



Corona Virus Frequently Asked Questions for People Receiving Direct Payments

Please note that guidance on COVID-19 may change over the coming days, weeks and months. Links to the most recent guidance can always be found on the Council's website at: www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/coronavirus

The Integrated Commissioning Service will continue to issue updates to providers and this Frequently Asked Questions document will be updated and re-circulated to reflect any changes in guidance. For ease of reference any changes will be highlighted.

Question	Response
1. What steps should I take if I employ Personal assistants via a Direct Payment?	<p>Review the care and support arrangements currently in place to ensure it is up to date and is still meeting your assessed eligible social care needs.</p> <p>You need to ensure there is adequate contingency arrangements in place should there be a need to cover for any period where a personal assistant may need to self-isolate because they are ill themselves, are in a vulnerable group or live in a household where someone has developed symptoms of COVID-19.</p> <p>Ensure that details about how you like your care and support to be delivered are up to date with key information that can be shared with care staff who may not be familiar to you, including what you deem to be essential. Where possible, if there are any regular or reoccurring needs that are time and-dayspecific (for example treatment sessions or attending work) please note these. Ensure that other details, such as critical telephone numbers, are up to date and available to all care staff who support you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you feel you need further support or to discuss your care plan with a social worker please contact the Adult Early Help Team on adultearlyhelpteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call 01296 383204• If you require support to find an alternative provider please speak to the social worker about a referral to our Brokerage Service.

<p>2. What do I do if I get a call from my care provider /personal assistant saying that they are not able to provide my care?</p>	<p>Your provider/ personal assistant will contact you to make you aware that they will not be able to provide care, you should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm with them the length of time that they will not be offering you support and the reason why • Contact the Adult Early Help Team on adultearlyhelpteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call 01296 383204 • Discuss your care needs with your social worker and consider whether a member of your family can help you for a short period • Create an emergency plan that considers what to do if your situation changes • Ensure that details about how you like your care and support to be delivered are up to date with key information that can be shared with care staff who may not be familiar to you, including what you deem to be essential. Where possible, if there are any regular or reoccurring needs that are time- and day-specific (for example treatment sessions or attending work) please note these. Ensure that other details, such as critical telephone numbers, are up to date and available to all care staff who support you. If you require support finding an alternative provider to help you please ask your social worker about a referral to the Brokerage service. <p>During this period of time the Council will continue to pay your direct payment and you will be required to pay your provider in line with your agreement with them.</p>
<p>3. I have decided that I do not want carers supporting me for a period of time. What do I need to do?</p>	<p>If you decide that you do not wish to receive support from a provider or a Personal Assistant during this time there are a number of steps that you should follow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your provider/ personal assistant directly • Be clear about the period of time that you wish to suspend the care for • Contact Adult Early Help Team; adultearlyhelpteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call 01296 383204 and make them aware that you are considering suspending your care • Discuss your care needs with your social worker and consider whether a member of your family can help you for a short period • Create an emergency plan that considers what to do if your situation changes <p>During this period of time the Council will continue to pay your direct payment and you will be required to pay your provider in line with your agreement with them. Please note: If you choose to suspend your care at this time, there is a risk that the provider will not be able to continue providing support if they have limited capacity when business as usual resumes.</p>

<p>4. I want to cancel my care permanently what do I need to next?</p>	<p>If you decide that you do not wish to receive support from a provider or a personal assistant during this time there are a number of steps that you should follow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your provider/ personal assistant directly and agree a notice period • Contact the Adult Early Help Team on adultearlyhelpteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call 01296 383204 • and make them aware that you want to cancel the care package that supports you • Discuss your care needs with your social worker • Create an emergency plan that considers what to do if your situation changes <p>During the agreed notice period the Council will continue to pay you your direct payment, and you will be required to pay them for the agreed notice/ termination period.</p> <p>When you decided who you would employ to provide your personal care, the PA/ agency provided you with a contract. Within this contract there is a period of time known as a “termination” period.</p> <p>If you require support finding the “termination period” within your contract please contact the Adult Early Help Team on adultearlyhelpteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call 01296 383204</p>
<p>5.. The personal assistant is not staying the whole duration of the care call.</p>	<p>There are two responses for this question</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the personal assistant completing some personal care and leaving early (eg completing 30 mins of a 45 mins call)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your personal assistant is not staying the full length of the visit please record any reduced visits and pay for time that is attended only. • Discuss with your personal assistant the reasons why they are not staying for the full call and if you feel that your needs are not being met then please call the Adult Early Help Team for advice. on adultearlyhelpteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call 01296 383204 2. Is the personal assistant offering an alternative service to community activities such as shopping, picking up prescriptions due to COVID 19 government guidelines? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your personal assistant is not able to support you to access the community or you have requested that they do not attend as you are isolating) but they are supporting you another way, please continue to pay the PA in full.

<p>6. I am displaying symptoms but need to continue to receive care – what do I do?</p>	<p>Inform your care provider if you are experiencing any of the below symptoms , even if they are mild:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new, continuous cough • a high temperature, or • a loss of or change in your normal sense of smell or taste <p>Anyone in England and Wales who has symptoms of coronavirus can get a throat and nose swab test for whether you currently have coronavirus – the link below provides advice on how to apply for a test:</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested</p> <p>If your provider/ personal assistant is unable to/not willing to provide support whilst you have symptoms of/ or a confirmed diagnosis of Covid 19 then please contact the Adult Early Help Team on adultearlyhelpteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call 01296 383204 to discuss your options.</p> <p>Please ask them for a referral to our Brokerage service if you require support with finding an alternative provider if you have symptoms of COVID-19 , then the risk of transmission should be minimised through safe working procedures. As with staff in home care services, personal assistants and other care staff should use PPE when providing care that brings them into direct contact with someone receiving care, such as through washing and bathing, personal hygiene and contact with bodily fluids. This is currently true for individuals with or without symptoms (due to the community transmission of COVID-19). For this, plastic aprons, fluid-repellent surgical masks, gloves and eye protection (if there’s a risk of droplets or secretions) are recommended. Different items of PPE are recommended if your personal assistant is not coming into direct contact, but is within 2 metres of yourself or the individual receiving care.</p> <p>Please see the FAQ’s on PPE for more information regarding what PPE is required to provide care and support and advice on how to pay for it</p>
<p>7. What do I do if a personal assistant that I employ is concerned they have symptoms of</p>	<p>If PA’s are concerned that they have COVID-19, they should follow the guidance on home care provision.</p> <p>They should follow the guidance from Public Health England and self-isolate at home and they should not visit and care for you until it is safe to do so.</p>

Covid 19 / or is self isolating	<p>They should apply to get a Covid 19 test within the first 3 days of showing symptoms of Covid 19 and should be tested within 5 days of showing symptoms for best results. Please see link for more information. https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/coronavirus/social-care-providers-hub/infection-prevention-control-testing/covid-19-testing-staff-and-residents/</p> <p>Whilst your personal assistant is unable able to provide care to you, you should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm with them the length of time that they are unlikely to be able to provide support • Please contact the Adult Early Help Team by email at adultearlyhelpteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call 01296 383204 • Discuss your care needs with your social worker and consider whether a member of your family can help you for a short period • Discuss a referral to the Councils brokerage service if you need to find an alternative carer • Keep clear records of periods where you employee was sick/ has taken annual leave • Consider whether your employee will be entitled to statutory sick pay <p><u>Please refer to Question 2 for further information regarding payment of personal assistantss during this period.</u></p>
8.) Can the Council help me find another provider?	<p>The Council offers a brokerage service to support people in finding care services including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respite • Domiciliary Care • Residential Care • Personal Assistants • Community Day Opportunities <p>If this service can support you in sourcing another care provider please discuss a referral with your social worker or <u>contact the Adult Early Help Team</u> at adultearlyhelpteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call <u>01296 383204</u></p>
9. Will I continue to receive my direct payment if my care or day opportunities has stopped	<p>Yes, your direct payment will continue as usual and you will receive payments into your bank account, prepaid card or virtual wallet account. It is essential at this time that you continue to make regular payments to your care provider even if they are not providing you with care or a community day opportunity at this time.</p> <p>If you wish to discuss this in more detail please contact. the Personalisation Team at: chascdp@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call us on</p>

temporarily?	01296 382527 and leave a message.
10. I pay a contribution/ Top Up towards my care; do I need to continue to pay this?	<p>It is essential that you continue to make regular payments to your care provider even if they are not providing you with care at this time, this includes any contributions or top ups that you make towards your care package. If you are receiving a reduced service at this time please continue to pay the provider in full.</p> <p>If you wish to discuss this in more detail please contact the Personalisation Team at: chascdp@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call us on 01296 382527</p>
11. Where can I find support if I have any questions?	<p>Please follow the latest national advice and guidance regarding keeping yourself safe and well. Information can be found on the Buckinghamshire County Council website www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/coronavirus</p> <p>For Carers requiring support please contact Carers Bucks on:-</p> <p>Email: mail@carersbucks.org or tel: 0300 777 2722 (calls charged at local rate)</p> <p>For additional support please refer to the Carers UK Website: https://www.carersuk.org/</p>
12. My personal assistant has asked me about Furlough – does this apply to my staff?	<p>The Central Government's information regarding furlough payments for individuals does not apply in this instance. As care workers, personal assistants are considered as critical/ vital and so are being paid by the Local Authority in the event of absences linked to Covid-19 and their roles in providing care and support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your paid carers/ Personal assistant should continue to provide support to you at this time, if your carer is not attending for any reason please contact the Adult Early Help Team on adultearlyhelpteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call 01296 383204.

<p>13. What should I do if I buy care from a domiciliary care agency or PA Hub?</p>	<p>If you're using a direct payment to buy care and support via a service such as a home care agency, you should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Make early contact with the agency. Discuss your situation and agree any actions that will be taken to support you should your regular, paid carer be unavailable. b. Ensure that they have your up-to-date details, any relevant care and support plans and relevant dates if you require support to attend important appointments. c. If you use your direct payment to purchase other types of support, it's important that you speak to your provider and agree arrangements to cover your care and support in case of any issues in delivering this service during this period. If you find yourself in a position where these arrangements are unable to support you due to the wider impact of COVID-19 and you have no alternative arrangements available to you, please contact the Adult Early Help Team to discuss alternative arrangements adultearlyhelpteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call 01296 383204 d. The Home Care agency and PA are responsible for ensuring they have the correct PPE to meet your care and support needs.
<p>14. When will I be able to return to my day opportunities providers and how will they ensure it is safe?</p>	<p>Please contact your community day opportunities provider directly to discuss your return to the service and any procedures that they will be following to ensure your health and safety (including social distancing and infection control).</p> <p>If you have any questions regarding payment to providers please contact the Personalistaion team.</p> <p>Email: chascdp@buckinghamshire.gov.uk, or call 01296 382527.</p>