

# 1 How to become an employer



One of the benefits for personal budget holders is being able to employ a personal assistant (PA) to help you live more independently.

The benefits of employing a PA are:

- ◆ **they work for you, when you want them to and doing what you want them to.**

Employing a PA means you become an employer, which can seem intimidating as there are a lot of responsibilities you need to know about.

This toolkit will help you:

- ◆ **stay within the law;**
- ◆ **protect yourself and your rights; and**
- ◆ **find people and ways to help you.**

If you would like to hear from other people who use a personal budget and employ a PA there are short video clips available on YouTube, a link can also be found at Free to Live, the Leeds Personal Budgets Peer Support group <http://www.freetoliveleeds.org/case-studies>

## How to use this toolkit

This is a reference guide. So just dip in and browse when you need to.

[Toolkit contents](#) inside there is information on:

- ◆ **Recruitment**
- ◆ **How to prepare for your PA**
- ◆ **Managing your PA**
- ◆ **Training and qualifications**
- ◆ **Sorting out problems**

There are also templates available for some of the bits of paperwork you will need. These can be found at [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/employingpas](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/employingpas)

Your social worker/care manager can also give you advice as well.

Visit [www.leeds.gov.uk/personalbudgets](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/personalbudgets) for more downloadable factsheets.

This publication can be provided in large print, Braille and audio.

 **0113 247 8630** to request a copy.

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 **0113 222 4401**  
textphone **0113 222 4410**



## Recruitment

There are seven key tasks:

- ◆ **Job description and person specification**
- ◆ **Advertise**
- ◆ **Choose who to interview**
- ◆ **The interview**
- ◆ **Offer the job**
- ◆ **Do the checks**
- ◆ **Keep a record**

### Job description and person specification

**What is a job description?** A list of tasks you want your PA to do.

**What is a person specification?** A list of the personal qualities, skills, and experience you want your PA to have.

Creating the job description will help you with the person specification. For example, if you want someone who can lift you, you need someone who is physically fit, perhaps someone who has had experience lifting, or someone willing to train in lifting.

### How to write a job description

- ◆ **List the main jobs**
- ◆ **List the skills**
- ◆ **Consider personal qualities, for example, patients, sense of humour**
- ◆ **What about background? Are similar cultural and religious beliefs important to you?**

- ◆ **Have they had a Disclosure and Barring Service check with them. If they haven't Leeds City Council will pay for them to have one.**

A sample job description and person specification are included as templates in the toolkit or can be downloaded from Leeds Centre for Integrated Living (Leeds CIL)  
<http://www.leedscil.org.uk/employer-info>

## Advertise

Before advertising decide how you want people to apply for the job. Is it by writing directly to you and saying why they want the job and enclosing their curriculum vitae (a CV is a history of jobs, skills and education) or by completing an application form and sending it to you?



## Where to advertise?

**Word of mouth** – is there someone you already know and trust who would be interested in becoming your PA? It is worth considering how becoming an employer/employee could change your existing relationship.

**Local post office/shop** – this is a cost effective way of reaching people who live near you. Employing someone local can have advantages, they're less likely to have transport problems and they may be someone you know already.

**Local newspaper** – this advert will reach a lot of people and can increase the number of replies but it can be expensive.

**Jobcentre Plus** – offers help and support in advertising <https://www.gov.uk/jobcentre-plus-help-for-recruiters>

## Online

Some recruitment agencies, such as the Leeds directory, can advertise on your behalf. Your social worker or care manager may be able to offer you more information.

Direct payment support organisations like Leeds CIL can advertise jobs on their website using a recruitment tool called West Yorkshire Personal Assistance (WYPA) [www.wy-pa.org](http://www.wy-pa.org). For example, if you are supported by Leeds CIL, they can help you with advertising and a place for interviews.

**Local college/university** – mature students may be interested in this type of work.

## Writing the advert

The advert should use clear, simple language and include the following information:

Hours of work	Days and times you will need your PA.
Rates of pay	Your social worker/care manager will have information about the standard hourly rates. You will need to pay at least the minimum wage.
General location	So that applicants will know where they will be working, and check they can get there when needed. Do not give out your home address at this stage.
Experience and/or qualifications	Say if you want someone who has experience/qualifications that meet your needs. Although you have to be careful about the Equalities Act, which bans unfair treatment and helps achieve equal opportunities, it is useful to specify if you want a man or a woman. For example, if you want help with intimate personal care and would prefer someone of the same gender.
Application form or CV	This is your choice, you could ask for both.
Closing date for applications	Choose a date that gives people enough time to see and apply for the job. Two weeks minimum is usually enough.