

North Yorkshire County Council Disabled Children's Service

**Personal Budgets for Care - employing a personal
assistant compared with using an agency**

Employing a personal assistant compared with using an agency

This guide is for families with a personal budget for social care.

A personal budget is the amount it costs to pay for the care and support in your child or young person's support plan. This can be arranged in the following ways:

- Disabled Children's Services can arrange services for you using your personal budget. You do not need to manage this yourself
- North Yorkshire County Council pays the personal budget direct to you as a direct payment, and you arrange support and services yourself. This could be all or some of your personal budget. You can choose which elements you want to arrange yourself.

This guide illustrates the differences between using an agency and employing a personal assistant to provide care and support for your child or young person.

If you want to employ a personal assistant (PA) you have to arrange this yourself and pay for them using money from a direct payment. If you use an agency, North Yorkshire County Council can arrange this or you can pay the agency using money from a direct payment.

The table below outlines some things to consider when you are deciding whether to employ a PA or use an agency. Remember you can choose the combination of support that best meets your child or young person's needs as identified in their support plan.

Employing a PA		Using an Agency	
			
You get to choose the people who will provide the care for you. They will be your employees	If your PA is sick or on holiday you have to arrange cover (Direct Payment Support will help you plan for this)	If a staff member is on holiday or off sick the agency should provide a replacement	You do not choose the person who provides the care - an agency employs the care staff and you may not always get the same worker
It is less expensive to employ someone yourself and it can make your budget go further	The PA cannot start work until they have had satisfactory safety checks (DBS) or references	The agency ensures all its employees have had safety checks, are eligible to work in the UK, and have had the appropriate training	It costs more to use an agency
You can get support from the Direct Payment Support Service including job adverts, setting up interviews, safety checks, and references and being an employer	You have to sign and send time sheets to your payroll provider or your PA will not get paid		

Example 1: 1 hour of support

Support identified	How long do you think this needs to be?	Choices about who provides this support		Costs (per year or term time)	
		Agency	Employing a PA	Agency	Employing a PA
Morning support at home to get up, washed and dressed for school transport (Monday to Friday and term time only approx. 190 days a year)	1 hour	Agency - approx. £17 per hour / £13 per half hour	Employing a personal assistant £9.00 an hour from your budget (approx. £7.50 an hour will get paid to your employee)	190 days x £17 = £3,230 Total £3,230	190 x £9 = £1,710 Total £1,710

Example 2: 3 hours of support and mileage

Support identified	How long do you think this needs to be?	Choices about who provides this support		Costs (per year or term time)	
		Agency	Employing a PA	Agency	Employing a PA
Support whilst at drama group once a week (includes transport to drama group)	3 hours (drama group 2.5 hours/ travel 15 minutes each way approx. 32 miles in total)	Agency - approx. £17 per hour x 3 hours =£51 May charge mileage @ 48p a mile. 32 miles x 48p = £15.36	PA £9 x 3 = £27 PA mileage @28p a mile. 32 x 28p= £8.96. With a direct payment the PA gets a smaller mileage allowance and can claim money back from HMRC. Your Direct Payment Advisor will advise.	Agency Support - 52 weeks x £51 = £2,652 Agency Mileage - 52 weeks x £15.36 = £798.72 Total £3,450.72	PA support 52 weeks x £27 = £1,404 PA mileage 52 weeks X £8.96 = £465. 92 Total £1,869.92

If you choose to have a direct payment you will be supported by the Direct Payment Support Service who will explain what you need to do to manage a direct payment either when using an agency or becoming an employer.

The Direct Payment Support Service has some fact sheets about using an agency and being an employer – you can view them here: <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/article/23980/Direct-payments>

If you are interested in having a direct payment, speak to your social worker who will arrange for a direct payment adviser to contact you.

Contact us

North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8AD

Our Customer Resolution Centre is open Monday to Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm
(closed weekends and bank holidays). Tel: **01609 780 780**

email: **customer.services@northyorks.gov.uk** web: **www.northyorks.gov.uk**

If you would like this information in another language or format please ask us.

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