

Direct Payments

your life

your choice



Direct Payments can be a way for you to have more choice over how you live your life.

Who can have Direct Payments?

- You can only have direct payments after you have had an assessment by Herefordshire Council.
- Most people who get help from social care can get direct payments.
- If you cannot have a direct payment, the council will tell you why.



What are Direct Payments?

Direct payments are sums of money paid directly to you from Herefordshire Council so you can sort out and pay for the care and support in your support plan.

You can use direct payments to meet your assessed needs. You do not need to have a direct payment. Your assessed needs can be met in other ways. Your social worker can help.



What can Direct Payments be used for?

As long as it is in your support plan, you can spend the money to get the help and equipment that your assessment says you need. For example:

- To go to work



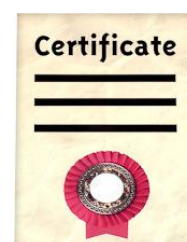
- To join a club



- To take a break



- To go on a course or go to college



- To pay people to support you at home.
These people are called personal assistants.



What can't Direct Payments be used for?

The law says you cannot spend the money on:

- Household bills
- Services already paid for by the council
- Paying one of your family members who lives in the same house as you to provide care for you. Unless Herefordshire Council says this is ok.
- Housing
- Health services
- Long term residential care. This is when you live in a care home because you cannot live on your own, even with support.



What will I need to do?

1. You will need to have an assessment to check if you can have services. If you can, we will write a support plan with you.



2. The plan will show what is going to happen and when it will happen.



3. You will need a back-up plan. If something goes wrong, a social worker will help you with your back-up plan.



4. You can choose to have your direct payment funds put on to a prepaid card. This card works like a chip and pin card.



5. Or you can have a separate bank account for your direct payments. We will help you with this.



6. We have to make sure that you are using the money properly so you will need to keep a record of what you spend and proof of what it was for.

You do not have to do this on your own.

You can have help from

- A social worker or direct payment advisor
- Family or friends
- A key worker
- Paid organisations

Will I need to pay anything myself?

The council will work out how much you can afford to pay towards your direct payment with you. This is called a financial assessment. If you are asked to pay something we will tell you how to do this.



What if I can't afford to pay?

You can ask us to look at your financial assessment again.

Do I have to have a direct payment?

No. But they are great because you can choose how you spend your care fund.