unhappy with your support or want to try something different, you can make changes to your support.

Emergency management

You can adjust your support to manage temporary emergencies or changes.

Restrictions on direct payments

We do not allow direct payments to pay for services from your husband, wife, partner, or any other family member(s) living with you. This includes:

- Parent or parent-in-law
- Son, daughter, son-in-law or daughter-in-law
- Stepson or stepdaughter
- Brother or sister
- Aunt or uncle
- Grandparent
- Husband, wife or partner of any of the relatives on this list.
- A person who lives with any of the relative(s) on this list, as if they were that relative's spouse or civil partner.

In exceptional circumstances, we may allow payment to someone on the list above, but only if we are satisfied that it is necessary to meet your care needs. Each request will be individually considered on its own merits, we may request further evidence to show that such a payment is necessary. Payment to a person listed above, living in the same household, will only be made with explicit prior agreement from us.

Support with managing direct payments:

- If you find making decisions or managing money to pay for your care difficult, you can have a trusted 'nominated person' to help you.
- We will complete a financial assessment of your personal finances to determine how much you may need to contribute towards the cost of your direct payment. The law requires any financial support we provide to be means-tested. The direct payment starts when your care plan is agreed, and your financial assessment has been confirmed.
- Your social worker will provide you with a direct payment agreement outlining your responsibilities regarding the use of the direct payment. The sooner this is signed and returned to us, the sooner we can set up the direct payment.
- We will set up a direct payment pre-paid card account for you and a pre-paid card will be issued. Your direct payment funds will be paid onto the card, every four weeks, in advance.
- You can use the pre-paid card in person, over the phone or online to achieve the outcomes identified in your care plan. It is safe, secure and

convenient to use. You cannot spend more money than is held on the card and you cannot go overdrawn. Cash withdrawals are not permitted.

- When using your pre-paid card, please keep copies of invoices, receipts and payroll records as we will request this from you for audit purposes.
- It is important that direct payment funds spent, are in line with your outcomes within your most recent care plan. We will check the pre-paid card transactions to ensure that the direct payment is working well for you. We may need to request copies of the paid invoices for your care and support.
- Direct payments are tax free and will not affect any benefits you may be receiving.

Fraud Prevention:

- We have a duty to protect the public funds we administer. Transactions and any extra information provided will be checked for the prevention and detection of fraud. We may share this with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes.
- We are committed to the fight against fraud in all forms. Any individual who tries to make any unauthorised transactions from their pre-paid card or direct payment bank account may have committed an offence under the Theft Act 1968. If we suspect that such a fraud may have occurred, the matter will be investigated and may lead to criminal proceedings being instigated.
- Your direct payment will be stopped immediately if it is found that you are using the direct payment illegally or fraudulently. It would also stop if you were using it in a way which is not supporting your assessed outcomes.

For more information, please contact us on (01983) 823073 or email personalbudgets@iow.gov.uk

Adult Social Care

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Direct Payments Team

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