



Disability Sheffield  
Centre for Independent Living

## Disability Sheffield

### Employing a Personal Assistant Factsheet



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## **Employing a Personal Assistant Handbook**

If you employ a Personal Assistant to help you meet your care and support needs, or you are planning to, you'll find lots of useful information and guidance in the [Employing a Personal Assistant Handbook](#).

The handbook was produced by the Sheffield Individual Employer and Peer Development Group and is available on Sheffield City Council's website. The development group includes disabled people with lived experience and knowledge of employing a personal assistant themselves. The handbook contains extremely useful Sheffield specific and national information for first time individual employers and for individual employers who are looking for information regarding issues involving an existing employee. It is an invaluable 'go to' resource, written for and by individual employers.

Topics covered in the handbook include:-

- Finding a PA
- Being a good employer/Terms and conditions of employment
- Using a service provider
- Keeping a PA
- Changing contracts/Redundancy
- Information and advice from other organisations
- Lists of blank 'template' documents and completed examples
- How to contact the council

There is also a Frequently Asked Questions section answering the most commonly asked questions in [Employing a Personal Assistant: FAQs](#) . For example "Can I employ a friend or relative?"

## **Personal Assistant Samples and Blank Documents**

Part 3 of the Handbook provides [Personal Assistant Samples and Blank Documents](#) to assist Individual Employers throughout the process of employing a PA. The sample/blank documents include:-

- Sample job description

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- Sample job adverts
- Blank job application form
- Sample letter inviting someone to interview
- Sample interview questions
- Preparing for your interviews checklist
- Sample job reference letter and job reference form
- Sample letter offering someone the job
- Sample content for a Contract of Employment
- Sample discipline policy and grievance procedure
- Sample payslip
- Blank timesheet
- Blank safety at home checklist
- Sample risk assessment

## Skills for Care Resources

[Skills for Care](#) is an independent national charity which works to help create a well-led, skilled and valued adult social care workforce. Their website has a dedicated [Information Hub](#) for both individual employers and personal assistants bringing together information from a range of sources.

The [Information for Individual Employers](#) section of the Information Hub takes you to Skills for Care's [Employing Personal Assistants Toolkit Guides](#) , 6 booklets that guide you through the process of recruiting, managing and training your PA.

The information for Individual Employers covers a wide range of topics, including:

- Why employ a Personal Assistant?
- Recruiting a Personal Assistant
- Before your Personal Assistant starts
- Managing your Personal Assistant
- Training and Qualifications
- Keeping your PA
- Useful Templates
- Other help for Individual Employers

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It's always valuable to look at information for PAs as it can provide a greater understanding of the relationship between a PA and an individual employer from a PA's point of view. The Information Hub has specific [Working as a Personal Assistant](#) section which includes several sub-sections:

- What is a Personal Assistant (PA)?
- Hear from PAs
- Finding a role as a Personal Assistant
- Important information when you start your role
- Training and Qualifications
- Managing your relationship with your employer

Skills for Care promote what they call a 'Values Based' approach to employment in the adult social care sector. For individual employers this basically means that when recruiting a PA you should not simply concentrate on their skills and experience and what training qualifications the person may or may not have. Your PA's 'values' should also be important to you as a difference in values between you and your PA could potentially cause friction with your PA. In its simplest terms this can be about whether you feel you have 'an affinity' with this person or whether you 'get on'. If so, growing, working and learning together will be beneficial for both parties. The right values, behaviours and attitudes are the raw materials, good induction, training and management will do the rest.

## **Disability Sheffield Resources**

We have a dedicated page on our website about [Support for Individual Employers and Personal Assistants](#), which has links to the resources we've already mentioned and our own projects including:-

- [Make it Personal with a Personal Assistant](#): This is a film about what it is like to have a Personal Assistant to support you.
- Training and Learning Opportunities ( see separate heading below )
- [Disability Sheffield PA Register](#) : We have designed this register for anyone whether an adult, young person or child wanting to find and employ a PA, and also for PAs to advertise they are looking for work.

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- **Digital Security Guide** : Employers of personal assistants (individual employers) have a legal obligation to store information about their staff safely and securely, regardless of whether the information is digital or paper based. Disability Sheffield have created [a short animation on YouTube](#) , which outlines this obligation along with a [Digital Security Guide](#) to ensure that as an employer, you are following the necessary policies and procedures that are in place for safe storage of data and usage of all devices within the home.
- **Personal Health Budgets animation**: A short animation produced by Disability Sheffield and Eden films
- **Safe Restraints Project**: Skills for Care have produced this leaflet detailing the Safe Restraints Project with Disability Sheffield.
- **Lets Talk About Restraints**: This website is a useful resource to help Individual Employers navigate the difficult subject of restraint.
- **Peer Coaching and Mentoring**: The Employer and PA Development group also facilitate a Peer Coaching and Mentoring Project. This project provides Individual Employers and Personal Assistants with the opportunity to talk to someone who has had similar experiences, whether they are new to the world of care or not.

## Sheffield City Council Information

The [Help and support in your home](#) page of SCC 's website includes, as already highlighted, the [Employing a Personal Assistant Handbook](#) and accompanying Sample and Blank documents and Frequently Asked Questions.

On the Right Hand side of a page is a video [Make it Personal with a Personal Assistant](#) about what it is like to have a Personal Assistant to support you.

It is also details the help, support and advice on living independently in your own home offered by Sheffield City Council.

'Care & support' is the help some people need to live as well as possible with any illness, disability or impairment they may have. Sheffield City Council also provide

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support for carers and for families with a disabled young person (as part of them moving to adult care and support).

Care and support can include help with things like:

- washing and dressing yourself
- preparing and eating meals
- getting out and about
- keeping in touch with friends and family

When you contact Sheffield City Council, they will talk to you about your care needs and the issues you are facing, and whether you can get short or long term care and support. You can find out more in their [Getting Care & Support Factsheet](#).

## **Advertising for a Personal Assistant**

Prospective Individual Employers can advertise for a Personal Assistant in several places, such as:

- [Disability Sheffield PA Register](#) – We have designed this register for anyone whether an adult, young person or child wanting to employ a PA, and also for PAs looking for work. Please have a look at the [Frequently asked Questions](#) before registering as an individual employer or PA.
- [www.indeed.co.uk](http://www.indeed.co.uk) – Indeed allows individual employers to search through a large number of CVs online.
- <https://www.gov.uk/advertise-job> - This government tool allows users to post advertisements for jobs to a large audience of UK jobseekers.
- You may also find it useful to advertise on noticeboards in any community venues you visit; make sure to make your advert is eye catching!

## **Training Opportunities for Personal Assistants and Individual Employers**

If you are an existing or aspiring Personal Assistant looking to build your skills and knowledge, you can access a number of free courses.

### **Disability Sheffield Training Opportunities**

Funding from Skills for Care enable us to offer a programme of free training courses

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again this year from Sept 2019 – February 2020 for individual employers and personal assistants. The brochure detailing the courses, dates and relevant information is available [here](#) and on our [Support for Individual Employers and Personal Assistants](#) page. Please be aware that booking on these courses is essential and numbers are limited.

### **Sheffield City Council Training Opportunities**


The [HR Learning and Development Service](#) () has a wide range of training courses available for people who work in social care organisations from the independent, private and voluntary sector ( including PAs ). You can also access their training if you are an Individual Employer to help you meet your care and support needs. You can view their online [2019-20 Training Directory](#) or telephone the service on ( 0114 ) 229 3041.

### **Disability Sheffield Information Service**

The Circle

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(Ansaphone facility available at other times)

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### **Disclaimer**

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