



Do I need to pay for social care in my home or local community?

2025 to 2026



**Easy
Read**

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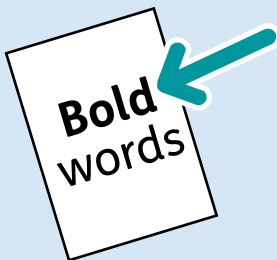
Easy Read



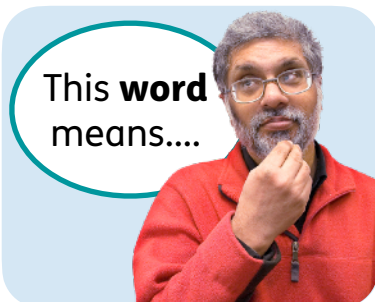
This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information but it will tell you about the important parts.



This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures. Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker. These are important words in the booklet.



Sometimes if a bold word is hard to understand, we will explain what it means.



Blue and underlined words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

West Sussex County Council



West Sussex County Council thinks that it is important to treat everyone fairly.



We respect the people we support, our staff and the organisations we work with.



We want to work in a way that is fair to everyone.



We also expect the people we support to treat our staff politely and with respect.

Introduction

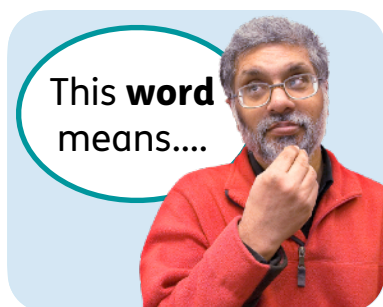


West Sussex council has written this information to help you understand if you need to pay towards the cost of your **social care**.



Social care is extra support some people need with everyday things, like washing and eating.

Difficult words



We use some difficult words in this booklet. In this part, we will explain what they mean.

Contribution



Your **contribution** is the amount of money that you might need to pay towards the cost of your care.

Disability related expenses



Disability related expenses is money that you only have to pay because of your disability.



Disability related expenses can include extra equipment or personal help that you need because of your disability.

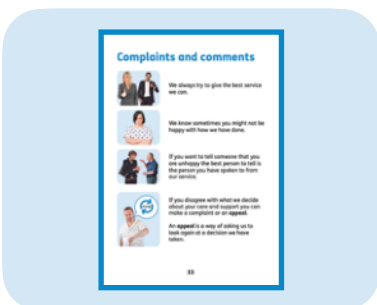


We look at your disability related expenses when we decide what your contribution should be.



If you are not happy with what we decide your disability related expenses are, you can ask us to look at our choice again.

This is called an **appeal**.



You can find out how to do this on page 33.

Income

Income is money that you get. It includes:



- All **benefits** you get.



- **Pensions** - this is a pot of money that you, your job and the government pay into while you are working. You can use it to live on after you retire.



- Money from **trust funds** - this is when money is put into a special account for someone else or an organisation to manage it for you.

Minimum income guarantee



The **minimum income guarantee** is the amount of your income that we do not count when we work out your contribution.



The minimum income guarantee includes money you need to spend on things like food and bills.

For single people this year, it is at least:



- £232.60 a week for people old enough to get a pension.



- £89.15 a week for people aged 16 to 24.



- £112.50 a week for people who are 25 or older, but not old enough to get a pension.



If you are in a couple, you may get less money than this.

Capital assets



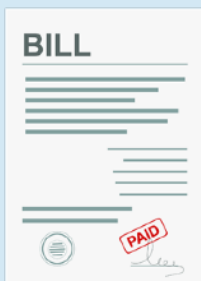
Capital assets

Capital assets is the amount of money you have. It includes cash and any money you have in bank accounts.



It also includes homes and land, but not the value of your main or only home.

Property-related household expenses



These are bills and other costs that you need to pay.



They include **council tax**, rent and some bills.

Council tax is money you have to pay to the Council.

Help from the council



If you need help to live independently or to care for someone you should get in touch with us.



You can find out how to get in touch with our **Adults' CarePoint** on **page 44**.



We will:

- Give you free advice about how to get care.
- Think about whether we should help pay for your care.



We will follow rules from the government to decide whether we should help pay for your care.



We will do this in an **assessment** - your social care worker will explain this to you.



You can find out more about assessments on our website: [westsussex.gov.uk](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk)

We will look at what you have told us and decide:



- If we should help pay for your care.



- How much money you can get.



Even if we decide to help pay for your care and support, you may need to pay some money towards the cost. This is called your **contribution**.



We may decide that you need support from an **occupational therapist** for a short time - this is someone who helps you with everyday tasks while you:



- Get better from an illness.



- Become able to care for yourself at home, if you have been finding this hard.

This is called **reablement**.



If you get support from an occupational therapist, they will decide how long you need it for.



The reablement is free for as long as the occupational therapist says that you need it.



If your occupational therapist says you don't need the support any more, you may need to start paying for any care you have.



When we decide what help you need, we will think about the needs of your family or other people in your life.

If you are a carer



You can ask for help for both yourself and the person you care for.



You can get an assessment even if the person you care for has not already had one or doesn't get support from us.



We will ask about your needs.

To arrange an assessment:



- Get in touch with our Adults' CarePoint. You can find out how to contact them on page 44.



- Get in touch with Carers Support West Sussex. You can find out how to contact them on page 41.

Making decisions



The law says that everyone over 16 years old can make decisions for themselves unless it is proved they can't.



If you cannot make a decision for yourself we will speak to someone who is allowed to make decisions for you by law.



If we have to make decisions for you we will only decide things that are best for you.

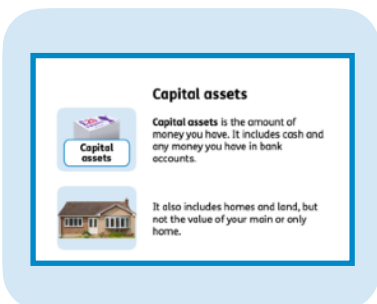
If we decide we should not help pay for your care



We will give you information about how to find the support you need.



If you have more than £23,250 in **capital assets**, you will need to pay for your own care and support.



We explain what capital assets are on page 10.



If an assessment shows that you need care but you have more than £23,250, we can help you to buy care services for yourself.

We call this a **brokerage service**.

We will charge you £219 to do this.



If you want us to change your support later on we will charge you another £219.



If you want us to buy services for you and then get back the money from you, we will charge you £7 a week.



You can find out more information about care and support services here:

westsussexconnecttosupport.org

Working out how much you will pay



If we decide to help pay for your care, you may need to pay some money towards it.

This is called your **contribution**.



We will look at how much money you have to decide if you should pay a contribution.



We will:

- Get in touch with you to arrange an assessment.
- Tell you what information you need to bring along to your assessment.





We will make sure you get all the **benefits** you should get.



Benefits is money paid to some people by the government to help pay for the things they need to live.



We will not charge you more than you can afford.



You can find out more about assessments in our Easy Read booklet: **‘Financial assessments for people who get care at home or in the local community’**.

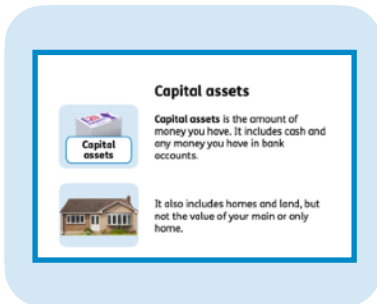


You can ask our Adults' CarePoint for a copy. You can find out how to get in touch with them on page 44.

How much you need to pay



If you have more than £23,250 in **capital assets**, you will have to pay for all of your care.



We explain what capital assets are on page 10.



But for most people, we will only charge some of what your care costs.



The amount you will pay will be decided by how much money you have, your income and how much you need to spend.

We will explain more about this in the next part of this booklet.



We will look at money that you have to pay because of your disability - this is called **disability related expenses**.

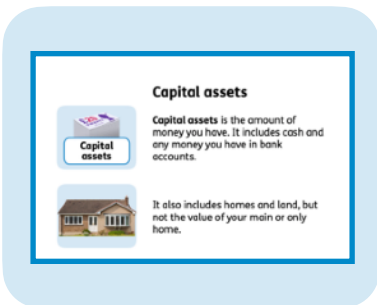
If you are a carer



If you are a carer who needs support because of your caring work, we might be able to help you.



We may agree that you do not have to pay a contribution, if you have less than £23,250 in **capital assets**.



We explain what **capital assets** are on page 10.



If you have more than £23,250 in capital assets, we will give you information to help you get support.

How we decide how much you should pay

To work out how much you should pay each week, we add together:



- How much money you get each week, like from a **pension** or benefits. It does not include money you earn from a job.
- Some other money, like saved up money over £14,250.



This does not include the value of your main or only home.



A **pension** is a pot of money that you, your job and the government pay into while you are working. You can use it to live on after you retire.

Then we take away:



- How much money you need to live. This is called the **minimum income guarantee**.



- How much you need to pay for housing.



- Money you need to spend that is to do with your disability.



The amount that is left is your contribution.



We will explain how we have worked out how much you should pay at your assessment.



If you think you can't afford the amount we tell you, you should get in touch with us right away.



You will have to start paying from the time your support begins.



You will need to pay even if you do not use a service for some time, like if you go into hospital.



If you ever pay too much, we will pay it back.



If you do not want to tell us about how much money you have, we may ask you to pay for all of your care.

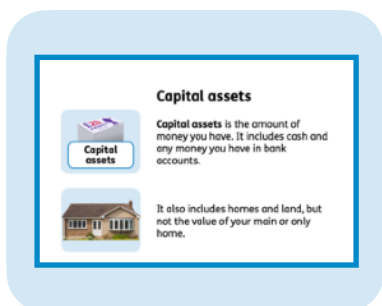
Staying in a care home



You may need to stay in a care home for a short time.



If you have more than £23,250 in capital assets, you will have to pay the full cost of staying at a care home.



We explain what capital assets are on page 10.



If you do not have that much, you will have to pay some money every week.



Your social care worker will tell you how much you need to pay.



If you do not think you can afford it, you can ask us for an assessment of your money.



If you need to stay in a care home for more than 8 weeks, we will do an assessment to decide how much you should pay for the rest of your stay.

If you have more questions

You should talk to your social care worker or financial assessment officer if you:



- Have more questions.



- Want us to look at your assessment.



If you are a carer, you can talk to Carers Support West Sussex. You can find out how to get in touch with them on page 41.



If you think that we are asking you to pay too much, you can ask us to look again at how much you should pay.



If you are not happy, you can:

- Ask us to stop the service.



- Ask us to look again at our decision.



- Make a complaint.



- Ask us to look again at your disability-related costs. This is called an appeal.
There is more information about this on page 33.

Someone to help you have your say



Some people find it hard to take part in their assessment and plan their support on their own.



They might not have someone to help them with this or speak up for them.



This means we must provide them with an **advocate**.

An **advocate** is someone who helps you to speak up, or speaks up for you.

If you think you need an advocate, you can:



- Ask a social care worker.



- Contact our Adults' CarePoint. You can find out how to do this on page 44.



- Go to this website:
www.westsussexconnecttosupport.org

Yearly check



Each year, we will work out the amount you should pay.

We call this a **reassessment**.

You should tell us as soon as you can about any changes to:



- How much money you get from pensions and benefits.



- How much money you have.

Your information



We will keep all the information you give us private.



We will only share your information with other organisations if you or the law says we can.



If you have any questions, please get in touch with our Adults' CarePoint. You can find out how to get in touch with them on page 44.



If you do not want to talk to someone about your money, you can fill in the forms yourself.

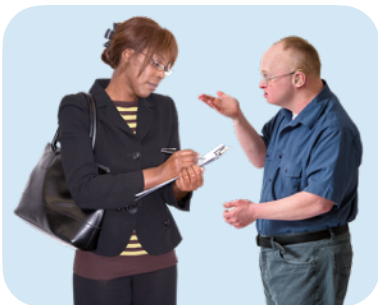
Complaints and comments



We always try to give the best service we can.



We know sometimes you might not be happy with how we have done.



If you want to tell someone that you are unhappy the best person to tell is the person you have spoken to from our service.



If you disagree with what we decide about your care and support you can make a complaint or an **appeal**.

An **appeal** is a way of asking us to look again at a decision we have taken.



Someone else can help you make a complaint or an appeal. This can be a friend, relative, Citizens Advice or an advocate - this is someone who can speak for you.



If your local office can't sort out the problem, you can contact our Complaints Team:



- Website:
Go to www.westsussex.gov.uk and then search 'make a complaint or appeal'.



- Phone: 01243 777 100
You should ask for the Complaints Team.



- Using Relay UK: 18001 01243 777 100
This helps people with speech and hearing difficulties.



- Email:
feedback@westsussex.gov.uk



- Post:
Complaints Team
West Sussex County Council
County Hall
Chichester
West Sussex PO19 1RQ.



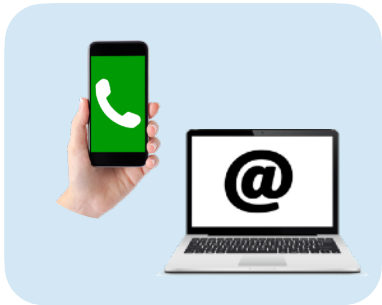
Please tell us if we have done a good job.

More information



Free advice about money

You can talk to Age UK, West Sussex, Brighton and Hove for free advice about your money:



- By phone: 0800 0191 310
- By email: info@ageukwsbh.org.uk



You can talk to Citizens Advice for free money advice, by:



- Website: citizensadvice.org.uk
- Phone: 0808 278 7969

Healthwatch



Healthwatch is an organisation that listens to people who use health and care services, to help health and care services improve.



It is not part of councils or the NHS.

You can get in touch with Healthwatch West Sussex by:



- Phone: 0300 012 0122



- Website:
www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk/

West Sussex Wellbeing



West Sussex Wellbeing is an organisation with information and services for your **wellbeing**.

Wellbeing means feeling happy and healthy in your body and mind.



Their website is:
westsussexwellbeing.org.uk



Independent Lives

For advice and support for living at home, get in touch by:



- Post:
Ground Floor
Southfield House
11 Liverpool Gardens
Worthing
BN11 1RY



- Phone: 01903 219 482



- Email: info@independentlives.org



- Website:
independentlives.org



Your local library

You can find information about any council or health service in West Sussex at your local library.

Information for carers



If you are caring for someone at home, you can get help from Carers Support West Sussex. You can contact them by:



- Phone: 0300 028 8888



- Email: info@carerssupport.org.uk
- Website: carerssupport.org.uk



Carewise

You can get advice about paying for long term care by:



- Phone: 0330 222 7000



- Using Relay UK: 18001 0330 222 7000

This helps people with speech and hearing difficulties.



- Email:
carewise@westsussex.gov.uk



- Website:
carewiseadvice.com



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Benefits

You can find out more about benefits by getting in touch with The Department for Work and Pensions.

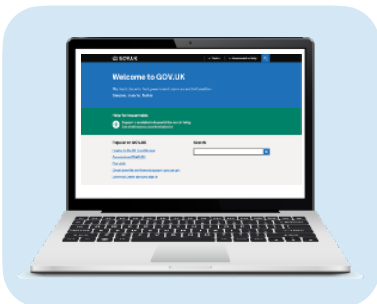


This is the part of the government in charge of benefits.



You can get in touch by:

- Phone: 0800 731 0464



- Their website:
[gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

Mental health social work service



For the Mental health social work service, please get in touch with our Adults' CarePoint.

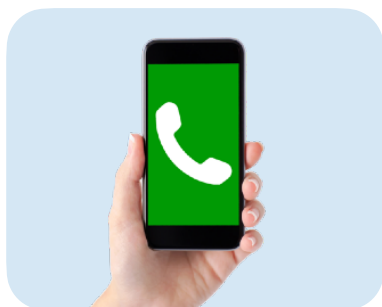
You can find out how to do this on page 44.

Contact us



Adults' CarePoint:

- Post:
County Hall
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1RG



- Phone: 01243 642 121



- Textphone: 18001 01243 642 121.
This helps people who struggle with hearing and speaking to contact us.



You can also contact us on our website:

westsussex.gov.uk/contact-help

Fill in the form called 'Contact us'.

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