



Getting the support you need

Recruiting a Personal Assistant

Once you've decided to receive Direct Payments, you can choose to recruit the person you feel is best suited to provide the support you need.

You can also use Direct Payments to buy support from care agencies and established providers. Find out more about this option in the SILC FastFacts sheet 3 'Buying from agencies and care providers'.

SILC can support you in recruiting a Personal Assistant by:

- helping you prepare a specification, outlining the skills, experience and knowledge that are needed,
- helping you write a job description detailing the hours required and the tasks involved,
- helping you to draft and place a job advertisement,
- helping you to send out application forms and shortlist replies,
- being there with you whilst you interview suitable candidates.

CRB and reference checks.

It's vital that you can trust the person that will be coming in to your home. Ask all applicants for written references from two people who know them well.

We'll help you:

- ✓ request and follow up references,
- ✓ carry out Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks.

Who pays for my advertisement?

- ✓ Your Direct Payments will cover reasonable costs of advertising as part of your initial set up costs.

What about Equal Opportunities?

- ✓ Although you do not have to have an Equal Opportunities policy, you must not (by law) discriminate on the grounds of race, sex, disability, age, religious belief or sexual orientation.

Can I employ people from other countries?

- ✓ You can employ people from within the 'European Economic Area' without the need for a work permit. Check that anyone you employ is legally entitled to work in the UK by asking to see documentation and keeping copies of it - SILC can help you with this.

Can I employ a relative?

- ✗ You can not employ a close relative or partner who lives with you without prior permission from Social Services and then only in exceptional circumstances (for example, if there is no other way of providing the support you require).

How do I offer someone the job?


- ✓ Make your offer of employment in a written letter to the candidate, stating clearly that it is subject to receiving satisfactory references - SILC can help you with this.

Can I employ someone for a trial period?

- ✓ It's a good idea to include a probation period in any offer of employment, so that you can see how the person gets on. We suggest a trial period of 13 weeks.

SILC can also help you recruit via its dedicated Personal Assistant recruitment website www.pafinder.org.uk

This is a free service designed to help you to find and recruit the right Personal Assistant (PA) for you. It also enables people who are looking for work as a PA to see your details and apply to work for you. For more details just visit the website or contact the SILC office.



SILC is a voluntary organisation run by and for disabled people. To find out more about the help we can offer you with your Direct Payments call 01483 458111 or email admin@surreyilc.org.uk
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