



# MANAGING YOUR DIRECT PAYMENT DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

This factsheet provides answers to some of the likely situations you or your employees might find yourself in.

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There may be a number of elements to your Direct Payment. There are instructions for each type of care and support.

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## 1) Personal Assistants (PAs)

If there is a specific clause in your contract with your PA that is more generous than the advice given here, you will need to adhere to your contract.

Description of Situation	Solution
<p>a) I need to “self-isolate” due to Coronavirus symptoms of myself or a family member I live with</p>	<p>It is fine for you to continue to pay your PA(s) their normal wage for up to 4 weeks when they are not working during this time. We would request that you encourage your PA to volunteer during this time if they are able to do so.</p> <p>If you are not going to use your PA support for longer than 4 weeks, please contact your social work team (see Contact Details if you do not know how to contact your social work team).</p> <p>If you cannot manage without the care your PA(s) provides and they are willing to continue while you self-isolate, you will need to provide them with Personal Protective Equipment (see c) in this table). They will also need to self-isolate and follow strict hygiene protocols. More guidance on this can be found here: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance</a></p> <p>If your PAs will not continue to provide care during your self-isolation, and you do not have any family or other informal support to help, please contact your social work team for assistance (see Contact Details).</p>
<p>b) My PA needs to “self-isolate” either due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coronavirus symptoms of themselves</li> <li>- or Coronavirus symptoms of a family member they live with</li> <li>- or they have been advised to by their GP</li> </ul> <p>(continues onto next page)</p>	<p>Your PA should be paid their normal wage up to the end of April – the Council will issue further guidance for after April.</p> <p><b>If your PA is entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), your payroll provider should apply for this for them as a part of their wage as the HMRC will refund some SSP during the Coronavirus Pandemic</b> (information about who is entitled to SSP can be found at <a href="https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay">https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay</a>). SSP for “self-isolation” applies from Day 1 of self-isolation.</p> <p>If your PA needs to self-isolate for more than 7 days they will need a “sick note” from NHS 111 online (<a href="https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/">https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/</a>) or a letter from their GP (more information on this can be found at <a href="https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay/eligibility">https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay/eligibility</a>).</p>

	<p>If you and your family are symptom free and you cannot manage without the care your PA(s) provides, and your family cannot assist, then you can buy the additional care you need using money from your Direct Payment account. Disability Sheffield have a list of temporary PAs you can choose from for cover or you can use agency care (see Contact Details and the PA Pool section for further information).</p> <p>If you do not have enough money in your Direct Payment account to pay for additional care then please contact the Direct Payment Audit Team for an emergency payment (see Contact Details).</p>
c) My PA needs Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to work (for example gloves and a face mask)	<p>You can request PPE via Disability Sheffield (see Contact Details for ways to contact them). If there isn't any PPE available when you request it from Disability Sheffield, you are allowed to use your Direct Payment money to purchase PPE.</p> <p>If you do not have enough money in your Direct Payment account to pay for PPE then please contact the Direct Payment Audit Team for an emergency payment (see Contact Details).</p>
d) My PA wants to work, but does not have suitable childcare	<p>The Government classes your PA as a Key Worker and so they are eligible to continued childcare during the Coronavirus pandemic. They can request childcare from their child's school or usual childcare provider.</p> <p>If they refuse the childcare offered they will need to take unpaid leave or holiday.</p>
e) How do PAs identify themselves as a "Key Worker" if they are stopped by the Police?	<p>Disability Sheffield can give your PA a letter that they can carry with them that explains why are a Key Worker.</p>
f) My PA is unwilling to provide services due to concerns about Coronavirus-related risks	<p>If you have made reasonable offers of PPE equipment, and discussed any other specific concerns, then the PA may need to take annual leave or unpaid leave if they are unwilling to work. Please seek advice from ACAS (see Contact Details).</p>

## PA Pool

Disability Sheffield are organising a record of available PA's. Please advise your PA's of this facility if they are willing to work additional hours during these challenging times. If you find you need PA cover for a short period, you can also get in touch with Disability Sheffield to see if they have anyone suitable available. More details can be obtained from Disability Sheffield (See Contact Details).

## Short Term Use of Family Members as a PA

There are rules about family members being paid as a PA or employee. If you need to pay a family member to provide your care you need to get authorisation from your social work team first (see Contact Details).

You do not need to contact your social work team if your family are able to provide support for free.

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## 2) Agency Care

Description of Situation	Solution
a) My agency can no longer provide the care I need	You can use your Direct Payment money to buy support from another agency. If you cannot find alternative care you can contact your social work team for assistance (see Contact Details if you do not know how to contact your social work team).
b) I need less support because my family are at home	If you need less support temporarily please advise the agency so that they can help more people. Please continue to pay the agency for any calls they should have been doing while you don't need them up to the end of April – the Council will issue further guidance for after April.

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## 3) Day Centre

Description of Situation	Solution
a) My Day Centre has closed – I am safe and well without attending it	<p>If the Day Centre needs you to continue paying, please do this up to the end of April – the Council will issue further guidance for after April.</p> <p>If your Day Centre does not need you to continue paying, you do not need to stop your Direct Payment. The Direct Payment Audit Team will help you with any additional funds when you next submit financial monitoring.</p>
b) My Day Centre has closed – I need alternative support to keep me safe	<p>If the Day Centre needs you to continue paying, please do this up to the end of April – the Council will issue further guidance for after April.</p> <p>If you find a replacement service, you can use your Direct Payment money to pay for it. If you do not have enough Direct Payment money to pay for this short term support, please contact the Direct Payment Audit Team for an emergency payment (see Contact Details).</p> <p>If you cannot find any alternative services, please contact your social work team (see Contact Details).</p>

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#### **4) Short term assistance managing your Direct Payment account**

If you or the relative who manages your account for you becomes too unwell to manage the Direct Payment account, you can use a Managed Account Company for a couple of months to ensure your bills are paid and any payroll you need is done. To arrange this please contact the Direct Payment Audit Team to arrange this (see Contact Details).

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#### **5) Contact Details**

##### **Sheffield City Council**

##### **Adults Social Work Teams**

Telephone – 0114 273 4908

Email – [asc.howdenhouse@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:asc.howdenhouse@sheffield.gov.uk)

##### **Childrens Social Work Teams**

Telephone numbers:

North – 0114 203 9591

East – 0114 203 7463

West – 0114 273 4491

##### **Direct Payment Audit Team**

Telephone – 0114 273 5397

Email – [DPUaudits@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:DPUaudits@sheffield.gov.uk)

##### **Continuing Healthcare Team – Sheffield CCG**

Duty Line – 0114 3051700 (please hold the line as there is a welcome message on the phone now)

Email – [sheccg.sheffieldchc@nhs.net](mailto:sheccg.sheffieldchc@nhs.net)

##### **Mental Health**

Please contact your individual care coordinator. If you don't know who this is, please contact the Direct Payment Audit Team and we will help you identify who they are.

## **External Contacts**

### **ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)**

Telephone: 0300 123 1100

Website: <https://www.acas.org.uk/>

### **Disability Sheffield: Centre for Independent Living**

The Circle

33 Rockingham Lane

Sheffield

S1 4FW

Telephone: 0114 253 6750

Email: [CV19@disabilitysheffield.org.uk](mailto:CV19@disabilitysheffield.org.uk)

Text Only Number: 07541 937 169

### **Disability Sheffield PA Register – electronic links:**

Please if you could encourage PAs who are interested in being redeployed or pick up additional work to register with the PA register using this [link](#).

Equally individuals who require support and their PA is no longer available please register your need on this [link](#).