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## Appointee Fact Sheet

### Managing benefits on somebody else's behalf

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Staffordshire County Council manage the finances of people who are unable to do this for themselves, and have no one else who is willing or able to do this for them. The Council offers Appointeeship for people living in residential care, or in the community under certain conditions.

Appointeeship may be the best course of action if the person has a low level of financial assets, is in receipt of benefits and doesn't have any other sources of income.

Depending on the person's financial circumstances, it may be that Deputyship is a better option.

#### **What is an Appointeeship?**

When someone is no longer able to manage their finances, an application from a social work practitioner can be made to the Staffordshire County Council Appointee Service.

Appointeeship is where the Council will act for someone, by collecting their state benefits and making payments from these monies for care charges, personal allowance or other items considered to be in the person's best interests.

An Appointee is someone who manages a person's benefits.

Appointees only manage a person's benefits - any other sources of income or substantial savings, the Council, as Appointee, cannot control.

In these circumstances an application to the Staffordshire County Council Deputyship team may be more appropriate.

Appointeeship is granted by the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) upon application by the Council.

#### **Who can have an Appointee?**

Appointeeship can be granted for people in long term residential care or for people living in the community – including Shared Lives accommodation.

The Council will apply for Appointeeship only in the following situations:

- There are allegations of financial abuse (with or without a safeguarding referral being made)
- The person has been deemed as to no longer having capacity to manage their finances by a social work practitioner
- There must be no one else who is willing or suitable to act for the person

- The person has only state benefits, little or no other income, savings or assets

Before an application for appointeeship can be accepted by the Appointee service the social work practitioner has to ensure there is a mechanism in place whereby the person can access money, such as support to go to a cash machine from family members, support providers or their social care worker.

The appointeeship service does not include the provision of cash, all transactions are carried out electronically. The person will be issued with a cash card which will be loaded on a daily/weekly basis by the Appointeeship Service.

For people living in residential care, where the provider agrees, the weekly personal allowance will be paid directly to the provider by BACS payment.

### **What are the main responsibilities of an appointee?**

To notify changes in circumstances to social work practitioner, such as:

- Savings levels – over £6,000 for people of working age and over £10,000 for people of retirement age.
- Inform Welfare Benefits if savings are approaching £16,000

Keep Social Work practitioners informed of account balance on a monthly basis and respond to requests from social work practitioner to purchase goods or increase weekly personal allowance in the person's best interest

Ensure incomings and outgoings are updated every 12 months by Social

Work practitioner, counter signed by their manager.

### **What can't the Appointee service do?**

Spend money without the authority from a social work practitioner.

Manage other sources of income or savings.

Settle legacy debt accrued prior to Appointeeship being authorised unless in exceptional circumstances where back payments from DWP are due and the debt was incurred whilst waiting for the correct benefits to be paid.

Act as the financial representative or nominated person for someone in receipt of a direct payment.

Being Appointee for a person's benefits does not give the Council any rights to make any other financial, medical or care decisions on their behalf.

### **How do I refer someone to Appointeeship service ?**

Contact your Social Worker who will complete a Mental Capacity Assessment

A Mental Capacity Assessment has to be completed in all cases either by the social care worker or by a medical professional. The social care worker then makes a referral to the team managing Appointeeship, ensuring detailed information regarding a person's benefits entitlement, any savings or other sources of income, outgoings and personal allowances is documented and countersigned by a Manager.

### **Timescales**

On average the process takes 8 – 10 weeks for Appointeeship to be granted

by the DWP, but redirection of private pensions can take a number of months depending on the pension provider.

In exceptional circumstances, where the situation for the person is deemed a priority, the Appointee service can make arrangements to provide weekly personal allowance or payment of outstanding bills on behalf of the person before benefits are received. These expenses will be recovered once benefits are received.

## **Charges**

A charge of £10 per week will be made where a service user has in excess of £1,000 of savings and lives in residential care and £15 per week if living in the community.

## **Contact Details:**

### **Staffordshire Cares**

#### **Phone**

[0300 111 8010](tel:03001118010)

#### **Email**

[staffordshirecares@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:staffordshirecares@staffordshire.gov.uk)

Emails are screened throughout the day and prioritised according to urgency.

## **Working hours**

The team work between the following hours:

- Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, except bank holidays

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<https://preview-staffscc.cloud.contensis.com/Advice-support-and-care-for-adults/Your-social-care-journey/Care-and-support-options/Appointeeships.aspx>