

Employing a personal assistant

This information is for people who use Direct Payments to employ, or are thinking about employing, a personal assistant (PA).

What is a personal assistant?

A personal assistant (PA) is someone who provides regular support to help you live independently.

A PA may help with:

- personal care
- day-to-day household tasks
- communication support
- accessing the community
- getting around at home or in the community
- preparing meals
- attending activities and events
- support with assistance animals
- finance and paperwork
- studying, volunteering, training or employment

Your responsibilities as an employer

If you employ a PA, you become an employer and take on legal and financial responsibilities.

You must make sure:

- you have employer's liability insurance and renew it each year
- you have a contract of employment and any relevant policies in place
- your PA has the right to work in the UK and you keep copies of the required documents
- your PA receives statutory holiday pay and sick pay

- tax and National Insurance contributions are calculated and paid correctly
- pension auto-enrolment requirements are met, where applicable

For information about payroll services and employer support, read the:

[Direct Payment Support Services factsheet](#)

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/direct-payment-support-services

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

Personal assistants who support people receiving Direct Payments must have an enhanced DBS check. If the role involves regulated activity, an enhanced DBS check with a barred list check may also be required.

We can arrange the check at no cost to you or your PA.

[Read the DBS checks for personal assistants factsheet](#)

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/dbs-checks-personal-assistants

Safe employment practices and modern slavery

To help reduce the risk of modern slavery and exploitation, we recommend checking that your PA's wages are paid into an account in their own name.

If you employ more than one PA, each should normally be paid into their own bank account.

If you have concerns about bank account details provided by a PA, contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0300 500 8080.

If your personal assistant is self-employed

Most personal assistants working for people who receive Direct Payments are employees.

Use HMRC's employment status checking tool to check whether your PA is employed or self-employed for tax purposes. Employment status depends on the working arrangement, not simply what you or the PA call it.

[Check employment status for tax \(CEST\)](#)

www.gov.uk/guidance/check-employment-status-for-tax

If a PA is self-employed, they are responsible for their own tax and National Insurance contributions.

If the tool shows that your PA is employed for tax purposes, you must employ them and meet the relevant tax and National Insurance requirements.

For more information, read the

[Personal assistants: employed or self-employed? factsheet](#)

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/personal-assistant-self-employment

If you are unsure about a PA's employment status, contact Acas for advice on a case-by-case basis.

More information

For more information and support, visit:

[Direct Payments support area](#)

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/direct-payments-support

Contact us

Direct Payments Enquiries Team

For help with employing a personal assistant and your responsibilities as an employer:

- Telephone: 0115 804 4945
- Email: dpenquiries@nottscg.gov.uk

Customer service centre

For help, information, or to request this document in another format:

- Call us on 0300 500 8080 (standard call rates apply)
- [Contact us online](#)

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/contactus

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