

# EMPLOYING A PERSONAL ASSISTANT

## Introduction

Direct Payments enable you to take control of your support.

- If you need regular help from another person, a good way to take control of this is to employ your own Personal Assistant (hereafter referred to as PA).
- This factsheet sets out clearly the main things an employer needs to know. It takes you through the whole process - from the initial recruiting procedures - to possible termination of employment.
- It also deals with some points regarding legal and financial matters.

## What is a Personal Assistant?

A Personal Assistant is someone who is employed by you to help you. Because you employ them, you are in charge.

You choose:

- who you will have to work for you
- what time of day they will help you
- which tasks they will carry out and when
- where the help will be given (at home or elsewhere)
- how things are done

## **Who can I employ as a Personal Assistant?**

You can employ anyone except your husband, wife or partner that you live with. You cannot employ the following close relatives if they live with you:

- parent or parent in law
- son or daughter
- son in law or daughter in law
- brother or sister
- aunt or uncle
- grandparent

You can employ someone as a live-in PA so long as the relationship is first and foremost a contractual one, and they would not be living there if they were not providing personal assistance services.

It is important to consider carefully before employing family and friends, as problems can arise. Talk to other disabled people who employ PAs, or to your Direct Payments Advisor, before making up your mind.

Advertising can help you find a person who is just right for you and will be able to put your needs first during the hours they are working for you. If you decide to advertise, there is plenty of help and advice available from your DPSS.