



Your Life Your Choice

care and support designed with you

Direct Payments update is changing

We've all felt the effects of the current financial climate. To do our bit we are removing the paper version of the Direct Payments update from circulation. What this means is that in future, the Direct Payments update will be provided online and by email.

From issue 21, those with an email address on our database will automatically receive an electronic version or it can be viewed online at www.durham.gov.uk/directpayments. If you would like to receive a copy by email, please let us know by emailing directpayments@durham.gov.uk confirming your name and address so we can update your records.

How do I get an email address?

As long as you have the internet either through your landline or mobile phone it's easy to get a free email account.

These are the most well-known providers you could use.

1. Gmail (provided by Google)
2. Outlook/Hotmail (provided by Microsoft)
3. Ymail (provided by Yahoo)

Many mobile phones' email software will offer to create one of these for you when you open the email software.

Staff at your local County Durham library will also help you open an account if you need a hand. You'll need to join or be a library member so you can book a computer slot. Find out where your nearest library is at www.durham.gov.uk/libraries.

Direct Payments card accounts

We are currently in the process of changing the Direct Payments (DP) card provider with minimal disruption. You will receive a letter explaining when this will happen and exactly what you will need to do when you receive your new DP card. Existing card accounts will be transferred to the new provider, and you will receive a letter explaining when this will happen, and what you need to do when you get your new DP Card. Support will be available from the Direct Payments Team and the new card provider. If you need any further information contact us on 03000 268200.



Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) checks

Is your employees DBS check up to date? DBS checks expire after 5 years and you must ensure that your employee completes a new check if the current one is due to expire within the next month. To do this they can visit the below link and follow the on-screen instructions in order to complete an online application.

<https://disclosure.capitarvs.co.uk/nereo/>

Username: DCCAS052890

Password: DCC

Once they have completed the application they should call us on 03000 268 200 or email directpayments@durham.gov.uk to arrange a suitable time to come to County Hall in Durham with their identification documents.

Please remember to let us know when anyone stops working for you so we are aware that their DBS does not need to be renewed.

Timesheets

If you are an employer and use a personal assistant you must send timesheets to your payroll provider in line with the Direct Payments Payment schedule. If you need a copy of the payments schedule please contact us on 03000 268 200 or email directpayments@durham.gov.uk.

Contact us

For more information about Direct Payments contact the Direct Payments team at

directpayments@durham.gov.uk

03000 268 200

Direct Payments, Room G 83/88, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UG

www.durham.gov.uk/directpayments

Invoices and Receipts for Audit

Even with the new DP card accounts, please remember that you still need to keep any invoices and receipts in relation to your Direct Payments. Any financial information should be kept for six years plus the current year.

Training

It is important that your staff are provided with adequate training to enable them to complete their duties safely and effectively. You can search for available training providers on www.durhamlocate.org.uk or www.skillsforcare.org.uk. You can also contact us for details of training providers that other people have used when you have identified any suitable training for your staff. Don't forget the council will not fund any professional qualifications via Direct Payments e.g. NVQ's.

Minimum Wage

Please remember that if you employ your own personal assistant directly it is your responsibility to ensure their hourly rate meets the National minimum wage. This is currently £7.50 per hour for employees over the age of 25. This includes hours worked as overnights or sleepovers. If you do not feel you are meeting this requirement please call us to discuss further.

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.



Braille



Audio



Large print

directpayments@durham.gov.uk

03000 268 200