



Personal Assistant Handbook

**For employees of
Direct Payment
Service Users.**

Contents

- **Introduction**
- **Starting your position as a PA**
- **Being Paid**
- **Holiday Entitlement & Conditions**
- **Attendance & Leave**
- **Confidentiality**
- **Health and Safety**
- **Ending Employment**

- **Safeguarding**
- **Training**
- **Useful Information
& Contacts**

Introduction

A personal assistant is someone who is employed directly by a person who needs support to maintain control and independence in their lives.

They can also be employed by a suitable person on behalf of the person receiving support.

This handbook provides you with a summary of working conditions and policies affecting your employment which are presented here only as a matter of information.

You are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the provisions of this handbook.

Starting your position as a PA

Probationary Period

You will start employment on condition of suitable references and DBS checks, as well as an initial probationary period as set out in your Contract of Employment. During this period your work performance and general suitability will be assessed and, if it is satisfactory, your employment will continue. However, if your work performance is not up to the required standard, or you are considered generally unsuitable, your employer may either take remedial action (which may include the extension of your probationary period) or terminate your employment at any time. Your employer reserves the right to apply the full contractual capability and disciplinary procedures during your probationary period.

Job Description

Where you have been provided with a job description of the position to which you have been appointed, amendments may be made to your job description from time to time, in relation to changing needs and your own ability.

Job Flexibility

It is an express condition of your employment that you are prepared, whenever necessary, to transfer duties within your day to day activities. During holiday periods, etc. it may be necessary for you to take over some duties normally performed by other people. This flexibility is essential as the type and volume of support is always subject to change, and it allows your employer to operate their life efficiently and gain maximum potential.

Mobility

Although you are usually employed at a home address, it is a condition of your employment that you are prepared, whenever applicable, to transfer to any location. This mobility is essential to meet the support needs of your employer. If driving your own vehicle is a requirement of the job then you must ensure you are adequately insured to use your car for business purposes.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Your initial employment is conditional upon the provision of satisfactory criminal records check via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) carried out at an appropriate level to your post. During your employment you are required to immediately report any convictions or offences with which you are charged, including traffic offences. You may also be required to provide proof of your right to work in the UK.

Being Paid

You are paid by your employer who is responsible for paying you for the work you do.

Your employer will pay you for the hours you work, which should be recorded.

This will be paid directly by your employer via cheque or bank transfer and accompanied with a wage slip.

If your employer uses Dewis' managed banking services then Dewis will make the payment on your employer's behalf via a bank transfer.

You accept that a cheque and bank transfer can take several days to clear into your bank account.

Dewis CIL helps your employer by calculated the correct figures that need to be paid.

Dewis prints wage slips on behalf of your employer based on the information they send to us on timesheets.

You should make sure with your employer which will be the regular day (of the pay week) when he or she is going to pay you.

Mistakes with pay

Mistakes can sometimes happen, to minimise them check that the timesheet is filled in correctly and sign it.

Your employer needs to record your hours and ensure that it is sent to Dewis on time on the scheduled date.

If a mistake is made on your pay, you should tell your employer who will contact Dewis.

Holiday Entitlement and Conditions

Annual Leave

Your holiday leave year begins on / /
and ends on / / each year.

Your annual holiday entitlement is calculated based on your contracted hours. Any hours worked in addition to your contracted hours will also accrue an annual leave entitlement.

It is policy to encourage you to take all of your holiday entitlement in the current holiday year. Holidays are not to be carried forward.

Conditions Applying To Your Annual Holiday Entitlement

- Holiday requests must be authorised before you make any arrangements to be absent from work.
- You should give at least one month's notice of your intention to take holidays and one week's notice is required for single days.
- You may not normally take more than two working weeks consecutively.
- Your holiday pay will be at your normal basic pay unless shown otherwise on your statement of main terms of employment.

Attendance and Leave

Lateness/Absenteeism

1. You must attend for work punctually at the specified times and you are required to comply strictly with any time recording procedures relating to your work.
2. All absences must be notified in accordance with the sickness reporting procedures laid down in this employee handbook.
3. If you arrive for work more than one hour late without having previously notified me, other arrangements may have been made to cover your duties and you may be sent off the premises for the remainder of the shift/day without pay.
4. Lateness or absence may result in disciplinary action and/or loss of appropriate payment

Sickness

If you are unable to attend work because of sickness you must inform the Employer personally, by telephone, as soon as you are aware of your inability to attend so other arrangements may be made.

Notification of absence for any reason by text message is not an accepted method of communication. Failure to follow an acceptable notification procedure may be considered misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

Unauthorised absence may be considered by the Employer to be gross misconduct and may result in the termination of your employment without notice.

There is no contractual right to payment in respect of period of absence due to sickness or inability to attend work. The payment for sick pay will be Statutory Sick Pay according to the prescribed rate, which will be paid

providing the Employee follows these procedures:

- a) Inform the Employer as soon as you know you will not be able to come to work and in any event not less than two hours prior to the shift start time;
- b) If the you are off sick for more than three days you are required to complete a self-certificate form;
- c) You will be required to provide a Medical Certificate if you are absent for more than seven days;
- d) For the purposes of the Statutory sick Pay scheme the agreed qualifying days are Monday to Sunday;

It is not acceptable to submit a sick note to your employer without contact by telephone in accordance with this policy. Nor is contacting an external support organisation an acceptable method of notifying absence as any external organisation are not your employer and it cannot be guaranteed that anyone else will

be in contact with your employer or organise alternative care.

Sick notes must be provided to your employer and not sent directly to any external payroll provider.

Failure to follow this procedure may result in disciplinary and result in no payment being made for periods of time which are considered to be absence without leave of the employer.

Shortness of Work

If there is a temporary shortage of work for any reason, I will try to maintain your continuity of employment even if this necessitates placing you on the local authorities agreed retainer payment rate for this period.

Bereavement leave

There is no statutory right to bereavement leave however the Employer recognises that circumstances, the nature of relationships and the required observances of different religions vary. Therefore rather than being prescriptive on absolute periods of leave in other cases, there is a need to assess each case individually.

Employees who need only to attend the funeral of a relative or close friend may be granted reasonable time off without pay at the Employers discretion. In most cases this will be a period of up to one day.

Maternity/Paternity/Adoption and Parental Leave

There is no contractual maternity/paternity or adoption pay in addition to the statutory amount. If you (or your partner) become pregnant or if you are informed that a child is to be placed with you by an adoption agency then you are free to notify the

Employer at the earliest opportunity so that your entitlements can be explained to you and measures can be put in place to ensure your safety in the workplace where applicable.

Maternity Leave and pay

In order that the Employer may offer you guidance on your rights, make provisions to protect your health and safety in the work place and ensure you benefit from your full entitlements it is preferred that you give notice of your pregnancy as soon as possible. At the very latest you must provide notice before the start of the 15th week prior to the expected week of childbirth in order to qualify for statutory maternity pay.

You are required to provide the MATB1 certificate which will be given to you by your medical team once you are 20 weeks into your pregnancy. This operates as proof of your pregnancy and allows the Employer to

process a payment of statutory maternity pay where you are eligible.

You are entitled to up to 52 weeks statutory maternity leave which may start no more than 11 weeks prior to the expected week of childbirth. Should you be absent from work, and otherwise not on maternity leave, within the four weeks prior to the expected week of childbirth your maternity leave will start automatically.

You must notify your employer in writing of your intended maternity leave start date, the Employer will then write to you to confirm the date that you are expected to return to work. Should you wish to return to work prior to the completion of 52 weeks leave you must give the Employer 8 weeks' notice in writing of your intended return date. You will not be allowed to return to work within 2 weeks of child birth.

You will receive statutory maternity pay where you are eligible. Please speak to the

Employer for further guidance on this. Statutory maternity runs for 39 weeks from the start of maternity leave, where eligible you will be entitled to 6 weeks at 90% of your average weekly salary and then 33 weeks at the statutory maternity rate applicable at the time.

If you are not eligible for statutory maternity pay the Employer will provide you with the SMP1 form which will allow you to claim Maternity Allowance.

Shared parental leave

Shared parental leave provides an opportunity to share entitlements that would otherwise arise under the provisions of maternity, adoption and maternity allowance. To qualify for SPL you must share responsibility for the child with one of the following:

- Your husband, wife, civil partner or joint adopter
- the child's other parent

- your partner (if you live with them)

Leave can be taken in blocks of 3 across the first year from the date of entitlement.

You must give the Employer 8 weeks' notice in writing of your intention to take shared parental leave.

Should you wish to consider this option you must first contact the Employer for further information about your rights and entitlement to both statutory parental leave and statutory shared parental pay. The Employer will require the name and address of your partner's employer and a copy of the child's birth certificate and will provide you with the relevant forms for completion.

Paternity Leave

In order to qualify for paternity leave and pay you must be the father of a child, the husband or partner of the mother, the child's adopter or the intended parent. You must be an employee and have worked continuously for the Employer for 26 weeks prior to the qualifying week which is 15 weeks prior to

the date of childbirth, or in the case of adoption 15 weeks prior to the matching week. You must have informed the Employer 15 weeks prior to the qualifying week of the likelihood of your claiming paternity leave and pay.

Where eligible you are entitled to one or two week's paternity leave which will be paid at the rate of statutory paternity pay. You may start your leave from the date of the child's birth or adoption and take it in blocks of one week either consecutively or separately within the first 52 weeks.

A week amounts to the same amount of days that you would normally work in a week for the Employer. You must give written notice of your intention to take leave and if you intend to change the start date of any period of leave you must give the Employer 28 days notice in writing.

Parental leave

Parental leave is different to that of Maternity or shared parental leave.

Parental leave allows mothers, father and people with parental responsibility for children up to the age of 18, to take up to 18 weeks unpaid leave. To be eligible for the leave you must have worked for the Employer for a consecutive period of not less than one year. The purpose of the leave is in order to spend time caring for your child.

Leave must be agreed in advance with your employer to ensure that the employer has adequate care in place for the duration of your absence and in any event you must provide not less than 21 days notice in writing of your intention to take leave. Leave must be taken in blocks of one week durations and may be taken in broken arrangements across the year.

Time Off For Dependents

Time off for Dependents is designed to support employees where emergencies arise that are related to children or dependents.

Unpaid time off may be taken to provide assistance when a dependant falls ill, gives birth, is injured or assaulted or to arrange for the provision of care for a dependent who is ill or injured.

Dependents include:

- A spouse
- A child
- A parent
- A person who lives in the same household as you and whom is not your employee, lodger or tenant
- Any person who reasonably relies on you for assistance to make arrangements for the provision of care

To take time off under the circumstances set out above you must notify the Employer as soon as reasonably practicable and inform the Employer how long you expect to be away from work.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is important for both you and your employer. Your employer will hold confidential information about you and you will have access to personal information about your employer in order to meet their support needs.

All information relating to this employment is considered confidential and should not be shared with any other party unless express permission is given to do so by myself, your employer. This includes not disclosing information to other employees.

All employees are responsible for the security of information and this includes verbal and written or printed documents. Any documents, forms or written material, when not in use, should always be put away in their appropriate place so that the information cannot be viewed by others.

Failure to ensure the security of information, accessing information or divulging information without consent is considered a disciplinary offence.

Health & Safety

You must not take any action that could threaten the health and safety of yourself, other employees, visitors or members of the public. You must notify the Employer immediately of any hazard to health and safety that is discovered in the work place or through systems of working.

Protective clothing and other equipment which may be issued to you for your protection must be worn at all appropriate times. Failure to do so could be a contravention of your health and safety responsibilities.

You should report all accidents and injuries at work, no matter how trivial, and record the event in the accident book that can be obtained from the Employer.

Hygiene

You must wash your hands immediately before commencing work and after using the toilet.

Any cut or burn on the hand or arm must be covered with an approved visible dressing.

Head coverings and overalls/uniforms where provided, must be worn at all times.

No jewellery should be worn other than wedding bands, without my permission.

You should not wear excessive amounts of makeup and perfume and nail varnish should not be worn. If you are aware of any particular sensitivities that the Employer has you must ensure that you have not exposed yourself to or carry any allergens that may trigger an allergic reaction prior to or during your shift. You will be notified of any particular requirements of the Employer.

If you are suffering from an infectious or contagious disease, this must be reported to the Employer and you must have clearance from your GP before recommencing work.

Ending Employment

Terminating Employment without Giving Notice

If you terminate your employment without giving or working the required period of notice, as indicated in your individual statement of main terms of employment, you will have an amount equal to any additional cost of covering your duties during the notice period not worked deducted from any termination pay due to you. This is an express written term of your contract of employment. You will also forfeit any contractual accrued holiday pay due to you over and above your statutory holiday pay, if you fail to give or work the required period of notice.

Return of Property

On the termination of your employment you must return all my property which is in your possession or for which you have responsibility.

Failure to return such items will result in the cost of the items being deducted from any monies outstanding to you. Where you fail to return keys to my property immediately you will be liable for any costs relating to the replacement of locking mechanisms. These costs will be incurred without your prior notice for my security. This is an express written term of your contract of employment.

Safeguarding

If you are a paid carer or other professional and have witnessed or suspect abuse, it should be reported as soon as possible to a senior member of staff or your line manager. If you are not happy with the response you get you can then report your concerns to someone higher in the organisation, the local authority social services department, the police, or the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

What is Abuse?

Abuse is when someone does or says things to another person to hurt, upset or make them frightened. It can consist of single or repeated acts. Abuse is wrong and can happen to anyone. The abuse can be committed by anyone, but is usually from someone who is in a position of trust – a relative, friend, paid worker or volunteer.

Abuse can take many forms (this is not an exhaustive list):

- **Physical** (hitting, kicking, undue restraint, over or misuse of medication, or inappropriate sanctions).
- **Psychological / Emotional** (threats of harm, abandonment or humiliation, controlling

relationships and isolation, verbal or racial abuse).

- **Sexual** (unwanted sexual activity which the vulnerable adult has not consented to/and or was pressured into consenting).
- **Financial** (theft, fraud or applying pressure in relation to money or other property, having money or other property misused).
- **Neglect** (failure to meet the everyday needs of the adult at risk, which includes a person's basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs, failure to access medical care or services or failure to give prescribed medication).

Report a concern

If you have been, or still are the victim of abuse, or you know someone who you think is being abused or neglected, please contact:

**Cardiff Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
(MASH): 02920 338439
Out of Hours: 02920 788570**

If an adult is in immediate risk of harm or danger call **999** and speak to the police.

Don't assume that someone else will take responsibility. You could help to save someone's life. If you are worried, report it.

Training



Learning Resource Pool

Training Course available for Personal Assistants who are looking to enhance their career in the caring profession.

The local Authority can provide free learning resources, examples are:-

- **POVA**
- **Manual Handling**
- **First Aid**

Please speak to your employer if you wish to attend a training course.

Access to the learning pool can be accessed via the link below:

<http://cardiff.learningpool.com>

This link will provide you with details of the training courses available and directions on how you can enrol.

Useful Information and Contacts

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

ACAS aim to improve organisations and working life through better employment relations. They help with employment relations by supplying up-to-date information, independent advice and high quality training, and work with employers and employees to solve problems and improve performance.

Free advice is available from:

www.acas.org.uk

Telephone 0300 123 1100

Text relay service 18001 0300 123 1100

Gov

This website is the best place to find government services and information. It has been designed to make it simpler, clearer, and faster for you to get to what you need from government.

www.gov.uk

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

They collect and administer direct and indirect taxes and pay and administer things like Child Benefit, Child Trust Fund and Tax Credits. They also protect you by enforcing and administering border and frontier protection, environmental taxes, National Minimum Wage enforcement and recovery of student loans.

www.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 200 3300

Textphone: 0300 200 3319

Opening times: 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday 8am to 4pm Saturday Closed Sundays and bank holidays.

The Pensions Regulator

This organisation has information for employers about work-based pension schemes for employees as well as information about automatic enrolment.

www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk

Telephone 0845 600 1011

customersupport@autoenrol.tpr.gov.uk

The Pensions Regulator PO Box 16314
Birmingham B23 3JP

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

HSE's job is to prevent people being killed, injured or made ill by work.

www.hse.gov.uk