



Haverling
LONDON BOROUGH



**Personal
Assistants
Guide
2023**

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1. Introduction

Becoming a personal assistant allows you to make a massive difference in the lives of people who need care. You have control over the work and the care you provide, including the hours you work, who you care for, and the tasks you perform. This guide offers helpful information on what it takes to become a personal assistant and steps on how to get there.

2. What is a personal assistant?

A personal assistant (PA) (sometimes referred to as a Carer or a support worker) is employed by people who need social care, either because of their age or disability, to enable them to live as independently as possible.

Personal assistants carry out a wide range of tasks as required by the employer, including support with things such as washing and getting dressed, cooking, feeding and supporting people to go out and about so they have greater independence and the ability to live more fully.



3. What is the role of a personal assistant?

A personal assistant helps the individual they are working for to continue to live independently by assisting them with everyday tasks. This can include:

- Assistance with shopping
- Assistance with household tasks
- Assistance with personal care (including bathing and getting dressed)
- Assistance with gaining access to community resources such as libraries, community activities and leisure facilities

A personal assistant will understand that each individual is different and that their support will help to widen the choices available and increase the control that service users have over their life.

4. Advantages of being a personal assistant?

Here are just a few of the many advantages of being a personal assistant:

- Flexibility – working various suitable hours
- Job satisfaction derived from helping people to make their lives better
- Jobs are varied and can be rewarding – can choose to work with adults and children
- Employment benefits are available i.e. annual leave

5. How to become a personal assistant?

Havering Council run a Personal Assistant (PA) accreditation service for people who want to work as a Personal Assistant. Once the accreditation process has been completed, you will be placed on the Personal Assistant Register. This means that you will be able to work with residents who have care and support needs. As a Personal Assistant, you will have access to the following:

- Information about training opportunities
- Access to support from the Council
- Invitation to events to meet other personal assistants
- Accreditation on the borough's PA Register

To express your interest in becoming a personal assistant, please visit the webpage below:

https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20015/adult_social_care/612/help_at_home/2



6. How to become an accredited personal assistant?

To be accredited, you will need to meet the following criteria:

- Complete an application form detailing your experience and training you have gained from previous jobs
- Provide details of two referees
- Provide a valid Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) which is less than three years old.
- Sign up for DBS checking service with the DBS organisation
- Sign Personal Assistant Code of Conduct

7. Code of Conduct

Any individual joining the PA List must sign to confirm adherence to the Personal Assistant Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct defines the minimum standards required from a PA (Personal Assistant) included in the Havering P.A. lists. This Code is to support you in your day-to-day work so that you are clear on the standards and expectations of a listed PA (Personal Assistant).

Protecting the person's rights and promoting their interests

There is an expectation that all listed P.A's will provide the highest possible standard of service and care to all Service Users through the performance of their duties. As a listed PA (Personal Assistant) you are expected to:

- Treat each person as an individual and promote their wellbeing
- Respect and promote the service user's right to control their lives and make informed choices about the services they receive
- Respect and maintain the dignity and privacy of the service user
- Respect diversity and different cultures and values
- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question your motivation and intentions
- Work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way
- Apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment

Confidentiality

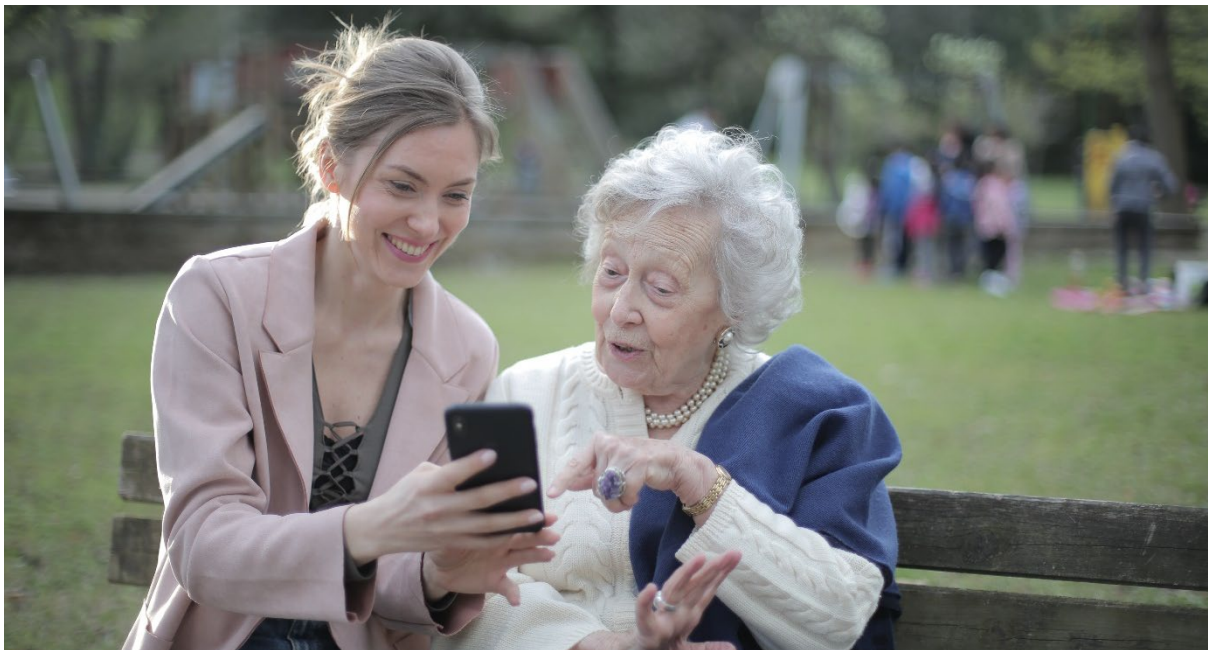
As a listed PA (Personal Assistant) you are expected to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of the person you support. This includes:

- Being honest and trustworthy
- Treating confidential information with respect
- Being punctual and reliable
- Behave in a professional manner at all times, which includes personal presentation and suitable attire
- Honouring work commitments, agreements and arrangements and, when it is not possible to do so, explain why you are not able to
- While it is natural to talk about work at home or socially, P.A's should be cautious about discussing specific and sensitive matters and should take steps to ensure that information is not passed on

Promoting independence and managing risk

As a listed personal assistant, you must promote the independence and respect the rights of the people you support. At the same time, you should protect them as far as possible from danger and ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves, or other people. This includes:

- Assisting the people you support to understand and exercise their rights
- Recognising that they have the right to take risks
- Helping them to identify and manage potential risks to themselves and others
- Reporting dangerous, abusive, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour and practice to the London Borough of Havering as a safeguarding concern
- Recognising and using responsibly the power that comes from your work with people and their carers



8. Essential standards

As a personal assistant you must not:

- Abuse, neglect or harm the people you support
- Exploit the people you support in any way
- Abuse the trust of people you support or the access you have to personal information about them, their property, home or workplace
- Share personal information on the people you support inappropriately, or in a manner that would breach Data Protection Legislation
- Form inappropriate personal relationships with the people you support
- Discriminate unlawfully or unjustifiably
- Put yourself, or other people, at unnecessary risk
- Behave in a way in work, or outside work, which could call into question your suitability to work as a listed personal assistant by London Borough of Havering

9. Employer information

The individuals that you work for are your employers. If you have any dispute or issues, you should first discuss it with the person you work for or their nominated representatives and try to agree on a solution. Although Havering Council facilitate your joining the Personal Assistant list and will continue providing information, advice and support, the Council is not your employer.