



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 this 'handbook'. It 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. The information is also helpful for existing 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 , for example "Can I employ a friend or relative?". Separate sections of the handbook are all provided on Sheffield City [Council's Employing a Personal Assistant page](#)

Part 3 of the Handbook provides [samples and blank documents](#) to assist Individual Employers throughout the process of employing a PA including:-

- Sample job description
- Sample job adverts
- Blank job application form

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- 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 [Toolkit Guide](#) , which will help you to think about your responsibilities as an employer, and includes guidance, templates and resources about recruiting, training and managing your PA(s)..

The [Information for Personal Assistants](#) section of the Information Hub explains the role of a PA, why it's a great job, and how you can find work. It has useful information about what to expect when you first start and what learning and development you could do. It also provides a greater understanding of the relationship between a PA and an individual employer from a PA's point of view.

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'

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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.
- [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

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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**

Sheffield City Council has information on their website about [direct payments and managing your care](#).

It highlights information about their Direct Payments strategy, who can and can't get a direct payment, how they can help you manage your direct payment plus a number of factsheets from their own Direct Payments team.

### **Direct Payment Support Service**

From September 2022 this new service supports adults and children in Sheffield who receive a direct payment to get the most out of their care money and to achieve their goals. It is run by Penderels Trust and funded by Sheffield City Council.

The support service includes:

- Support with setting up your direct payment
- Support when recruiting a personal assistant
- Guidance on all aspects of being a good employer including legal obligations and responsibilities
- Support with choosing and using a care agency
- Help with keeping accurate records

Tel: (0114) 698 6959

Email: [sheffield@penderelstrust.org.uk](mailto:sheffield@penderelstrust.org.uk) and

Address: Penderels Trust, Office 1, Victoria Centre, Victoria Community Enterprise, Stafford Road, Sheffield S2 2SE.

Website: <https://www.penderelstrust.org.uk/sheffield.php>

## **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.

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The Sheffield PA Register is a website where PAs and people who require a PA can advertise themselves. PAs can create adverts explaining their skills and availability, and people who require PAs can advertise their requirements. Visitors can either browse the adverts or create their own. The website also includes support resources such as a Services Map, Training Directory, and Resources pages for PAs and Employers.

Other suggestions include:

- [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 eye catching!

## **Training Opportunities**

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**

Disability Sheffield has once again secured some funding from Skills for Care to enable us to offer a programme of free training courses during 2024/25.

(This project is part of the Sheffield Employer and PA Development group, a unique collaboration between Disability Sheffield, Sheffield City Council and Individual Employers and their Personal Assistants)

A summary of the courses available free of charge to IEs and PAs can be viewed by downloading our brochure later this year and you can book on Eventbrite pages

You'll also find this information on our [Support for Individual Employers and Personal Assistants](#) page. Please be aware that booking on these courses is essential and numbers are limited.

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## **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 telephone the service on ( 0114 ) 229 3041

## **Disability Sheffield Information Service**

The Circle

33 Rockingham Lane

Sheffield S1 4FW

 **0114 253 6750**

(Ansaphone facility available at other times)

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## **Disclaimer**

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