



Hiring a Personal Assistant (PA)



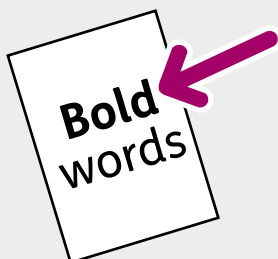
Easy Read



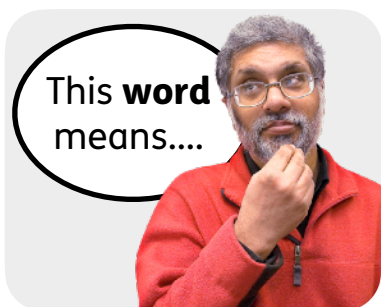
This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information but it will tell you about the important parts.



This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures. Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker. These are important words in the booklet.



Sometimes if a bold word is hard to understand, we will explain what it means.



[Blue and underlined](#) words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

What is in this booklet

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You can fill in a quick survey to say what you think about this Easy Read booklet:
www.easy-read-online.co.uk/easy-read-feedback-survey

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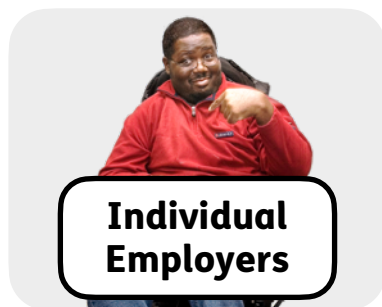
About this booklet



This information is from Skills for Care and Independent Living Group.



It is about hiring someone to help you with your care and support needs. We usually call this person a **Personal Assistant (PA)**.



This information is for people who are hiring someone to support themselves or a family member. We call these people **Individual Employers**.

We will tell you more about:



- What you need to do as an Individual Employer.



- The laws you need to follow as an Individual Employer.

Getting money to pay your Personal Assistant

You can get money to pay your Personal Assistant from:



- A **Direct Payment** from your local council.

A **Direct Payment** is a way for people to choose and pay for their own care and support. The money comes from local councils.



- A **personal health budget** from the NHS in your local area.

A **personal health budget** is money that you get from the NHS to pay for care instead of getting it at a hospital.



- Your own money, which we call **self-funding**.

The good points about employing a Personal Assistant

Being an Individual Employer and employing a Personal Assistant can help you by:



- Giving you more control over the care and support you get.



- Letting you decide on the care and support that works best for you and fits best with your daily life.

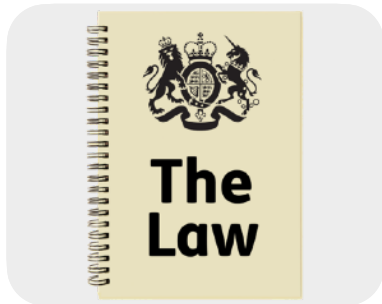


- Having one person who gives you care and support, who you can get to know and trust.



- Making it easier to say what you think about your support and changing it if you want to.

What you need to do as an Individual Employer



As an Individual Employer, you must follow the laws about employing someone.



Your council's Direct Payments team will be able to help you make sure you are doing everything you need to.

You will need to:



- Follow the laws about employing someone.



- Register as an employer with **HMRC**.
HMRC is part of the government that deals with tax.

You will also need to:

- Get **employer's liability insurance**.

Employer's liability insurance is money you pay to a company that can pay for any problems, like your PA getting ill or injured.



- Think about getting special insurance for Individual Employers.



- Check that your Personal Assistant can legally work in the UK.



- Give your Personal Assistant a contract that says what they will do and how much they will be paid.



You can find an example contract on our website here:

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Recruitment-support/Support-individual-employers-PAs/Individual-employers/Employing-a-PA-Toolkit/Templates.aspx

You will also need to:



- Follow the rules about paying the **National Minimum Wage**. This is the lowest amount of money you can pay someone.



- Follow the rules about the **Working Time Regulations**. This is how many hours you can tell someone to work for.



- Give your Personal Assistant holiday pay and time off for holidays.



- Set up a **pension** for your Personal Assistant.

A **pension** is money you save up while you are working to live on when you stop working.



- Make sure your PA is working in a safe way that protects their health and safety.



You will also need to follow the laws about keeping your Personal Assistant's personal information safe and private.

Other things you may want to do

There are extra things you do not have to do by law, but you may choose to, like:



- Getting a police check of your PA's criminal record, called a **DBS check**.



- Asking for **references** from places your Personal Assistant has worked in the past.

A **reference** is a report of how well a person worked in their last job.



- Checking if your Personal Assistant has a valid driving licence and the right car insurance for business use, if they will be driving you around.

Where you get support with employing a Personal Assistant



You may need to get support with being an Individual Employer. For example, support about paying your PA.



Or you could choose to hire a company to do some of the things you need to do as an employer.

Direct Payment Support Services



Your local council will have support services for people getting Direct Payments.



They will help you to employ someone and tell you what you need to do.



You could also hire the Direct Payment Support Service to be in charge of paying your Personal Assistant.

Insurance companies or legal advice services



Some companies give advice about the law on employing someone.



If you have a problem, you should get advice as soon as you can before the problem becomes too big.

Third Party Managed Accounts



A **Third Party Managed Account** is when a company manages your Direct Payment for you.



If you do not want to deal with being an employer and managing money, this might be a good choice for you.



Your Direct Payment would be sent to the Third Party Managed Account, and the company would use it to employ your Personal Assistant.



You would need to pay some money for this service.

Payroll services



This is a service that helps you to pay your Personal Assistant if you do not want to deal with managing money.



They can deal with paying the person's tax and pension.



You would need to pay some money for this service.

Help with difficult words



There are lots of difficult words involved in employing someone.



There is a list of words and what they mean on this website, which might help you:

www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/jargon-buster

How to be a good employer



It is important to build a good working relationship with your Personal Assistant.

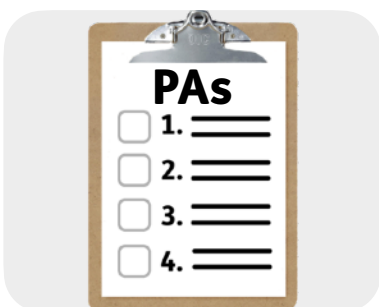


Here are some ways that can help you do that.

Getting off to a good start



You should try to find a Personal Assistant (PA) who you like and who works in a way you like.



Your local council may have a list of PAs to help you find the right one.

You can also use websites to find a PA, like:



- www.papool.co.uk



- www.bsbnationalpahub.co.uk

You should write down a list of:



- All of the ways you would like the PA to help you.



- What type of person you are looking for.



This will help you find the right person.



You can see an example of the list on our website here:

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Recruitment-support/Support-individual-employers-PAs/Individual-employers/Employing-a-PA-Toolkit/Recruiting-a-PA.aspx



You should treat the PA in the same way from the time they start working for you.



This will help them to know what you expect and to trust you.



You can read an Easy Read booklet about what to do before your PA starts here:

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/resources/documents/Recruitment-support/Employing-personal-assistants/Easy-Read/ISL205-19-ER-PA-Booklet-2-FINAL-WEB-ACC-easy-read-020920-new.pdf



You can read an Easy Read booklet about sorting out problems here:

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/resources/documents/Recruitment-support/Employing-personal-assistants/Easy-Read/ISL205-19-ER-PA-Booklet-4-FINAL-WEB-ACC-easy-read-020920-new.pdf

Building a good relationship with your PA

To build a good relationship, you should:



- Plan to have meetings with your PA to check how things are going.



- Agree on how you will work together and what you expect your PA to do for you.



- Set some rules about how you expect your PA to behave and keep your care private.

To build a good relationship, you should also:



- Talk to your PA about what information they will have about you and when they could share it with others.



- Agree to a plan of care and support so that your PA cannot change the care without asking you first.



You can watch some videos about people who have employed PAs on our website:

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Recruitment-support/Support-individual-employers-PAs/Individual-employers/Hear-from-other-individual-employers.aspx

Managing and supporting your PA



You should give your PA time to get to know you and the ways you like them to work.



They might be used to working in different ways than how you would like.



You can watch these videos of Personal Assistants talking about their work here: www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Recruitment-support/Support-individual-employers-PAs/Personal-Assistant/Hear-from-personal-assistants.aspx



Sometimes it might make you sad if working with the PA becomes difficult.



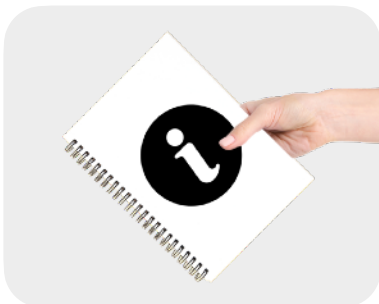
You should try to stay fair and act in the same way as you usually would with them.



Always try to talk to your Personal Assistant in a clear way.



You can read and Easy Read booklet about managing your PA here:
www.skillsforcare.org.uk/resources/documents/Recruitment-support/Employing-personal-assistants/Easy-Read/ISL205-19-ER-PA-Booklet-3-FINAL-WEB-ACC-easy-read-020920-new.pdf



You should:

- Give your PA information about yourself and what matters to you.



- Ask your PA about what is important to them.



- Find ways to talk to each other, like going for a walk or making a storyboard about how to work best with you.

Supporting a PA to work on their skills



Part of being a good employer is helping your PA to work on their skills.



Your PA may not have all of the skills they need to support you when they start.



You can help them to find training on our website here:

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Funding/User-Led-Funding/ULO-funded-training/ULO-training-courses.aspx



You could ask your local council if there are groups that your PA can join to talk to other PAs and share skills.



We have set up a national scheme for PAs to talk to each other. You can find out more about it on our website here: www.skillsforcare.org.uk/news-and-events/Events/Ongoing/Personal-assistant-support-network.aspx



There are also groups of Individual Employers that you can join and get support from.

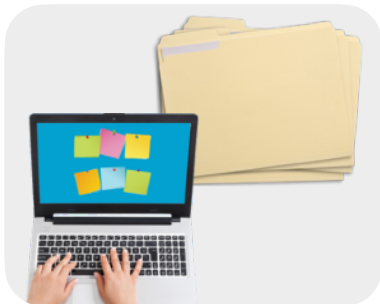


You should contact your local council or disabled people's organisations to find out about groups in your local area.

Managing records and information



All employers must keep records and up to date information about their employees.

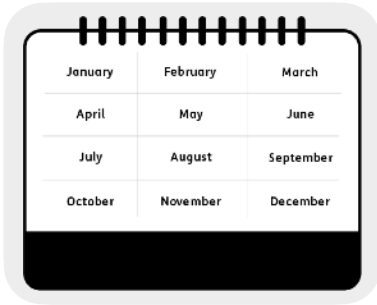


Some people keep information on paper, and others use apps or computers.



Always make sure your records and information are kept safely in case you need them in the future.

Some ways you can manage information are:



- Using a shared calendar with your PA so you know when the PA is working and when they are on holiday.



- Keeping written records of meetings, so you can check what you agreed would happen.



- Keeping a record of when meetings happened and who was there.



- Setting reminders for you to do tasks like paying your PA or renewing your insurance.

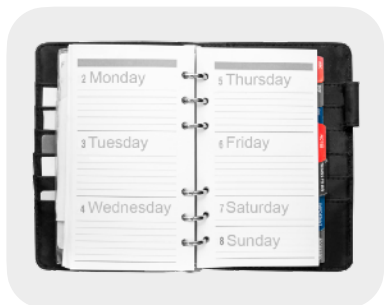


- Having a list of tasks you need to do and ticking them off when you do them, either on paper or on a computer.

Some ways you can manage information are:



- Using an app to tell you when you need to do certain tasks.



- Using different coloured sticky notes in your diary to tell you when you need to do certain tasks.



- Making a routine of the tasks you need to do every week or every month.



You can watch this video about how 2 different employers manage these tasks here:

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Recruitment-support/Support-individual-employers-PAs/Personal-Assistant/Learn-from-other-PAs-and-employers.aspx



Remember that you can always get support from your local council or disability organisations.