Sefton Direct Payments Guide

This guide explains the Direct Payments Scheme. It covers what Direct Payments are, who can get them, how to use them, and the support available.

What is a Direct Payment?

A Direct Payment is money from the Council to arrange your own care and support services. This gives you more independence and choice.

Who Can Get a Direct Payment?

You can get a Direct Payment if:

- **Eligible**: You have had a care assessment, and the Council agrees you need social care services.

- **Care Plan**: You and the Council have agreed on a care support plan that lists your needs and goals.

• **Financial Eligibility**: You have £23,250 or less in savings.

Direct Payments can go to:

• **Adults with Capacity**: Adults who can manage their Direct Payment, with or without help.

• **Nominated Person**: Someone chosen to manage payments for those who cannot do it themselves (the Council must approve this person).

To get a Direct Payment, you need to:

• **Understand Needs**: Know what care you need and who you want to provide it.

• **Manage Responsibilities**: Handle financial and legal tasks, or appoint someone to help.

Sometimes, Direct Payments might not be suitable. A social care worker can advise on this.

Using a Direct Payment

You can use Direct Payments for services listed in your care support plan, such as:

• **Employing a Personal Assistant (PA)**: To help with daily care.

• **Buying Support**: From agencies that offer necessary care and activities.

Your spending plan must be agreed upon and in your care support plan.

Important Points:

• Direct Payments are not a
replacement for help from family, friends, or charities.

• You cannot use the money to pay family members living with you.

• Use a pre-payment card to manage your funds.

Direct Payment Responsibilities

When using Direct Payments, you must:

• **Sign an Agreement**: This outlines your and the Council's responsibilities.

• **Keep Records**: Show how you spend the Direct Payment.

• **Use Funds as Planned**: Spend money according to your support plan.

• **Employing a PA**: Meet legal requirements if you hire someone.

• **Understand Contracts**: Know your duties when buying services.

These steps ensure proper use of your Direct Payment.

Support for Managing Direct Payments

Sefton Carers Centre offers help with:

• Setting up your Direct Payment and pre-payment card.

• Finding and training Personal Assistants.

• Payroll support, including payslips, DBS checks, and taxes.

• Legal advice for insurance and employment laws.

Council's Self-Directed Support Team helps with:

• Managing and spending your funds.

- Ensuring correct payment amounts.

- Keeping records of expenses.

- Reviewing your Direct Payment account.

Frequently Asked Questions

What will it cost me?

A financial assessment checks if you need to pay for care services. Costs depend on your situation.

Who can I employ?

You can employ anyone over 18, except close family who live with you. PAs working with a child must pass a DBS check.

Can I spend the money on anything?

You can only use Direct Payments for agreed care and support, not personal expenses or daily living costs.

How to Apply for a Direct Payment

First, Adult Social Care needs to assess your care needs.

To learn more, call Sefton Council at 0345 140 0845, visit their website at www.sefton.gov.uk/directpayments, or contact the Direct Payments Team at Sefton Carers Centre on 0151 288 6060.