

What councils can and can not do when changing your services



The government is giving less money to every council.

This means councils will have less money to spend.



Councils want to save money by stopping some services or spending less money on them.

Services are things like day centres and care homes.



This means that some people with a learning disability will not get the care and support they need.

For example

- some day care centres may close
- less people might get respite/short breaks



You need to know if your council is doing what it should do. If it is not, you should complain.

What councils CAN do



1. Councils can change the rules on who can use services. This can make it harder for people with less serious disabilities to get the support they need.
2. Councils can change the services they give. For example they can close day care centres and cut down the hours when services are open.
3. Councils can start giving you a 'personal budget' or 'direct payment'. This is where you are given money to choose the services you want rather than the council choosing for you.



What councils HAVE TO do



1. Councils have to have another look at what you need before they change your services.
2. Councils have to put together a clear plan saying what support you should get and how you should get it. You have the right to see this.



3. Councils have to give you the services that are right for you. They can not say that they do not have a service at the time you need it. This is against the law.



4. Councils have to listen to where you want to live when they are planning your services.



5. Councils have to change to a 'personal budgets' scheme only if it makes your services better, not just to save money.

What councils SHOULD do



1. Councils should ask you what you think if they are changing your services in a big way.

2. Councils should make it easy for you to have a say about any big changes to your services.



What should I do if I have any questions?
You can contact the Mencap Direct Helpline.

They are there to give you information and advice.

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
3rd floor
Delta View
2309-2311 Coventry Road
Birmingham
B26 3PG

Help us change things!



Lots of people with a learning disability may stop getting the support they need.

Mencap is working to stop this happening.

There is more information about what you can do to help in our booklet called *Don't Cut us Out!*.



For more information on how you can help, contact the campaigns team on campaigns@mencap.org.uk or phone 0207 696 6952.