

# Adult Social Care

## A guide to being a Personal Assistant



Barnsley – the place  
of possibilities.



**BARNSLEY**  
Metropolitan Borough Council

**A Personal Assistant (PA) is usually employed by someone who manages their own care through direct payments or individual budgets from the council or funds their own support.**

**This helps give them control over their life by employing staff and organising the services they need to support them.**

**These types of employers are often called 'individual employers'.**

The role of a PA can mean helping with personal care, doing things around the house or helping people get to the places they want to go. The main aim of having a PA is to help someone be as independent as possible and achieve their goals.

If you're working as a PA for someone using a direct payment or Personal Health Budget, that person or their representative will be your employer.

They will handle things like hiring you, setting up your contract and payment, and taking care of other employment duties, such as making sure you undergo a DBS check.

At the start of your job, you'll work with them to agree on things like your work hours, tasks and other employment details, just like in any other job.

Please remember, a Personal Assistant is employed directly by the person needing support or their representative and not Barnsley Council.

# Key responsibilities of a Personal Assistant

- If you want to be an approved PA, you must agree to the standards in our Code of Conduct. These standards make sure that all PAs deliver high-quality services to the people they support.
- Follow the rules and requirements in the job contract from your employer – even if it's not signed, you still have to follow these rules because it's legally binding.
- Keeping accurate records is important for the care and support you provide. As a PA, it's your responsibility to make sure all records are done on time and contain correct details about the care given. You need to keep thorough records for each person, including what care and treatment they received and any decisions made for them.
- Respect the rights of the people you support while making sure their actions don't harm themselves or others. To do this, you may need to follow policies and procedures for assessing risks.
- PAs are accountable for the quality of their work and should take ownership for improving their skills and knowledge. This means working in a legal, safe and effective manner, participating in any necessary training for the job.
- Comply fully with the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and share appropriate information with your employer.
- Make sure that a professional relationship is maintained while providing paid support, even if this is a family member.
- If your job involves using your vehicle, such as driving someone to social activities, you'll need to add business insurance to your car insurance. Please talk to your insurance company about this.

- Any problems that arise regarding work should be discussed with the employer as soon as possible to make sure that they can be resolved quickly. Please remember it is your employer's responsibility to deal with employment-related issues, not Barnsley Council.
- Confidentiality must be maintained at all times. It is your responsibility as a PA to make sure confidentiality is maintained. It's also important to keep both personal and professional boundaries.
- Be aware of safeguarding issues. Any issues of abuse must be reported to Barnsley Council or South Yorkshire Police. Information can be found at [barnsley.gov.uk/safeguardingadults](https://barnsley.gov.uk/safeguardingadults).

## Boundaries of Personal Assistants

### What they can't do

- ✗ Reside in the same household as the person receiving support. You must inform us immediately if your circumstances change, as you will not be able to continue as a PA.
- ✗ Abuse, neglect or harm employers, carers or colleagues. This can include physical, financial and sexual abuse.
- ✗ Form inappropriate personal relationships with the employer that exceed the boundaries of professionalism.
- ✗ Abuse the trust of employers, carers or your access to personal information about them.
- ✗ Discuss other employers or carers with the person you are supporting.
- ✗ Discriminate unlawfully or unjustifiably against employers, carers or colleagues.

- ✗ Accept gifts, including money, from employers.
- ✗ Withhold sensitive or confidential information which may put the employer at risk. Should such information be shared with you, you must follow the Safeguarding Adults Procedures for South Yorkshire.

## Record-keeping



Personal Assistants have a duty to make sure that all records are completed in a timely manner and contain as much information as possible about the care provided.

There is a lot of emphasis placed on accurate record keeping, and these records will, in some cases, inform other professionals on how the person is and could impact future care given. Good record keeping helps to improve accountability and shows how decisions related to a person's care have been made.

Barnsley Council can request records, such as daily logs or instance reports, and both you and your employer must make sure these are an accurate and signed account of all support undertaken.

### Points to consider when completing records:

- > Information should be accurate.
- > Information should be factual.
- > If opinion is used, it must be backed up with facts.
- > All records should be dated and signed, but some may need times and the person's designation clearly written on them.
- > Avoid using jargon and abbreviations unless fully explained.

- > Handwritten records need to be legible and, in some cases, be written in black ink.
- > Avoid using phrases like slept well, appears well or eaten well. Personal Assistants need to record in full the meanings behind these statements.
- > Records must never be completed on behalf of someone else.
- > If mistakes are made, put a single line through it, initial the line and then complete the record.
- > If you have forgotten to include something, do not try to squeeze it in. Start a new line, but identify the date that it refers to.

Record keeping, in many ways, is about recording what the PA has completed to support the person they care for.

The employer and Barnsley Council can use these records in their assessments of the support someone requires. If records are not completed, disciplinary action can be taken against you.

## Health and safety

Your employer's home will usually be your place of work unless stipulated otherwise in the contract of employment. You should speak with your employer about any risks or hazards you have noticed in your workplace.



It is your responsibility as a PA to make your employer aware of anything that may impact your health and safety. Your employer should keep a record of any risk assessments, discussions about risks and hazards, or any equipment needed for you to undertake your role safely.

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality is important for both you and your employer. Your employer will hold confidential information about you, and you will have access to personal information about your employer to meet their needs. It would be best to discuss with your employer who you can share information with, such as their doctor, and under what circumstances.



No information should be shared with anyone against your employer's wishes. Disciplinary action can be taken against you should you fail to maintain confidentiality.

## Safeguarding

When safeguarding concerns exist around someone, we will consider whether the risk warrants further investigations and discuss a formal safeguarding process. This may include a safe and well review with the person to ensure their safety and clarify any potential safeguarding risks.



The person's PA may be consulted as part of the council's safeguarding investigation. You may need to attend safeguarding training, which your employer can arrange as part of your role.

If you think that your employer is being abused, you must contact us. Visit [barnsley.gov.uk/safeguardingadults](https://barnsley.gov.uk/safeguardingadults).

## Further help and advice

Please contact your employer for any information regarding your employment contract and terms and conditions. It is their responsibility to assist you in these matters.



Skills for Care has lots of support and resources available for PAs, including access to learning and development. For more information, please visit: [skillsforcare.org.uk/iepahub](https://skillsforcare.org.uk/iepahub).