



Your Life Your Choice

care and support designed with you

Direct Payments update

You should have recently received your revised payment schedule, there is also an electronic version available on the website.

Are you paying the National Minimum wage?

From the 1st April 2019 the national minimum wage for adults aged 25 and over increased from £7.83 to £8.21 per hour and for 21-24 year olds from £7.38 to £7.70 per hour. Employers must ensure they are paying employees in line with this requirement. Please call the Direct Payments team to discuss any necessary increases.



DP Card Update

Our DP card supplier, PFS, are introducing a 3-D secure service for all of their customers, to give you added protection from fraudulent payments. This will only impact you if it has been agreed that you can make online payments or purchases as part of your care and support plan. This may include renewing your liability insurance policy.



To continue to use your DP card in this way, you will need to contact us by email at directpayments@durham.gov.uk and provide us with your mobile phone number, so we can register it with PFS. This number will be used to send you an SMS with a one-time password for online transactions, when appropriate.

Personal Assistant Training

We have been working with our learning and development department to develop a program of basic training that PAs can attend. This training will be available for existing PAs or newly appointed PAs. If you require further information on training please contact us by email or phone.



Care agency/provider increase



Your care agency/provider may have increased their hourly rate as of April 2019. They should make you aware of this. Any change of hourly rate needs to be discussed with your social worker/ care coordinator to get agreement for this increase in your budget. Your social worker will then make The Direct Payments Team aware so the necessary changes can be made.

Pension increase

If your employee has opted to remain in the work place pension scheme please note that the employer's workplace pension contribution has increased to 3% from April 2019. The money for this should come from the Direct Payments budget, please advise us if you do not have sufficient to cover this increase.



Direct Payments website

We are currently in the process of updating our Direct Payments website. The information on the website currently includes fact sheets to assist you with your Direct Payments and employment responsibilities, in addition to providing you with information to signpost you to relevant websites to support you in your role. Please let us know your thoughts on how this website could be improved to help you.



Employing personal assistants

We are looking for ideas on how to improve the recruitment and retention of staff for Direct Payments employers. We have developed a PA web page which can be found at www.durham.gov.uk/personalassistant, where potential workers can find out information on how to become a PA and how to register themselves on the Locate website. This will help Direct Payments employers access information for available PAs when they are trying to recruit.

We are also considering having a closed facebook group for employers and PAs so we can pass on relevant information and job opportunities. We would like to invite you to put forward any ideas and suggestions on the type of information you would find useful. Please submit your feedback by email or contact us in the office using our usual telephone number.

Contact us

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

directpayments@durham.gov.uk

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www.durham.gov.uk/directpayments

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