

## **Freedom of Information – Response – 27248**

*I would like to submit a Freedom of information request please - could I see all policy, guidance and advice you have regarding Disability Related Expenses for Adult Social Care charges?*

Please see the attached. The document provided is in the process of being reviewed in line with the national guidance and annual uplifts. The document will transition into a public facing, accessible document that will be made available on the Suffolk County Council website to support residents.

# DISABILITY RELATED EXPENSES (DRE)

## Guidance for Financial Assessments

Good Practice:

- Don't allow things that do not have an explanation or satisfactory explanation.
- Always question if the DRE appears excessive/implausible

HELP IN YOUR HOME				
If other people live in the home and also incapacitated, split costs accordingly				
Type of help	Please explain why you need this help	Who do you pay to do it?	How much do you pay?	How often do you pay for this?
Help to clean your home	<b>Must be related to disability. If another adult living in home, then need to explain why they cannot do cleaning tasks</b>	<b>If paying a relative ask for proof of regular payment and confirmation that it is declared for tax/benefit purposes</b>	<b>Allow two hours per week at up to £20 per hour, but if description of reason why gives <b>clear reasons</b> why cleaning is for more than two hours per week (eg bowel incontinence and cleaner has to come daily or severe risk of infection etc), then allow up to five days per week</b>	
Help with your garden	<b>Must be related to disability. If another adult living in home, then need to explain why they cannot do gardening</b>	<b>If paying a relative ask for proof of regular payment and confirmation that it is declared for tax/benefit purposes</b>	<b>Check size and nature of garden using Google street view. If reasonable based on garden size and type allow up to two hours per week at up to £20 per hour. Allow for max of 36 weeks per year. For remaining 16 weeks allow maximum two hours every four weeks. If exceptional case made for more hours based on circumstances, then consider reasonableness. If in doubt have a peer discussion.</b>	
Window cleaning	<b>Must be related to disability. If another adult living in home, then need to explain why they cannot do window cleaning. Is this covered in cleaner's costs?</b>	<b>If paying a relative ask for proof of regular payment and confirmation that it is declared for tax/benefit purposes</b>	<b>Allow for maximum of £25 every four – six weeks. If size of property or specialist windows (eg double height – converted church etc.) means costs are higher, then allow where reasonable</b>	
Community alarm/assistive technology including ineligible service charge	<b>Should be disability related and not funded by personal budget from ACS (may be ineligible part of rent)</b>		<b>£ Allow cost for service – if excessive, check supplier's web site to confirm</b>	
Other private care and support	<b>Need to be clear what this is. Need</b>	<b>If paying a relative ask for</b>	<b>Check rate on supplier's website. Consider whether</b>	

	to check to see if funded in personal budget or is reasonable to allow	proof of regular payment and confirmation that it is declared for tax/benefit purposes	private care is reasonably required – check care and support plan to see if mentioned
Do you need to do extra loads of washing? Please tell us why, and how many loads you need to do in an average week.	Look for reasonable explanation. Our allowance will cover additional electricity, water, washing powder, etc.		Allow £4.00 for first load above 4 per week, an extra £.50p for every load to a maximum of fifteen loads= £9.00. Must be for Adult's laundry only, not general household If laundrette used and use is disability related, then allow weekly costs above £4

If you feel that you pay more towards your heating and electricity bills because of your illness or disability, please send your last 12 months' bills. We will compare these to some nationally agreed figures.

Please circle the type of property you live in: -

Detached      Semi-detached      Terrace      Bungalow      Flat      Bedsit

### YOUR HEALTH AND PERSONAL WELLBEING

	Please explain why you need this	How much do you pay?	How often do you pay for this?
Continence aids	Look for reasonable explanation as to why needed instead of or in addition to NHS provision	£ Allow £50 per week maximum + additional costs e.g. wipes/disposal Above £50 to panel	
Normally incontinence pads are provided by the NHS. Please explain why you need to pay for these. Accept if they state they are inadequate to meet needs			
Chiropody	No NHS provision (eg diabetes and other certain conditions)	Allow up to £40 a session for four weekly period or more, unless need for more frequent service clearly identified.	
Special toiletries	Such as E45 cream etc. & must have a direct relationship to disability (in addition to max. allowed for continence aids)	Allow costs above £3 - £20 per week. Costs above this to be discussed with senior/manager	
Prescription costs	Not allowed for anyone on means-tested benefits or who would qualify for free prescriptions for low income. Other cases allow annual season ticket cost.	Do not allow delivery costs unless no alternative (	

		<b>should be available for free from local voluntary groups – get to know your area)</b>
Personal grooming (e.g. support with washing hair, cutting nails)	<b>Must be directly linked to disability – if there is a reasonable explanation. Hair cuts not normally allowed unless directly related to disability. Hairdressers may wash/dress hair and the need is entirely disability related because Adult cannot do it for themselves Discuss if unsure.</b>	
Physiotherapy	<b>Must identify clearly why non- NHS treatment needed and how this benefits them Default eight sessions per year and then onus on Adult to provide evidence of why needed more frequently</b>	<b>Allow up to £45 per session</b>
Other therapies	<b>Must identify clearly why non- NHS treatment needed and how this benefits them Default eight sessions per year and then onus on Adult to provide evidence of why needed more frequently</b>	<b>Allow up to £45 per session</b>
Other things that help your wellbeing	<b>As above - Consider on case by case basis Vitamins and supplements <u>always</u> request that Adult provides evidence from GP/specialist to say that they are necessary and reasonable for Adult to be taking, and not provided by NHS. Require statement for each item in case of multiple items</b>	
Replacement clothing	<b>More than average wear and tear must be directly linked to disability -</b>	<b>Allow up to £400 per year <i>Ensure you look into why the replacement clothing is needed and how it is directly linked to the disability – i.e. look in Care &amp; Support plan, phone customer for clarification, request evidence etc</i></b>

## GETTING AROUND

If you receive Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment mobility component, please note that we will only allow expenses above the amount you get.

Do you have a Motability vehicle? (Please tick)	Yes	No
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Do you have to pay transport costs that are more than they would be if you did not have your illness or disability?

Type of expense	Please explain why you need this	How much do you pay?	How often do you pay for this?
<p><b>Do not allow travel costs to hospital appointments if in receipt of means-tested benefits. Refer to hospital fares scheme</b></p>	<p>Would family normally transport for free as part of informal care?                      Check care and support plan to see if travel costs have been considered                      If taxi – why not a community car service/hospital transport/family/using own Motability vehicle etc.                      Consider if customer would be eligible for taxi vouchers and if so, supply info to customer. If taxis cost above this, only consider the additional costs.</p>	<p>£ If customer is in receipt of PIP/DLA mobility, only consider amounts above the rate they receive. Check if PIP mobility used for motability vehicle. If customer not receiving PIP/DLA mobility, consider info on the left.</p>	
<p><b>Must identify why these costs only exist due to disability</b></p>			

## FOOD

	Please explain why you need this	How much do you pay?	How often do you pay for this?
<p>Meals on Wheels</p>	<p><b>Only relates to ADDITIONAL costs and these must be directly linked to disability. Assume normal weekly food costs for a single person as £46.50 per week so allow costs above this. Check British Dietetic Association (or condition specific) website for information about recommended diets for specific medical conditions. Understand that some people may do their own research but may be vulnerable to spurious recommendations where there is no scientific evidence to support.</b></p>		
<p>Frozen ready meals delivery</p>			
<p>Meals at a day centre</p>			

Internet order delivery charge	<b>Allow up to a maximum of £5 every week unless special reason shown for need for weekly deliveries</b>
Special diet	<b>Consider whether diet costs more than a “normal” diet (diabetic unlikely), need to have demonstrated why it costs more. Extra costs may be related to behavioural issues in LD customers. Allow costs above £45 per week to a reasonable maximum. Check with senior/manager if unsure.</b>

### DISABILITY EQUIPMENT

Have you recently paid for any specialist disability equipment? If so, please tell us what you paid for and when.

Description of this item	How much did you pay?	When did you pay for this? (Please specify)
<p><i>If someone purchases a one off item before care starts eg new bathroom, that will not require replacement, do not treat as DRE. This is because this has already been taken into consideration in their capital level.</i></p> <p><b>Given figure for actual cost, we need to divide by 52 and then by number of years (as below)</b></p> <p><b><i>Stairlift and wet room –10 years</i></b>  <b><i>Wheelchairs - new 10 years, Second hand 5 years</i></b>  <b><i>Electric bed 10 years</i></b>  <b><i>Riser Recliner 10 years</i></b>  <b><i>Electric scooter where allowable* 7 years</i></b>  <b><i>Hearing Aids 5 years</i></b>  <b><i>Blood pressure machines 5 years</i></b>  <b><i>Large button phone 5 years</i></b>  <b><i>Electric toothbrushes 3 years</i></b>  <b><i>Batteries for scooter 1.5 years - 3years depending on usage so average = 2 years</i></b></p> <p><b>Check to see if they have accessed NHS funding (eg wheelchair, walkers)</b>  <b>Cost of electric scooter* – offset PIP mobility (if not already done so for other mobility costs)</b>  <b>Check care and support plan, consider OT referral where appropriate.</b></p>		

Do you have to pay for the cost of replacing or repairing your equipment yourself?

Description of this item	How much do you pay?	How often do you have to replace this item? (Please specify)
<b>See above for replacement. Allow reasonable repair costs over reasonable period</b>		

Do you have any specialist disability equipment that you have to pay insurance or service costs for?		
Description of this item	How much do you pay?	How often do you pay for this? (Please specify)
<b>Allow reasonable insurance/service costs</b>		

YOUR HOBBIES AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES			
Type of hobby or leisure activity	Please explain why you need this	How much do you pay?	How often do you pay for this?
	Explanation must show clear link to disability	If link clear, then allow in full	
<b>Phone/IT/broadband/TV subscriptions etc</b>	Explanation must show clear link to disability	If link clear then allow 50% of costs	

LEGAL CHARGES			
Do you have to pay someone to manage your money or your personal affairs for you?			
Who do you pay?	Please explain why you need this	How much do you pay?	How often do you pay for this? (Please specify)
<b>Allow cost if necessary due to disability. Consider reasonableness of cost.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Not one-off costs (e.g. POA)</b></li> <li>- <b>Management e.g. Legal fees for customer and NOT for any other person, but if they are also managing trust funds/investments rather than just weekly income and costs, only allow a proportion. Trusts should cover those other costs.</b></li> <li>- <b>Annual deputyship charges</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Do not allow payment to family members for informal support with finances.</b></p>		

ANY OTHER DISABILITY RELATED EXPENSES YOU MAY HAVE				
What do you have to pay for?	Please explain why you need this	Who do you pay for this?	How much do you pay?	How often do you pay for this?
Holiday costs – only allow for cost of specialist holiday or additional care and support, but check care and support plan to see if already			£	Weekly / Monthly / Yearly / Other (please specify)

included in ACS funding				
Pets – must see direct link to disability. Allow a maximum of 50% of costs for food and routine vets bills unless it is established that animal companion is essential for health and well-being. Check care and support plan			£	Weekly / Monthly / Yearly / Other (please specify)
Professional dog walkers – will consider if customer unable to walk pet anymore due to disability.	<b>If paying a relative or friend ask for proof of regular payment and confirmation that it is declared for tax/benefit purposes</b>		Maximum £12 per walk (max 1 per day)	

Utility costs – refer to NAFAO guidance, updated annually.

See below for financial year 2025/2026. Only allow costs above these figures.

## HEATING ALLOWANCES

<b>Figures for 2025/2026</b>	<b>Standard</b>
Single person - Flat/Terrace	£1,975.11
Couple – Flat/Terrace	£2,605.85
Single person – Semi Detached	£2,097.83
Couples – Semi Detached	£2,769.47
Single – Detached	£2,552.27
Couples – Detached	£3,364.45
<b>Water usage</b>	£626.00