

Individual employer funding: frequently asked questions

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If your question is not answered in this document please contact
funding@skillsforcare.org.uk

Who can apply for this funding?

Any adults who live in England and directly employ or contract with their own care and support staff using an adult social care direct payment, a personal health budget, or their own money can access this funding, providing it is to pay for the learning and development for their personal assistants (PAs) or themselves as an employer of PAs. Applications must come from the person who get support (the 'individual employer') or if they don't have the mental capacity for that it can come from their authorised nominated person. Training providers, PAs themselves or any other party may help someone to apply but they can't apply directly.

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.

We do not have an indicative list as the funding is personalised to the Individual Employer and their needs.

When can I apply for the funding?

You can apply for funding anytime between now and Friday 20 March 2026. 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 then 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 please fill in an [application form](#). 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 legal right to act for them) must sign the form and say they accept the conditions of the grant funding. Before completing the form make sure you read the terms and conditions. Email the completed application form 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 (people employing or contacting with PAs).

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

No, only individual employers (or the person with the power of attorney in certain circumstances) may apply for funding. All funding will be sent to the individual employer.

Can the employer get help to fill in the form

Yes. The individual employer can get help to fill in the form.

- They can ask anyone they know and trust to help them.
- They can join a monthly zoom call for help – details are on the website
- They can call or email Skills for care for help.

If they have the mental capacity to apply and agree to the terms and conditions then they don't need to tell us about any help they have. If they don't have the mental capacity, then a person with the legal right to act for them can apply. The nominated person can also get help to apply as above.

Are agencies eligible?

No, the funding is only available for individual employers (people employing or contracting with PAs using an adult social care direct payment or their own money).

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 nominated person 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 or their nominated person **must** be the person who accepts the conditions of the grant and submits the application.

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

Yes if they are aged 18 or over and live in England.

PHB holders should still explore with their PHB provider what training and development is available to them.

Further information about PHBs and training

NHS England has recently published a [PHB Quality framework](#) which clearly outlines the responsibilities for training and development of the PHB providers (Integrated Care Boards (ICBs)). It states that 'sufficient funding is available in PHBs to cover the additional necessary costs of employment, if required, such as tax, National Insurance, training and development, pension contributions, any necessary insurance such as public liability, emergency cover, etc, and this is clearly explained to people before they recruit personal assistants.

A PHB uses NHS funding to create an individually agreed personalised care and support plan that offers people of all ages greater choice and flexibility over how their assessed health and wellbeing needs are met. The principles of the NHS is that services are available to all, based on clinical need not on ability to pay and therefore a person's PHB should support the health and wellbeing needs which have been planned and agreed with the person's NHS team.

People employing PAs using a PHB can discuss training requirements for PAs with their PHB provider. For example, if a person's care plan outlines support PAs will be providing to their employers (e.g. medication, assisting and moving, communication etc.) and their PAs require training to be able to provide that support, then the PHB provider (or ICB) has responsibility for funding the training and development.

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 for different courses or different parts of training. You shouldn't claim money from two sources for the same expenditure. You must not make a profit.

For example, if there is funding through a charity in your local area for first aid training so it is free for you and your PAs to access, then you should not apply to us for the cost of the training, but you can apply to us for travel and replacement costs for that training.

Will Skills for Care 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.

Our monthly zoom calls will suggest ways of doing this.

You may be able to find additional support from your local authority that agreed your personal budget, or a direct payment support organisation.

You should check what fully funded training is available to you from [User Led organisations](#) that we have funded and they may also help you source other training or develop courses that individuals or groups need.

You can consider training providers that have been quality assessed by the [Quality Assured Care Learning Service](#).

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

We can consider this on a case-by-case basis. Training would need to be assessed by a training provider before we would consider funding 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 personal assistants that your local authority that agreed your personal budget 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 could still be classed as an individual employer and would be eligible for this funding. Please get in touch if you are unsure about this.

What are personal assistants?

Personal assistants (sometimes called a PAs, a support worker, or carer) are either employed by a person who needs care and support, or maybe a self employed PA contracted by the person. 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, manage 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?

Only if the child is aged 18 or over. If the child is under the age of 18 you cannot access this 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?

Yes. This year the funding is for people who employ or contract with their PAs. People engaging the services of a self-employed PA can apply for this funding, so long as this is true self employment and should not really be an employment situation. Those applying for development for self employed PAs must provide evidence that this is genuine self-employment and only apply for training relevant to their needs.

My PAs are employed by an agency, organisation or co-op 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 or contract as self-employed PAs. PAs employed by an organisation 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)?

We will process all applications as quickly as possible. You should hear the outcome within four weeks of sending your application and all the supporting evidence. If there are any difficulties with processing your application (e.g. missing documents or information), then you might 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. You can only apply for money to pay for a course, qualification or unit 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 in time , what do I do with it?

Any funding that could not be used 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 more than once (provided money is still available). However, before asking for more funding you must make sure that any training that has been funded has finished (if it's a short course) or started (if it's longer than a few months) and you have sent us the completion certificates.

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.

My application has been successful, and I have received part of the funding requested, when will I get the rest of the funding?

Successful applications asking for funding around or exceeding £10,000 may not be paid all at once, but we may agree to release the funding in stages. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis and how we will do this will be discussed with you. If a staged payment is agreed, further funding will only be released once the first set of training funded has been Completed or started (depending on the duration of the training). The release of further funding is dependent upon funding still being available and it being released within the timeframe of the funding year (before the end of March of that financial year). There is a risk that if training already funded is not completed in a timely manner that funding may not be available to be released. We advise once funding is agreed, the training is completed as soon as possible to enable the release of any second or third grant payments.

My application has been successful, can I add on any further training if further needs becomes apparent?

Yes this is something we have provided funding for previously, we are happy to accept this if this is a part of the teams training requirements – as you have submitted an application already for this year we would ask that any further training should be claimed for in a new funding application (can be all the same details just with the additional costs specified).

How would a PA go about doing the Care Certificate or the new Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate qualification? Would this be funded?

Yes this would be funded for PAs and SEPAs.

For the Care Certificate standards, there are some useful FAQs here: [The Care Certificate FAQ's - Personal Assistants](#), please note these are currently being reviewed.

For the qualification you would need to contact a learning provider who are offering the qualification do discuss your requirements, and check what is expected and secure a place.

A list of learning providers below:

- Coleman Training Ltd
- Unique Training Solutions Ltd
- Centra Training
- The Education Training Collective - Stockton Riverside College
- Lifetime Training
- Social Works Ltd
- Guardian Angels
- HCPA in partnership with CPA

- Access Skills Ltd
- AASOG Education and Training
- The Prime College
- Inspiro Learning Ltd
- Durham Learn
- Training in Care
- Realise Training Ltd
- Luminare Education Group

You would need to explain your working scenario as being a PA, so the Learning Provider fully understands this and check that they can deliver in your area (as workplace observations/assessment visits are required).

There are ways around providing alternative evidence where observation assessment may be difficult to gain, however the Learning Provider will be best placed to advise around this.

Find out more about the [Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate qualification](#).