

# Direct Payments Auditing

## What is a Direct Payment Audit?

An Audit is a check on various aspects of your Direct Payment bank account and spend by the Direct Payments Auditing Team. Everyone's Direct Payment account is monitored this way.

## How often will my Direct Payment account be audited?

Your account will be audited at around eight weeks after you receive your first payment to check that everything is working smoothly. It will then be audited again when you have been receiving your Direct Payment for about one year. Following audits will take place once a year, or more frequently if it is thought necessary.

## What do I need to provide for an Audit?

### 1. Direct Payments Auditing Return Slip

We will send you a Direct Payment Auditing letter with a Return Slip which you must return to us along with copies of bank statements and other relevant documents.

### 2. Copies of bank statements

We will ask you for copies of bank statements for your Direct Payment account and will let you know what period these statements must cover. You must send the statements to us within three weeks of our letter.

### 3. Records of all spending

You will also need to send us relevant documents to support any payments made by cash or cheque from the Direct Payments account. This may include:

- receipts

- wage slips for any staff you employed
- invoices from agencies you have used
- timesheets of staff providing care and support

**If you use a Direct Payment Support Service Provider** we will ask them to provide us with bank statements on your behalf.

**If you have a Pre-Paid Debit Card** to receive your Direct Payment you will not be asked to send bank statements to us as we can access these online on your behalf.

## What happens if I don't provide the information?

We will contact you to remind you to send the Auditing information. If you fail to provide us with the statements and any other documents we have requested, this will be treated as a breach of your Direct Payment Agreement, and an urgent review of your Direct Payment will be scheduled.

A breach of your Direct Payment Agreement may result in your Direct Payment being stopped and the Council taking any action necessary (including court proceedings) to recover all Direct Payment money paid to you.

## What happens at an Audit?

We will look at your Bank Statements and check all your incoming and outgoing transactions. We may need to check these against invoices, wage slips or receipts.

If you employ a PA, we will also check that, where applicable, you are paying employer's liability insurance, and tax and national insurance to HMRC. If your Audit is satisfactory, you will not hear from us until we undertake your next scheduled Audit.

If we identify some issues with your Direct Payment account, we will contact you or a social worker to resolve these.

## **Misuse of Direct Payment money**

If we identify that you are intentionally spending your Direct Payment on things which were not agreed in your Support Plan this will be classed as 'misuse' and a breach of your Direct Payment Agreement. This may lead to your Direct Payment being stopped and you being billed for all the Direct Payment money we calculate you have misused.

## **Surplus Direct Payment money**

We will also look at the balance of your account and calculate what surplus monies are required to be returned to us. If there is a surplus above the amount agreed in your Support Plan, we will write to you asking you to send this amount back to us within six weeks. If you have internet access, you can return money to us using our quick and secure online payment form at [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/return-direct-payment](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/return-direct-payment)

## **What if I have paid contributions into my Direct Payment account?**

Your assessed contribution always pays the first part of all care and support costs. Our payments will make up the remainder. As long as the total of your care and support costs is greater than the total amount you have contributed, any surplus identified in your Direct Payment account will need to be returned to us, to be put back into the Adult Social Care budget. We will reimburse you only if you have contributed more than what has been spent on care and support.

## **Is the information I send treated securely?**

In line with the General Data Protection Regulation we will treat any information you send to us with the utmost professionalism and care. Your auditing information will be used solely for the purposes of Direct Payments

Payments Policy and the Direct Payment Agreement you have signed.

## **How my personal information is used**

The Council is committed to protecting your privacy and ensuring all personal information is kept confidential and safe. For more details see our general and service specific privacy notices at: <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/global-content/privacy>

## **Contact information**

If you have any questions about Direct Payment Audits, please contact our Direct Payments Auditing Team:  
Phone: 0115 9775760 Option 4, Option 1  
Email: [aschppdirectpaymentsauditing@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:aschppdirectpaymentsauditing@nottsc.gov.uk)

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