

Individual employer funding: frequently asked questions

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Who can apply for this funding?

Any individuals who live in England and directly employ their own care and support staff can access this funding providing it is to pay for the learning and development for themselves and their personal assistants (PAs).

What training will be funded?

All applications will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Funding is likely to be granted to pay for any training, development or qualifications that shows value for money and meets the care and management needs of the individual employer and their PAs.

PHB holders will not be able to apply to fund training for any delegated health care tasks included in the care plan they have agreed with the NHS organisation issuing their budget; training (or the funding for training) for these essential tasks must be provided by the NHS (for example, medication awareness).

When can I apply for the funding?

You can apply for funding anytime between now and the end of March. Funding is finite and employers are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Grant funding will be allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis. If the application is successful funding will be paid directly into the individual employer's bank account. This means training can be paid for before individual employers or PAs attend the course(s).

How do I apply for the funding?

To apply for funding an application form must be fully completed.

The individual employer receiving the funding does not have to complete the form, this could be done by a PA, family member or support organisation, but the individual employer (or the person with the power of attorney in certain circumstances) must sign the form and say they accept the conditions of the grant funding.

Before completing the form make sure you read the guidance document.

After completing the application form, email it to funding@skillsforcare.org.uk or send it by post to IE funding, Skills for Care, West Gate, Grace Street, Leeds, LS1 2RP.

Are training providers eligible?

No, the funding is only available for individual employers.

Can training providers help complete the application form or complete the application form on behalf of the individual employer?

No, training providers should not support individual employers to complete the application form. Only individual employers (or the person with the power of attorney in certain circumstances) may complete the form and apply for funding. All funding will be sent to the individual employer.

Are agencies eligible?

No, the funding is only available for individual employers.

Can agencies or support organisations help complete the application form?

Agencies (e.g. user led and support organisations) can support individual employers to complete the application form if they are asked to by the employer. However, the individual employer **must** be the person who accepts the conditions of the grant and submits the application (or the person with the power of attorney in certain circumstances).

Can personal assistants apply directly?

No, but the PA can support the individual employer to complete the application if they are asked to by the employer. The individual employer **must** be the person who accepts the conditions of the grant and submits the application (or the person with the power of attorney in certain circumstances).

Can individuals receiving a personal health budget (PHB) apply for this funding?

Yes, individuals who receive a personal budget and use that to employ PAs for themselves or their children can apply for funding. But the funding cannot be used to pay for health related training courses (e.g. medication awareness).

Can individuals receiving an integrated personal budget apply for this funding?

People who receive an integrated personal budget can apply for funding, but the funding cannot be used to pay for health related training courses.

I've found a training course which is free, could I still claim for my personal assistants backfill costs and travel expenses?

Yes, replacement PA or backfill costs and any travel expenses can be claimed even if you are not paying for the training. We still need to know the details of the training course including who will be delivering it and who will be attending.

Can I claim money from two sources?

It is fine to claim funding from two sources from Skills for Care's point of view if the individual employer is not making a profit and the same cost is not being claimed from more than one source of funding.

Will Skills for Care help me find the appropriate training?

No, Skills for Care does not find training for individual employers and personal assistants. We encourage individual employers and personal assistants to research appropriate training themselves.

You may be able to find additional support from your local authority, NHS organisation that agreed your personal health budget (PHB), direct payment support organisation, etc.

You might want to consider training providers that have been endorsed by Skills for Care through our Endorsement Framework; this is a mark of quality for good learning and development. You can see a list of providers that have achieved this mark and their courses by visiting www.skillsforcare.org.uk/endorsement. Follow this link to find a learning provider <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Developing-your-workforce/Find-a-learning-provider/Find-a-learning-provider.aspx>.

Can an individual employer design and run internal training and claim for this?

Any training would need to be assessed by a training provider before we would consider funding any internal training.

I have received a letter from my local authority about funding for training, but I don't directly employ personal assistants.

You may have PAs that your local authority or NHS organisation that agreed your personal health budget (PHB) has supported you to recruit and pays their salary on your behalf through a managed account; this does not mean you cannot claim funding. You are still classed as an individual employer and would be eligible for this funding.

What are personal assistants?

Personal assistants (sometimes called a PAs, a support worker, or carer) are employed by people who need care and support. PAs work directly with individuals to support them to live as independently as possible and in a way they choose. They carry out a wide range of tasks needed by the individual employer.

Can an unpaid carer or family member who has been appointed to 'employ' a personal assistant on behalf of the adult they care for apply for funding?

This will be reviewed on a case by case basis. If the carer or family member is the nominated person responsible for recruiting and managing PAs and would like to do

some training on how to do payroll, managing people, etc. then we will consider this. In general, unpaid carers are not eligible for this funding.

I am an adult who employs a personal assistant on behalf of my child, can I claim funding?

If the child is aged 18 or over, yes, you can apply for funding. If the child is under the age of 18, only those that receive a personal health budget (PHB) to employ PAs can apply for this funding.

Individuals employing PAs for children under the age of 18 using a social care budget are not eligible to apply for funding. We are not aware of any similar funding available from the Department for Education (DfE), who has responsibility for children's services and would recommend that you speak to your local authority about possible training or funding for training.

My PAs are self-employed, can I apply for funding to pay for their training?

No, this funding is for employers and is made available to support the learning and development of the PAs they directly employ. People engaging the services of a self-employed PA are not employers and, therefore, cannot apply for this funding. People working on a self-employed are in business for themselves and are responsible for the maintenance of their own knowledge and skills.

My PAs are employed by an agency, can I apply for funding to pay for their training?

No, this funding is for employers and is made available to support the learning and development of the PAs they directly employ. PAs employed by an agency should speak to their employer about learning and development.

How long will I have to wait to receive any money (or how long does it take to process my application)?

Skills for Care aims to process all applications as quickly as possible. You should allow approximately four weeks between sending your application and receiving notification that the money has been sent to your bank account. If there are any difficulties with processing your application (e.g. missing documents or information), then you will have to wait longer to find out if your application has been successful and receive the money.

Can a course which has already been completed be funded?

Yes, provided it has been completed within the current funding year, that is between 1 April and 31 March. Please note that money to pay for a course, qualification or unit can only be claimed once. If your course, qualification or unit has been paid by other funding, then you cannot make a claim.

I have already received funding for a training course, but I forgot to claim for PA backfill and travel costs, can I claim this later?

We would encourage individual employers to apply for funding to cover all costs related to the training, including the replacement PA (backfill) and travel costs when they apply. Further claims for funding will be reviewed on a case by case basis provided funding is still available.

I have been awarded funding for training, but I wasn't able to use the money before 30 May, what do I do with it?

Any funding that could not be used by 30 May must be returned to Skills for Care. You should email funding@skillsforcare.org.uk and you will be given details on how to return the money.

I have been awarded funding for training; can I have more money for additional training?

You can apply as many times as you like for funding to pay for training (provided money is still available). However, before asking for more funding you must make sure that any training that has been funded has finished and you have sent us the completion certificates. You cannot ask for more money if training hasn't yet finished.

Can I apply for funding for an Apprenticeship?

Yes, non-levy paying employers can ask for IE funding to pay for the 5% employer contribution to the cost of an apprenticeship qualification. The rest of the payment (95%) is paid by the government.