

What should you pay for your services?

Do you have to pay for your services?



Your council can ask you to pay some money towards your services.

We call this charging.



Councils are getting less money from the government than they used to so some have started charging people more for their services.

Your council can decide how much they charge you but there are some rules they have to stick to.

How does the council decide how much you have to pay?



Your council must look at how much you can afford to pay before they decide what to charge you.



They will look at what money you have coming in, like disability benefits.



They will also look at any money you might have saved up.

If you have lots of money saved up you might have to pay for all your services.



The council cannot count any money you earn from working.

The council also cannot count money from some benefits, like the mobility part of DLA.



The council cannot count your family's money or ask them to pay for your services, even if you live at home.



After counting how much money you have the council will look at how much you spend on things like food and bills.



They will also look at how much you spend on things because of your disability, like transport or equipment.

After looking at all this the council will decide how much you can afford to pay.



They must leave you with enough money to live on.

What does the council have to do when charging you?



Firstly they must ask you what you think before they bring in a new charge or increase a charge.



They must also see if there are other ways you can get money that you might not know about.

They must give you advice on this.



If you do not agree with a charge and you complain, the council has to keep providing your services while it is sorted out.

They must not leave you without support that you need because you cannot afford to pay.



What do you do if you cannot afford to pay charges?

You should show the council that the money you have coming is not enough to pay the charges as well as things like food and bills.



If the council does not listen you can challenge the charge officially.

The council should tell you how to do this.



What should you do if you have questions?

You can contact the Mencap Direct Helpline.

They are there to give you information and advice.



You can contact them

By phone on 0808 808 1111



By email at help@mencap.org.uk



By textphone on 18001 0808 808 1111



By text on 0771 7989 029

or by post at

Mencap Direct Helpline

Mencap

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