

Disability Sheffield

Employing a Personal Assistant Factsheet



Disability Sheffield, Centre for Independent Living
The Circle, 33 Rockingham Lane, Sheffield S1 4FW
Tel (0114) 253 6750

E mail: info@disabilitysheffield.org.uk
Website: www.disabilitysheffield.org.uk

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Coronavirus Update

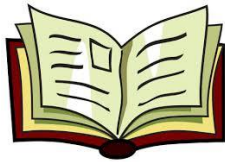
Please see our Coronavirus Resource where we post the latest information for PAs and Individual Employers

<https://www.disabilitysheffield.org.uk/peoplewhoreceiveadirectpaymentorfundtheirornicare>

Sheffield City Council has recently (Dec 2021) reorganised information on their website about direct payments and managing your care.

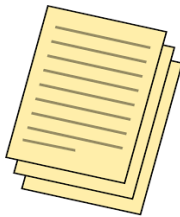
<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/social-care/direct-payments-managing-your-care>

This factsheet provides an overview of the different local and national resources and tools available to disabled people who are thinking of employing a Personal Assistant (PA) or are currently employing a Personal Assistant. It covers some of the most widely used and regularly updated sources of information available.



Employing a Personal Assistant Handbook

Produced by the Sheffield Individual Employer and Peer Development Group and written for and by individual employers with lived experience and knowledge of employing a personal assistant themselves.



Sample Employment Documents

To assist Individual Employers throughout the process of employing a PA including sample adverts, job descriptions, interview questions etc..



Skills for Care Resources

Their website has a dedicated Information Hub for both individual employers and personal assistants bringing together information from a range of sources.



Disability Sheffield Resources

We have a dedicated page on our website about Support for Individual Employers and Personal Assistants.



Sheffield City Council Information

See what's on their website about employing a PA including information about getting the care and support you may need to continue to live independently.

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Advertising for a Personal Assistant

Find out where Individual Employers can advertise for a Personal Assistant including out PA Register.



Training Opportunities

Links to a selection of national disability organisations that provide employment specific information, services and resources.

Employing a Personal Assistant Handbook

If you employ a Personal Assistant to help you meet your care and support needs, or you are planning to, you'll find lots of useful information and guidance in this handbook. It was produced by the Sheffield Individual Employer and Peer Development Group and is available on Sheffield City Council's website at <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/social-care/direct-payments-managing-your-care/employing-personal-assistant>

The development group includes disabled people with lived experience and knowledge of employing a personal assistant themselves. The handbook contains extremely useful Sheffield specific and national information for first time individual employers and for individual employers who are looking for information regarding issues involving an existing employee. It is an invaluable 'go to' resource, written for and by individual employers.

Topics covered in the handbook include:-

- Finding a PA
- Being a good employer/Terms and conditions of employment
- Using a service provider
- Keeping a PA
- Changing contracts/Redundancy
- Information and advice from other organisations

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- Lists of blank 'template' documents and completed examples
- How to contact the council

There is also a Frequently Asked Questions section answering the most commonly asked questions , for example "Can I employ a friend or relative?".

<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/content/dam/sheffield/docs/social-care/help-at-home/personal-assistant-faqs.pdf>

Personal Assistant Samples and Blank Documents

Part 3 of the Handbook provides samples and blank documents to assist Individual Employers throughout the process of employing a PA including:-

- Sample job description
- Sample job adverts
- Blank job application form
- Sample letter inviting someone to interview
- Sample interview questions
- Preparing for your interviews checklist
- Sample job reference letter and job reference form
- Sample letter offering someone the job
- Sample content for a Contract of Employment
- Sample discipline policy and grievance procedure
- Sample payslip
- Blank timesheet
- Blank safety at home checklist
- Sample risk assessment

<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/content/dam/sheffield/docs/social-care/help-at-home/Part%203%20-%20PA%20Handbook%20samples%20and%20blanks.pdf>

Skills for Care Resources

[Skills for Care](#) is an independent national charity which works to help create a well-led, skilled and valued adult social care workforce. Their website has a dedicated [Information Hub](#) for both individual employers and personal assistants bringing together information from a range of sources.

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The [Information for Individual Employers](#) section of the Information Hub takes you to Skills for Care's [Employing Personal Assistants Toolkit Guides](#) , 6 booklets that guide you through the process of recruiting, managing and training your PA.

The information for Individual Employers covers a wide range of topics, including:

- Why employ a Personal Assistant?
- Recruiting a Personal Assistant
- Before your Personal Assistant starts
- Managing your Personal Assistant
- Training and Qualifications
- Keeping your PA
- Useful Templates
- Other help for Individual Employers

It's always valuable to look at information for PAs as it can provide a greater understanding of the relationship between a PA and an individual employer from a PA's point of view. The Information Hub has specific [Working as a Personal Assistant](#) section which includes several sub-sections:

- What is a Personal Assistant (PA)?
- Hear from PAs
- Finding a role as a Personal Assistant
- Important information when you start your role
- Training and Qualifications
- Managing your relationship with your employer

Skills for Care promote what they call a 'Values Based' approach to employment in the adult social care sector. For individual employers this basically means that when recruiting a PA you should not simply concentrate on their skills and experience and what training qualifications the person may or may not have. Your PA's 'values' should also be important to you as a difference in values between you and your PA could potentially cause friction with your PA. In its simplest terms this can be about whether you feel you have 'an affinity' with this person or whether you 'get on'. If so, growing, working and learning together will be beneficial for both parties. The right

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values, behaviours and attitudes are the raw materials, good induction, training and management will do the rest.

Disability Sheffield Resources

We have a dedicated page on our website about [Support for Individual Employers and Personal Assistants](#), which has links to the resources we've already mentioned and our own projects including:-

- [Make it Personal with a Personal Assistant](#): This is a film about what it is like to have a Personal Assistant to support you.
- Training and Learning Opportunities (see separate heading below)
- [Disability Sheffield PA Register](#) : We have designed this register for anyone whether an adult, young person or child wanting to find and employ a PA, and also for PAs to advertise they are looking for work.
- [Digital Security Guide](#) : Employers of personal assistants (individual employers) have a legal obligation to store information about their staff safely and securely, regardless of whether the information is digital or paper based. Disability Sheffield have created [a short animation on YouTube](#) , which outlines this obligation along with a [Digital Security Guide](#) to ensure that as an employer, you are following the necessary policies and procedures that are in place for safe storage of data and usage of all devices within the home.
- [Personal Health Budgets animation](#): A short animation produced by Disability Sheffield and Eden films
- [Safe Restraints Project](#): Skills for Care have produced this leaflet detailing the Safe Restraints Project with Disability Sheffield.
- [Lets Talk About Restraints](#): This website is a useful resource to help Individual Employers navigate the difficult subject of restraint.
- [Peer Coaching and Mentoring](#): The Employer and PA Development group also facilitate a Peer Coaching and Mentoring Project. This project provides Individual Employers and Personal Assistants with the opportunity to talk to someone who has had similar experiences, whether they are new to the world of care or not.

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Sheffield City Council Information

Sheffield City Council has recently (Dec 2021) reorganised information on their website about direct payments and managing your care.

<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/social-care/direct-payments-managing-your-care>

It highlights information about obtaining a direct payment and, as already detailed, the 'Employing a PA Handbook and accompanying sample /blank documents and Frequently Asked Questions.

It is also directs you to information about how to get a care and support assessment, the help, support and advice on living independently in your own home offered by Sheffield City Council. 'Care & support' is the help some people need to live as well as possible with any illness, disability or impairment they may have.

Care and support can include help with things like:

- washing and dressing yourself
- preparing and eating meals
- getting out and about
- keeping in touch with friends and family
- obtaining and equipment or adaption you need

When you contact Sheffield City Council, they will talk to you about your care needs and the issues you are facing, and whether you can get short or long term care and support. You can find out more at <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/social-care/getting-long-term-care-support>.

Sheffield city Council has produced a number of factsheets about adult social care <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/social-care/adult-social-care-factsheets>

Including a factsheet about Getting Care and Support <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/content/dam/sheffield/docs/social-care/factsheets/Getting%20Care%20and%20Support%20Factsheet.pdf>

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Advertising for a Personal Assistant

Prospective Individual Employers can advertise for a Personal Assistant in several places, such as:

- [Disability Sheffield PA Register](#) – We have designed this register for anyone whether an adult, young person or child wanting to employ a PA, and also for PAs looking for work. Please have a look at the [Frequently asked Questions](#) before registering as an individual employer or PA.
- www.indeed.co.uk – Indeed allows individual employers to search through a large number of CVs online.
- <https://www.gov.uk/advertise-job> - This government tool allows users to post advertisements for jobs to a large audience of UK jobseekers.
- You may also find it useful to advertise on noticeboards in any community venues you visit; make sure to make your advert is eye catching!

Training Opportunities for Personal Assistants and Individual Employers

If you are an existing or aspiring Personal Assistant looking to build your skills and knowledge, you can access a number of free courses.

Disability Sheffield Training Opportunities

Disability Sheffield has once again secured some funding from Skills for Care to enable us to offer a programme of free training courses during 2020/21.

(This project is part of the Sheffield Employer and PA Development group, a unique collaboration between Disability Sheffield, Sheffield City Council and Individual Employers and their Personal Assistants)

A summary of the courses currently available free of charge to IEs and PAs can be viewed by downloading the [2021 – 2022 Individual Employer and PA Training Brochure](#)

Or you can book by going to our [Eventbrite Page](#)

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You can also find information on our [Support for Individual Employers and Personal Assistants](#) page. Please be aware that booking on these courses is essential and numbers are limited.

Sheffield City Council Training Opportunities

The [HR Learning and Development Service](#) has a wide range of training courses available for people who work in social care organisations from the independent, private and voluntary sector (including PAs). You can also access their training if you are an Individual Employer to help you meet your care and support needs. You can telephone the service on (0114) 229 3041 and look at training information on their website <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/social-care/learning-development>

Disability Sheffield Information Service

The Circle

33 Rockingham Lane

Sheffield S1 4FW

 **0114 253 6750**

(Ansaphone facility available at other times)

E- mail info@disabilitysheffield.org.uk

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Disclaimer

No recommendation is given or implied by providing these details. Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy we cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. Please note that the inclusion of groups or individuals on the factsheet does not mean that they have been vetted or are recommended by Disability Sheffield Information Service or Disability Sheffield. Details may change so it is important you check the information provided to make sure they are accurate and suitable for your own requirements

January 2022