

# **Southampton City Council**

## **Direct Payment Policy**

**Easy Read**



# 1. What this document is about



This is an **easy read** version of Southampton City Council's Direct Payment Policy.



This policy explains what happens if you are offered, ask for, or already get a Direct Payment.



A Direct Payment is money from the council, which is used to buy care and support.



It is for people who need support, or for their carers.



The aim is to help people live independently in their own homes.

## 2. What the policy Covers

This policy explains:



When you can ask for a Direct Payment



What a Direct Payment can and cannot be used for



How the council checks and reviews your Direct Payment



How the council works out the money you get



When a Direct Payment might stop



What happens if you go into hospital



What happens if you pass away

### 3. Definitions



**Direct Payment:** Money from the council to pay for your care and support needs



**Nominated Individual:** Someone you choose to help manage the money



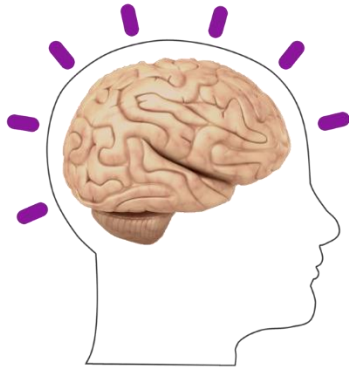
**Authorised Individual:** Someone chosen to manage the money if you cannot give consent yourself



**Care and Support Plan:** A plan made with you about the care and support you need



**Co-produced:** When people who use services help design them.



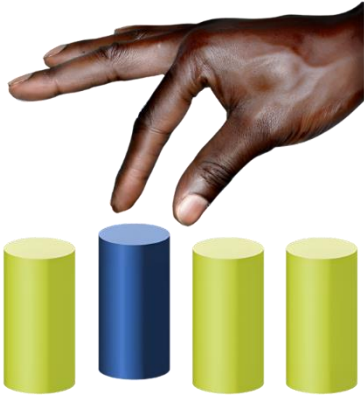
**Mental Capacity Assessment:** A check to find out if you can make certain decisions.

## 4. Council Promise



The Council promises to follow the law when giving Direct Payments.

This policy follows laws like The Care Act 2014 and The Mental Capacity Act 2005. It also respects human rights and equality laws.



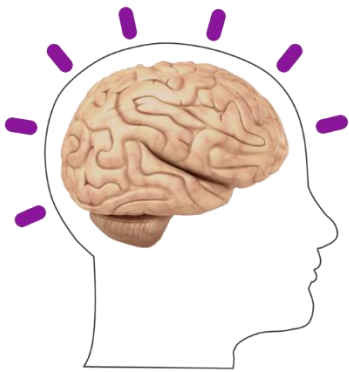
The council want to make sure Direct Payments give people:

1. Freedom of choice about support
2. Independence to live their lives.
3. Flexibility, because people's needs can change day to day.

The Council worked together with people who receive direct payments, providers, volunteers and staff to make this policy. Everyone's views were listened to and treated equally.



## 5. Being offered a Direct Payment



If you are eligible, the council will always offer you a Direct Payment at each yearly review.

You do not have to accept a Direct Payment.

If there are doubts about your ability to make decisions, a **Mental Capacity Assessment** will be completed.

If you cannot consent, an **Authorised individual** can receive the money for you.

If you need help managing the money, you can choose a **nominated individual**.



The Council will give you information about:

1. What Direct Payments are
2. How to ask for one
3. How much you might need to pay towards the Direct Payment
4. How the council reviews and checks your money
5. Your responsibilities
6. What services you can buy
7. What support is available to help you manage the money



# 6. Asking for a Direct Payment



You can ask for a Direct Payment at any time.

The Council will decide if you can receive a Direct Payment based on the law.

You will be told the decision and the reasons for this.

If your request for a Direct payment is refused, you can complain.

If your request for a Direct Payment is accepted, you will need to sign an agreement with the council

# 7. What you can use Direct Payments for

You can use the money for things agreed in your **care and support plan**, such as:

Personal Care

Help with Daily Activities

Respite (Short Breaks)

Respite support for Carers

Employing a Personal Assistant





If you employ a Personal Assistant, the council will support you with:

Contracts and employment law



Insurance



Paying Tax and National Insurance



Pensions, Holiday and Sick Pay



Recruitment and safety

# 8. What you cannot use Direct Payments for



You cannot use the money for:

Long-term Residential care



In-house services run by the council

Alcohol, Drugs, Gambling



Nursing, Healthcare, Medicine



Illegal Activities

NHS Equipment

Anything else that only benefits someone else.



You cannot pay a family member who lives with you for care. In special cases, you may pay them to help manage the money.

## 9. Reviews



The Council will check your Direct Payment after 6 Months, then every year.

Reviews will check that the money is used as agreed



Reviews will check that you are meeting your responsibilities



You may need to show documents like bank statements, receipts, invoices or payslips.



# 10. How the money is worked out



The Council will work out your personal budget.

The Money will be paid into a special Direct Payment account every 4 weeks.

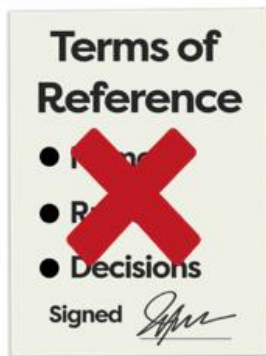
The Council will work out and explain if you need to contribute some money toward the cost.

Standard Rates are used for some services, for example:

1. Agency provider hourly rate.
2. Personal Assistant hourly rate.

These rates are checked every year.

# 11. When Payments may stop



Payments can stop if:

The money is not used properly

The agreement is broken

Safeguarding issues arise

The Council will always try to fix problems first and only stop a Direct Payment as a last resort.

You will be given notice and alternative support.

You can complain if you disagree.

## 12. Going into hospital



Direct Payments may still continue if you go into hospital.

This is to help meet your needs or pay a Personal Assistant.



If your Nominated or Authorised Individual goes into hospital, the council will urgently review your support.

## 13. If you pass away



The Council must be told quickly.

Any money left will be returned to the council.



Liabilities (like redundancy or contracts) will be taken into account.

## 14. Further Information and Support



More Information and resources are on the council's website:

[Direct Payments.](#)