

hitting, teasing, stealing money or benefits
intimidation, **neglect**, leaving on own
scalding, **restraint**, withholding food and drink, ignoring needs
emotional abuse, sexual abuse, bullying
pushing, pinching, **coercion**, shaking
blaming, isolating, misusing medication

Safeguarding Adults

Organising your own care & support



Solihull
METROPOLITAN
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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All adults should be able to live free from fear or harm and have their rights and choices respected.

If you need care and support you have to trust and depend upon those you rely on for help. You could be vulnerable to abuse or mistreatment and need protection. There may be some different risks or dangers if you use Direct Payments, Personal Budgets or employ your own care and support staff rather than using a Domiciliary Agency or living in a Residential or Nursing Care Home.

It is therefore very important that you take certain steps to try and make sure that there isn't any threat to you from other people who may wish to harm or mistreat you.

The aim of this leaflet is to provide you with information and guidance to help reduce the risk of you being abused or harmed.

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Protecting yourself from abuse

By choosing to receive a Direct Payment or a Personal Budget, you may choose to take on the responsibility for employing your own staff. When organising and employing your own staff there are some measures you may wish to consider to ensure that any potential risks to you are minimised.

Solihull Council has arranged, with a support organisation, to provide a free information, help and support service for those receiving a Direct Payment or Personal Budget. This service supports people in their role as an employer. Details of the support organisation are given at the end of this booklet.

Why it is important to protect yourself from abuse?

Some members of society deliberately target people they feel are vulnerable and less able to protect themselves from harm for their own gains. They will seek out situations where they feel there will be less scrutiny on them and where there will be less supervision.

National studies show people living in their own homes are the most likely to be abused and that families, friends and paid carers are more likely to abuse people than strangers.

However there are a number of steps you can take to help keep you safe from harm and abuse.

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Guidance on employing your own support staff

Advertising

- **DO NOT** put your home address, telephone number, or details about yourself on a job advert.
- Ask a friend or relative if they would be your contact address and telephone number.
- The support organisation also has a contact address you can use.
- Or you can ask the job centre to advertise for you. They have their own processes which will help you to stay safe.
- If you have access to the internet you can use a mail box number. To find out more about PO mail boxes visit the Royal Mail website – www.royalmail.com



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Application forms and gaps in employment

- It is important to ask people for details of their employment history and to scrutinise it carefully and identify if there are any gaps in an individual's employment.

The image shows a screenshot of an application form titled "APPLICATION FORM FOR THE POST OF PERSONAL ASSISTANT". The form includes a header with a logo and a "PERSONAL DETAILS" section. The form fields are as follows:

- Full name: []
- Address: []
- Postcode: []
- Telephone number: []
- Daytime: []
- Evening: []
- Email address: []
- U.K. Number (or Home Phone Number): []
- If you do not have a U.K. Number please give a Home Address (if any): []
- Method of transport: Car Public Transport (Please tick appropriate box)
- Do you have a valid Driving License? Yes No

At the bottom of the form, there is a small disclaimer: "All personal details supplied on this form are for the use of the employer. Please do not provide any personal details on this form unless you are sure that you have provided the correct details. We will not be responsible for any loss of data or any other loss of information." Below this is a large empty box for a cover letter.

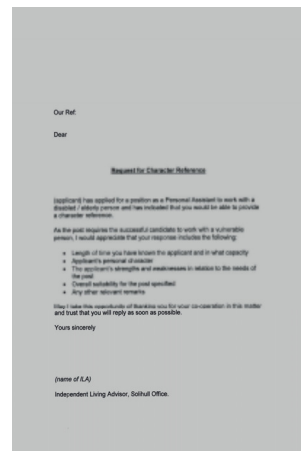
- Gaps in someone's employment could mean they are trying to hide something they don't want you to know.
- You should try and confirm the reason for any gap in employment.
- If they are not currently working it is recommended you ask why they left their last place of employment.

Interviewing

- When you interview people we suggest that you do it away from your home address and have someone with you to support you i.e. the support organisation.
- Good employment practices suggest if you are interviewing more than one person ask each person the same questions – you will then be able to make a comparison.

References

- Make sure you ask for job references from people you interview and follow them up. Always try to get a reference from an employer, not the person's friends.
- If a person has previously worked in a care setting, it is strongly recommended you seek a reference from this employment setting.
- Two good questions to ask within a reference are;
 - Was the person ever subject to any disciplinary procedures?
 - and
 - Would they re-employ the person?



The decision to employ a person remains with you but if someone would NOT re-employ a person this should suggest to you to proceed with extreme caution.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

- Solihull Council strongly recommends that if you choose to employ a Personal Assistant / carer, rather than purchase care through an agency, you should carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (formally know as a CRB) on the person you are planning to employ.
- The Disclosure and Barring Service helps employers to make safer recruitment decisions and includes those involved in caring and supporting 'adults at risk' whilst checking information against the Police National Computer.
- The support organisation can process DBS checks for people who employ their own Personal Assistants.
- There is a charge for DMS checks. If you are receiving a Direct Payment or Personal Budget this charge can be included in the amount of money you are given.



Disclosure &
Barring Service

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Skills/knowledge and training

- It's important to ensure anyone supporting you has the appropriate training and skills to do so, so they do not harm you or themselves.
- Training is available for Personal Assistants. The support organisation can provide advice and full details of where and how Personal Assistants can access training. The training includes things like moving and transferring people, food hygiene, personal care etc.
- Therefore, if you required help or support with moving and transferring it is essential your Personal Assistant has completed Moving and Handling training, which they should update on an annual basis.
- Also if you require help and support with meals it is important your Personal Assistant has completed Food Hygiene training.
- There may be other training you consider important to ensure your Personal Assistant can effectively support you.
- There may be charges for training and these can be included within your Direct Payment or Personal Budget.

Cover for sickness, holiday and absences

- It is important to put in place arrangements to cover your Personal Assistants holidays and sickness so you are not left without vital support.

Using an agency

- You may wish to use a Domiciliary Care Agency to provide your support. If you do, Solihull Council strongly recommends you only use these agencies who are registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
- All Domiciliary Care Agencies registered with the CQC are inspected on a regular basis.
- Agencies who are not registered with the CQC cannot be used to help with personal care needs e.g. bathing or help with using the toilet etc - it is against the law.
- To check if an agency is registered with the CQC go to:

Internet: www.cqc.org.uk – Find a care service.

Tel: 03000 616161

Fax: 03000 616171

Opening hours are Monday to Friday, between 8.30am and 5:30pm.

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Financial management safeguards

- Financial abuse is one of the most common forms of abuse.
- Financial abuse is when someone misuses your money, financial resources or property without your consent or understanding.
- Motivations for this abuse can include financial problems or greed.
- Abusers may take advantage of the trust, discretion or power that has been given to them. They may have a false sense of entitlement or they may feel that you don't need all of your money.
- To protect yourself you should:
 - Keep your money in a bank or financial institution, not at home. Have regular cheques and payments deposited directly into a bank account.
 - Arrange to have bills paid by direct debit from your bank account.
 - Keep a list of all property, bank accounts and valuable belongings. Keep the list in a safe place.



- Ensure that you don't write down any passwords, PIN numbers etc.
- Plan ahead. Prepare a will with a solicitor's help and review it periodically to keep it up-to-date. Change it only after careful consideration. Ask a solicitor how a power of attorney can ensure your wishes are followed.
- Ask a trusted friend or family member to review all documents before signing.
- **Never** give your PIN (Personal Identification Number) for any debit or credit cards to anyone.



What to do if you think you are being abused

- If you have any concerns talk to someone.
- If you are being abused and feel unable to report it or call the Police yourself, tell someone you trust and ask him or her to do it for you. This could include a:
 - Family member
 - Friend
 - Social worker
 - District nurse
 - Doctor
 - Support organisation

To report abuse contact



Solihull Connect
on **0121 704 8007**

OR

The Police on
0845 113 5000 or **999** in emergencies

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Useful telephone numbers

GP	
Community nurse	
Social worker	
Support organisation	

Contact details

If you require any further copies of this publication, please contact the Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board Business Team:-

SSAB Business Team
Solihull Council
10 West Mall,
Chelmsley Wood Shopping Centre,
Chelmsley Wood, Solihull
B37 5TN

Tel: 0121 788 4387
Fax: 0121 788 4414
Email: ssab@solihull.gov.uk
Website: www.solihull.gov.uk/adultabuse



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