Planning ahead

It is hard to think about when things go wrong. We want things to go well. But it is still good to know what to do just in case something happens.

If your personal assistant is sick or away

This could be hard for you. You need to have a good plan in place.

You could talk to an agency. They can give you a personal assistant quickly if you are stuck.

There will be local groups who can tell you where to go for this.
If you are unhappy with your personal assistant

Talk to them and let them know what is wrong. It may be that a chat can sort it out.

If they have done something bad, you may want to fire them. You have to make sure you follow the law if you do this. If not, you could be the one in trouble.

Do have a set of rules the worker knows about. It is called a disciplinary policy. This is about if you are fed up with your worker, in case things go wrong.

They will know what you want and what happens. This is not the same thing as the contract of employment.
Ask for support from someone you trust. A local group may help. It is hard to do this alone.

ACAS can talk to you and your worker. This is to try and sort things out. They give free information.

Call 0300 123 1100 or go to www.acas.org.uk

It may be that your personal assistant is not happy. Again, it is good to talk. Make sure you set aside time to talk and take notes. By talking, small problems can be sorted out before they become big.

There are rules called a grievance policy. This is about if your worker is fed up. It sets out what should happen.

Make sure your worker has a copy of this as well as the employment contract and disciplinary policy.

For these policies go to www.gov.uk or phone 0300 456 3565.
If you are abused

**Abuse** is when another person takes power over you. It is against the law.

It is abuse if someone:

- hits you
- takes your money
- is nasty to you
- makes you do sexual things you do not want to do
- takes away your rights
- keeps you away from other people
- does not do something they need to do for you, like give you personal care.
If you are being abused, tell someone straight away.

Tell:

- the police
- social services
- family
- friends
- doctor
- a local group.
Your personal assistant must report abuse. It is more important than keeping things private.

They need training about:

- the rules for keeping people safe in your area. This is called safeguarding

- calling the police or an ambulance if there is an emergency

- reporting to the police if there is a crime

- knowing what services to contact to get help

- keeping notes about what has happened.
Speaking up about hate crime

Hate crime is when someone commits a crime against you because of something like your sex, race, religion or disability.

It is against the law and you should always report it.

In an emergency, phone 999 or 112.

You can register to text 999 if you cannot make voice calls.

There are also other things you can do:
- telephone or go to your local police station.
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Stop Hate UK: www.stophateuk.org
contact Crimestoppers if you do not want to talk to the police or fill in forms.

Website:  www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Telephone:  0800 555111

The phone call is free and you do not have to tell them your name.

If your personal assistant is leaving

They have to tell you before they go. The amount of time they should tell you before they leave will be in the contract of employment.

This gives you time. You will have to think about getting another personal assistant.

It is good if the assistant who is leaving can meet the new assistant. It will help the new one learn about the job.
The assistant who is leaving must give you back any keys.

You need to keep a note or record of:

- holiday leave
- sick leave or time off sick
- times when they have not turned up
- any time you have followed the rules to talk about problems with your assistant
■ about the job ending

■ any notes about race, sex, religion, age or disability.

For more information call ACAS: 0300 123 1100

or go to: www.acas.org.uk
If you would like this toolkit in a different format please contact Skills for Care:

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