



THE FINANCE CARE SERVICE  
"A Helping Hand"

## REFERRALS PROCEDURE & APPOINTEE PROCEDURES/POLICIES

January 2023

### THANK YOU

Thank you for your referral to the Finance Care Service (FCS).

We take great pride and care in what we do in supporting vulnerable adults so may we now ask that you carefully consider the information below which sets out how we operate, the next steps in the referral process, our duties and policies as well as listing information we may need from you (such as information on bills, benefits and property). Should you have any questions then please contact us.

### VERY IMPORTANT

The process of setting up the Appointeeship may take a number of weeks so it is very important that the Client has sufficient funds for 8 weeks to support their needs so as to not temporarily run out of funds. Please ensure that steps have been taken to provide the Client with financing until our formal appointment is in place. We will confirm to you once we are appointed.

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## **1. THE REFERRAL PROCEDURE OVERVIEW**

### **STEPS**

- 1. Referral is received from Social Worker, Carer, Local Authority, Care/Nursing Home or Other;**
- 2. Form DWP BF56 completed by FCS Appointee;**
- 3. Completed form DWP BF56 sent to DWP for appointment;**
- 4. Notification Order BF57 received from the DWP confirming FCS appointment;**
- 5. Managed bank account setup for Client to receive welfare benefits payments;**
- 6. Benefits agencies/others (such as utilities providers) contacted regarding FCS involvement and provided with updated bank details.**

## **2. IMPORTANT INFORMATION NEEDED**

- ✓ DWP Benefits Correspondence/Information (DLA, PIP, Pension, ESA information, etc);
- ✓ Care Fee correspondence (Local Authority, Care provider, Domiciliary Carers, etc);
- ✓ Utility Bills (If relevant, Gas, Electricity, Water, Telephone, Internet);
- ✓ Mortgage/Rent Account Details (If relevant, Mortgage provider or Housing Association);
- ✓ Insurer Details (If relevant, Home, Contents, Life Policies or Funeral Plan);
- ✓ Any other information determined relevant that we should be aware of;

## **3. TEAMWORK AND AN IMPORTANT NOTE**

Throughout step 1 (above) and beyond we are reliant on the information provided by the Referrer (and or others involved) in the Vulnerable Adult's circle of care. The information is necessary to ensure the Corporate Appointeeship is put in place quickly and correctly so the setup/transfer of money management responsibilities can commence correctly/efficiently.

We pride ourselves on always being approachable. It is important that we can obtain information quickly and efficiently. We believe the key to this to be clear communication. Please always feel free to pick up the phone and ask us any questions you may have. We are here to help.

If we need to speak to you we will always try to telephone before emails are sent. If we are unable to obtain any information that results in us being unable to carry out our responsibilities as Corporate Appointee, we may instruct a Social Worker or Visiting Officer to visit our Client and their support circle to obtain the information needed, however many of those referred make it difficult to obtain the information from the Client directly given their disabilities or vulnerabilities, so we will always try to approach the circle of care and indeed you first.

The referral process does not end once the Vulnerable Adult's referral form is submitted and we may need further information as matters progress. Even when the Corporate Appointeeship is in place we may need still need to ask question about the Client's circumstances so we will continue to communicate with you as required/requested. We believe teamwork is vital.

## **4. THE ROLE OF AN APPOINTEE**

The following explanation is given for the role of Appointee on the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) website:

*"As an appointee you're responsible for making and maintaining any benefit claims. You must:*

- *sign the benefit claim form*
- *tell the benefit office about any changes which affect how much the claimant gets*
- *spend the benefit (which is paid directly to you) in the claimant's best interests*
- *tell the benefit office if you stop being the appointee, for example the claimant can now manage their own affairs*

*If the benefit is overpaid, depending on the circumstances, you could be held responsible."*

The DWP narrative is a general overview, in reality the position is more complicated which we will explain more about below.

## **5. APPOINTEE LEGAL AUTHORITIES- BANKS AND UTILITY PROVIDERS**

**Appointee Bank Account** (to be setup for receipt of benefits payments) An Appointee has the legal authority to manage welfare benefits monies in the Client's best interests. The Appointee bank account will be used to manage receipt of welfare benefits and to make payments on behalf of the Client. As part of their due diligence for money laundering, financial crime and other regulatory requirements the bank may perform searches.

**Private Bank Accounts** (Barclays, Natwest, TSB, HSBC, Post Office, Etc) An Appointee is only granted legal authority to manage welfare benefits monies and matters as set out above. Generally, we are unable to directly access private bank accounts belonging to our Clients, however in some instances, we will try to liaise with the bank as required to access amassed benefits monies that have accrued over time. One exception to this rule are Post Office accounts, which may be accessible providing the appropriate mandates are registered.

**Utility Companies** (Water, Gas, Electricity, Internet, Telephone, etc) are not legally obliged to acknowledge an Appointee. This can cause issues if we are trying to contact the provider for account details so as to arrange payments or query payment histories, which is why it is very important we are provided with the account details (if known) at the commencement of the Appointeeship.

If the Client is able to, we may sometimes ask them to sign a form of authority form to forward to the provider which should work as permission for us to discuss and manage the account.

**Private Pension** providers are not legally obliged to recognise the authority of an Appointee. However we will always liaise with the provider and can often be able to arrange for the payment into the Appointeeship Account.

**When a Client Dies** our legal authority to act ceases. We will liaise with an Executor and or family members as required to ensure information is provided regarding the deceased Client's bank account(s)/financial position. If no will has been made, or there are no next of kin or family members, we will assist with obtaining funeral funds from the Client's account and will provide information as necessary. The bank will release funds on provision of the relevant paperwork. Although our role formally ends on death, we appreciate this can be a challenging time and do not charge fees for assisting with these matters (within reason).

## **6. ACCESS TO BENEFITS FUNDS (CARERS/CARE HOME/ CLIENT)**

To provide access to funds for the benefit of our Client, an Appointee bank account will be opened once the Appointeeship Order has been received. This account enables us to receive the welfare benefits money, itemise the monies received, manage the monies and to make payment of bills. It also enables us to provide funds to either the Client's carer(s) or the Client themselves in a controlled manner.

As many of our Clients are supported by carers who undertake shopping duties, a shopper's card account can also be setup along with the Appointee account. A shopper's card will be given to the carer/care home/ Client (spends card) along with a PIN number. Monies will then be transferred, as required pursuant to a budget (normally weekly or monthly), between the Appointee account and the shoppers account pursuant to the Client's needs. The shopper's card absolves the need for the carers to carry cash and spending can be tracked. The Shopper's Card is essentially a pay as you go card and once the funds have been used no further funds can be accessed until it has been reloaded. The card may also be used to access cash from cash machines if necessary.

The carer(s)/care homes will be responsible for the use of their cards and are required to retain all receipts as we may request these at a later date for auditing.

The accounts will be checked by the Finance Care Service and monies in and out will be monitored, documented and audited as necessary.

## **7. INBOUND (CARER/CLIENT) CONTACT POLICY**

We will always do our best to answer any questions or specific requests on initial approach from Clients, circles of care or Referrers. We pride ourselves on our positive attitude in pursuance of helping others, so appreciate that sometimes answers are needed quickly.

However (unusual), if for any reason we are unable to deal with your request on initial approach we will do our best to respond to those requests as quickly as possible and normally within 48 hours. Any unreasonable, excessive or duplicated contact requests will be dealt with as soon as reasonably practicable.

## **8. ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

We appreciate that some Client's may have challenging behaviour and understand that such behaviour requires patience and care. We will always try to be empathetic and compassionate, however we will not accept any repeated abusive or disrespectful telephone calls or conduct and if such conduct endures then we will request that subsequent contact is made via Carers, Social Workers or Care Home Managers.

## **9. FINANCIAL INFORMATION, CLIENT PRIVACY AND DATA PROTECTION**

So as to safeguard our Client's privacy and in consideration of data protection legislation, it is our policy not to send financial information directly to our Clients as vulnerable adults.

If financial information is required by a third party involved in the support of our Client, then a written request will be needed setting out why the request is being made. This request will be considered by the Finance Care Service and a decision will usually be made within 48 hours from the date of request receipt. It is our policy to help all of those involved with our Client's life as far as reasonably practicable and in their best interests.

## **10. FINANCIAL INFORMATION, FINANCIAL ASSESSMENTS FOR CARE CONTRIBUTIONS**

Should a Financial Assessment need to be carried out by a Local Authority (for assessment of the Client's financial status in relation to care and funding) then we will assist/provide this information in line with our role as Appointee. The information will be provided solely for the purposes of financial assessment and in the best interests of the Client.

## **11. SPENDING MONEY- BUDGETING AND FORWARD PLANNING**

Once the Appointeeship has been confirmed by the DWP and we have sufficient information to make informed decisions, our Client's financial position will be considered (in light of care bills, utility bills, household bills, money in bank and forward planning) and a weekly budget will be set in conjunction with the Client and/or their circle of care. A payment date will then be set and the money transfers will be diarised.

## **12. SPENDING MONEY- ADDITIONAL MONEY REQUESTS**

We understand that sometimes additional monies may need to be requested by our Client's or person's within their circle of care (for the benefit of our Client) over and above the regular budgeted amounts.

Should the situation arise, each request for additional money will be considered on its benefits by the nominated Appointee and a decision will be taken as to whether to grant the request. This decision may need confirmation by a Social Worker, Support Worker or Occupational Health Specialist dependant on what it relates to, particularly if it relates to equipment or an alteration to living arrangements. We usually require such requests in writing or via email setting out the requested sum and what it will be used for.

## **13. THIRD PARTY PURCHASE REQUESTS- EQUIPMENT/DECORATING/HOLIDAYS**

Should we be required to make payment to a third party (aside from utility providers, Carers or Care homes) such as equipment suppliers/decorators/holiday companies not already setup the in the first instance, then the request for payment will need be made in writing or via email and we ask the request to be made at least 7 days before any payment is due. Should the payment request be in excess of £900 then we will normally (except holidays) request 3 quotes. If the payment request is in respect of equipment or alternation to any living arrangements then either an Occupational Health Specialist, Support Worker or Social Worker may need to be consulted before approval of any request. The request will be considered and a subsequent decision will be taken as to whether to grant the request.

#### 14. CLIENT VISITING

We wish to keep our fees low and our fee structure relates to our office based operation. It may be that a home visit will be required in order to obtain important information needed to correctly support/understand the best interests of our Clients. We may therefore work with independent visiting officers, independent Social Workers and/or other professionals who can carry out visits as needed and complete tasks/carry out reports accordingly. Such visits will be reasonably chargeable.

#### 15. SERVICE COSTS

The fees associated with our office based service for **April 2023** onwards are:-

##### **If a Carer's (Shopping) Card if NOT Required:-**

Nursing Home/Residential Care Home Based Service Client (3 items below): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Monthly Management Fee- £44.00</li><li>✓ One Time Administration Fee- £145.00</li><li>✓ Relinquishment Administration Fee- £100.00</li></ul>	Community Based Service Client (3 items below): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Monthly Management Fee- £77.00</li><li>✓ One Time Administration Fee- £145.00</li><li>✓ Relinquishment Administration Fee- £100.00</li></ul>
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##### **If a separate Carer's Card (Shopping) IS Required:-**

Nursing Home/Residential Care Home Based Service Client (4 items below): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Monthly Management Fee- £44.00</li><li>✓ Monthly Card Fee- £5.00 (+£2 provider fee)</li><li>✓ One Time Administration Fee- £145.00</li><li>✓ Relinquishment Administration Fee- £100.00</li></ul>	Community Based Service Client (4 items below): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Monthly Management Fee- £77.00</li><li>✓ Monthly Card Fee- £5.00 (+£2 provider fee)</li><li>✓ One Time Administration Fee- £145.00</li><li>✓ Relinquishment Administration Fee- £100.00</li></ul>
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We are able to use the Client's own bank account for deposit of spends shopping, should the circumstances permit.

We reserve the right to incur and charge additional fees for services undertaken to support our Clients outside of regular office based service. Examples of additional work may include (not an exhaustive list):-

- ✓ Attending best interests meetings or other meeting that are held in pursuance of best interests decisions;
- ✓ Property visits to search for important documentation such as wills, deeds or financial information;
- ✓ Property visits to meet estate agents, meet locksmiths, compile inventory or utility provider services as required;
- ✓ Social Worker home visits to complete benefit application forms or to compile best interest annual reports, safeguarding reports, etc;
- ✓ Any other service above and beyond the office based service that is reasonably required to enable the Finance Care Service to act in the Client's best interests (such as attending at banks/building societies in person to determine finances).

Our Appointee is a Solicitor (non-practising) and our fees outside of the normal office based monthly fee are £70.00 per hour plus reasonably incurred expenses (such as travel) as required. We reserve the right to reconsider our applicable fees every calendar January to March, for application from April onwards. Any fee increase will always be reasonable, in-line with inflation, in-line with operational costs and in-line with annual benefits increases.

#### 16. RELINQUISHMENT OF THE APPOINTEESHIP

If a request is to be made for the Client to manage their own welfare benefit responsibilities following our appointment then we will require confirmation in writing from a Social Worker or suitably qualified NHS Health Professional that the Client has capacity and the capability to manage their monies. The reason for this being, for us to comply with the DWP Appointee responsibilities we will need be satisfied that the Client is able to manage their legal responsibilities and welfare benefits. Following the instruction to relinquish we may ask the DWP to arrange for a Visiting Officer to meet the Client and satisfy their own criterion. In the interim and until the time of relinquishment we will continue to act.

If a request is received for a transfer of Appointeeship, a copy of the DWP BF57 document will be required from the new Appointee to allow us to release any monies held. Our costs will be billed accordingly and reasonably.

## **17. OPENING TIMES AND DAYS**

It is important that we are easily contactable and responsive to inbound inquiries. We are open throughout the week between Monday to Friday between the hours of 10.00am to 5.00pm for inbound contact.

We are closed for Bank Holidays.

A downloadable referral form is available on our website at [www.financecareservice.org](http://www.financecareservice.org)

An electronic referral can be made via our website also.

If you have any questions please call us on 0161 973 5759 or email [info@financecareservice.org](mailto:info@financecareservice.org)

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