

Risk Assessment Tool for Personal Assistants (PAs) returning to work

What is this tool?

This tool can help you think about how you can support your PAs to return to work, and so they feel they're in a safe environment. It has suggestions for things to talk about, questions to ask and ways to assess any risks – and then limit or remove the risks for your PAs.

Why do I need it?

PAs may be returning to work after time shielding or self-isolating because of their own needs or for someone in their family's needs. Or they may have been asked to stay away from work because you, or someone in your household, was shielding or self-isolating.

You should always have an honest conversation with your PAs about the risks they and you are worried about. You should all think about what options are available and how they can work. It may be that things need to work differently for a while or for a longer time.

Employing PAs means you're in control of your support. It means you have the autonomy and personal choice about what you do, and how you live each day. It also means you're an employer, and so have duties and responsibilities to make sure your PAs are safe while at work.

The Coronavirus pandemic means all of us have to act differently, and change what we think is safe. Use this tool as a guide of what you could put in place so that you and your PAs are safe and comfortable.

How do I use it?

Look through the table below. It sets out what a risk assessment could cover by giving a topic and then asking what you can do to reduce risks of spreading Coronavirus. You can record what you and your PA have agreed will happen. Let your PA have a copy, and keep another copy on your PA's employment file.

It may be useful to write down what a typical day looks like, from the start of the shift through each activity, such as food preparation, personal care, cleaning and going out and about. Together, you can have an open discussion about what you'd both like to happen to protect you and your PA, whilst maintaining a healthy and happy relationship.

Remember to review the risk assessment regularly. Government guidelines on topics like Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) change regularly so make sure you keep up to date. Revise the risk assessment in light of these changes, and when there's a change in personal circumstances – for you or for your PA.

For more information

There's lots of information relating to managing your own support and personal assistants during the Coronavirus pandemic at [Coronavirus Information and Support](#).

Or phone Disability Sheffield on: **0114 253 6750**.



Personal Assistant returning to work Risk Assessment

PA Name:

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Think about:

- ▶ Have you and all your PAs read the [Government guidance on PPE](#).
- ▶ How much PPE you need, and storing enough stock in advance.
- ▶ Order PPE from: [Disability Sheffield](#).
- ▶ Is your PPE stored safely, and does everyone know where to find it?
- ▶ Is your PPE being used correctly?
- ▶ Does everyone know where to get and how and where to dispose of PPE?

notes

Personal hygiene

notes

Frequent hand washing should be done for at least 20 seconds with antibacterial soap. Make sure hands are washed:

- ▶ As soon as your PA gets to work.
- ▶ When your PA sneezes or coughs.
- ▶ When your PA has helped you and this involved touching your face or contact with bodily fluids, even if they wore gloves.
- ▶ Before handling food.

Think about:

- ▶ Is hand sanitizer available?
- ▶ Do your PAs need to change into fresh clothes and shoes when they enter your home? Could they store a change of clothes at your home in a closed bag?
- ▶ Can your PAs avoid wearing jewellery on hands and wrists?
- ▶ Do you have individual towels for each PA for handwashing?
- ▶ Are individual towels changed as each PA leaves each day?
- ▶ Do your PAs need to use separate cups, plates and cutlery?
Are these items stored separately for each PA?

Cleaning and disinfecting

notes

Think about:

- ▶ **Is there disinfectant available and does everyone know where to find it?**
- ▶ **What needs to be cleaned? For example work surfaces, kitchen appliances, toilets, taps, equipment like hoists/shower chairs/wheelchairs, keys, key lock boxes, key pads, door handles, light switches, doorbell, mobile phones, computers, screens, keyboards.**
- ▶ **How often or frequently do things need to be cleaned?**
For example after every use, every hour, beginning and end of shift.
- ▶ **How do you deal with laundry?**

Food preparation and feeding

Think about:

- ▶ Does PPE such as face masks/gloves need to be used when preparing food or feeding?
- ▶ When do utensils need to be washed, is this before as well as after using?
- ▶ Do you want your PAs to use separate utensils and/or crockery?
- ▶ Could your PA make multiple portions to freeze some, to reduce how often they have to cook?

notes

Personal care

Think about:

- ▶ Is PPE available to PAs when assisting with showering, bathing, and going to the toilet?

notes

Reducing contact and social distancing when others live or work in the house

Think about:

- ▶ Can I have 'safe' spaces, rooms or zones which are just for me?
- ▶ Can PAs be 2 metres distanced when not performing personal support tasks?
- ▶ Are face masks to be worn at all times, or just when within 2 metres for a prolonged time?

notes

Shopping

notes

Think about:

- ▶ Can shopping be done online?
- ▶ Is there a way I can minimise the need to go to the shops?
- ▶ Are some of my PAs more happy to go to the shops than others?

Discuss and agree together.

- ▶ Do staff that run errands have the appropriate PPE and hand-sanitizer, and do they know to keep social distancing?
- ▶ Are items that come into the house wiped down?

Going out – for exercise, for work

Think about:

- ▶ Am I keeping 2 metres apart from others, including my PAs if possible?
- ▶ Can I change the times I exercise or go to work to support my PAs with their travel plans?
- ▶ Can I and my PAs avoid using public transport?
- ▶ If PAs drive my car is it cleaned inside before and after use? For example steering wheel, door handles, dashboard, windows, gear stick, buttons/levers?
- ▶ Is PPE and hand sanitizer available in my car?

notes

Travelling to work

Think about:

- ▶ Can my PAs walk or use their own vehicle?
- ▶ Can I be flexible with shift times to avoid busy travel times?
- ▶ Are other methods of travel available so my PAs avoid using public transport?
(extra funding is available from Sheffield City Council £20 per visit if PAs can't use public transport)
- ▶ Is everyone aware of the up-to-date public transport travel guidance?

notes

People visiting your home

Think about:

- ▶ Can I reduce the number of people that visit my home, or change the number of times they come to my home?
- ▶ Do I know what risk assessments professionals like chiropodists or hairdressers have done so that they're using safe working practices? Have they told me how they will carry out their visit?
- ▶ Can visitors be confined to one room and kept away from others in my home?

notes

Signed

Employer	Date
PA	Date
To be reviewed on	

This template was developed by the Sheffield Individual Employer and PA Development Group. The group includes people who have experience of employing their own PAs, and people who work as PAs. You can help too! Send your feedback and suggestions to information@sheffield.gov.uk.

WORKING TOGETHER AT ITS BEST

