

Micro-Enterprise Programme Portsmouth Code of Good Practice

This document sets out the quality standards expected of the Portsmouth Micro-Enterprise Programme. Anyone wishing to join the Portsmouth Micro-Enterprise Programme and the Portsmouth Micro-Providers Directory must read, understand and agree to adhere to these standards. Members will be known as Micro Providers.

All members of the programme are responsible for ensuring that their conduct does not fall below the standards set out in this document and that they will safeguard the wellbeing of clients.

Please note that Portsmouth City Council cannot recommend or offer any assurance for any organisations/providers within the Portsmouth Micro-Enterprise Programme and are not responsible for how the organisations/providers deliver their services. Micro-Providers are NOT regulated by Portsmouth City Council, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) or any other authorised/regulated body.

The Micro-Enterprise fully aligns itself with the standards set out in the [Code of Conduct](#) for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers in England

Portsmouth Micro-Providers will be expected to provide services which are:

- Totally independent of any larger or umbrella organisation
- Small - Individual Sole Traders
- Local- Portsmouth based
- Offering support services that help people improve their independence, choice, control, health, and wellbeing
- Delivering a person-centred service
- Promoting diversity and equality of opportunity
- Flexible and responsive to change

Portsmouth Micro-Enterprise Programme members must also ensure they understand and uphold [competition consumer protection laws that apply to all trading businesses](#).

Portsmouth Micro-Providers are committed to and confirm they are:

- Ensuring that their services are always run within the boundaries of any legal and regulatory requirements.
- Undertake activities to which they are qualified, experienced, and competent in.
- Continually improving the quality of the services, they offer
- Charging a fair price for their services.
- Offering people who use their services a clear cost breakdown by invoicing.
- Ensuring that their service is safe and follows safeguarding principles.

- Being open, honest, and trustworthy, always respecting confidential information.
- Providing a contract detailing their terms and conditions which must be signed whenever they take on a new customer.
- Providing evidence of any qualifications or training certificates when requested by the customer.
- Providing a service portfolio which should include a DBS certificate which is fit for purpose, Public Liability Insurance documents, complaints and compliments procedure, Support Plan template, Risk assessments, References, or testimonials of the services they have provided, qualification certificates and blank copies of their contracts.
- Honouring commitments, agreements, and arrangements to provide services and, where it is not possible to do so, give adequate notification explaining why.

Further Information and Guidance

Customer Commitment

Registered Micro-providers are within their right to remove themselves and their services without notice in the following instance's:

- If they are not paid within the agreed timescales
- If they are being asked to work in an unsafe environment
- If they are not treated with dignity and respect.
- If they are asked to co-ordinate or rota care and support and/ or provide regulated activities in an unregulated setting.
- If they are asked to provide services that they are not trained or competent in

Fair Pricing

All members of the Community Micro-enterprise Programme (CMEP) need to ensure they offer a clear, fair, consistent, and transparent price for their services.

Portsmouth City Council (2025-26) currently have 'set' rates for people who are eligible for council funded care. For people with a council funded Direct Payment this is currently £24.40 per hour for any CQC registered service and £18.00 for people employing a personal assistant or engaging with an unregulated Micro-provider.

Micro-providers, as independent businesses, can set their own rates. They do not hold the responsibility or have the overheads associated with a CQC regulated service.

There may be instances where providers may offer specialist services that can command a higher rate.

Mileage

CMEP members cannot charge to get to and from work. Mileage should only be charged when taking a customer out and about to enable them to access the community, appointments, or shopping. They can claim their business mileage back from HMRC on an annual basis at £0.55 per mile but they must have business car insurance to be able to do this.

Retainers & Notice Periods

Registered Micro-providers are to have contracts with their customers to include procedures for absence/holidays and ending the agreements with acceptable notice periods. (An acceptable notice period would be between 7 and 14 days unless the Quality Standards have been breached). They cannot charge a notice period if the customer has given them the correct amount of notice stated in their contract.

In the event a client/ customer passes away, in alignment with other care provision (domiciliary care/ residential care) Micro-providers are not to charge a notice period, and the contract will cease upon death.

Contingency Planning

It is expected that all Micro-providers have contingency plans in place to cover emergencies. They must keep in regular contact with family or neighbours who were involved in the plan. They can provide a list of other providers from the local community to the customer detailing who the customer could use as a substitute. Micro-providers substitute cover should be directed by the customer with any providers that they choose, the micro-provider should not arrange this. The contingency plan should be shared with all parties involved.

Holiday Cover/Sickness

The Micro-provider should, where possible give reasonable notice of holiday, enabling the client to arrange their own cover for the absence of the Micro-provider. Sickness contingency plans should be pre-planned with the client and logged within the contingency plan.

Employment Status (for self-employed Micro-providers)

Micro-providers should present proof of self-employment to customers when it's requested.

A Micro-provider must be sure of their self-employment status. There are a series of factors which determine a lawful self-employment status result and only HMRC can

provide this. They should have a CEST tool result that they can show you which they would complete here: [Check employment status for tax - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-employment-status-for-tax)

Micro-provider portfolio

- Micro-providers should have a professional portfolio as a comprehensive collection of their best work and letters of recommendation for potential clients. The portfolio should contain
- Enhanced DBS Check (withing 3 years of date)
- Public Liability Insurance / Business Car Insurance
- Terms of Service (or Contract / Agreement)
- References and / or testimonials
- Relevant Training and Qualifications
- Safeguarding, Complaints & compliments, GDPR policy
- Support Plan template
- Proof of Self Employment.

Micro-providers and Regulation

Micro-providers who intend to deliver 'personal care' (as defined by the [Care Quality Commission](https://www.cqc.org.uk)) must ensure they are either registered with CQC, or meet the criteria for exemption as stated in the following CQC guidance:

[Personal care: ongoing role, introductory agencies and individual care workers - Care Quality Commission \(cqc.org.uk\)](https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance/publications/personal-care-ongoing-role-introductory-agencies-and-individual-care-workers)

For example: "Providing personal care where a person, or a related third party on their behalf, makes their own arrangement for personal care and the care worker works directly for them and under their control without an agency or business involved in managing or directing the care provided", is exempt from registration and regulation by CQC.

"It is possible for two or more individual care workers to provide care to a shared person receiving care by coordinating with each other without this being classed as a legal partnership. 'Coordination' means a group of care workers all working under the separate instruction of their client. For example, jointly agreeing when they attend and what they will do.

Each worker must have a separate contract with the person receiving care. The person receiving care must still control arrangements to cover absence when a care worker cannot attend. They must also clearly set out their care requirements that are provided by each care worker they employ."

Should a Micro-provider be found to be operating an unregulated care service that should be regulated they will be immediately removed from the Portsmouth Micro Provider Register and reported to the Care Quality Commission.

The Micro-enterprise Programme does not consider unregulated 'introductory agencies' as an eligible service type to join the programme.

For more information on Regulation, please contact the CQC on 03000 61 61 61 or visit [What is registration webpage](#).

Micro-providers and Medication

Micro-providers may only assist with medication under the direction of the person receiving care or their legal representative. The following requirements must be met:

- A formal request must be provided in writing.
- An authorisation form must be signed by the person receiving care or their legal representative.
- This written consent must clearly outline the support being requested.

The request must set out exactly what the Micro-provider is required to do, in clear and specific terms. Example:

“Take inhaler from fridge at 12 noon and assist in using the inhaler by pressing down the button while the person breathes in.”

The Micro-provider must check whether any specialist training is required to safely carry out the medication support.

Where training is needed, this must be completed before providing support.

The agreed instructions and signed authorisation must be attached to the Service Agreement.

The Micro-provider must complete Medication Administration Records (MAR) for all medication support provided.

Micro-providers should follow the general guidance outlined above, and in addition, and even if a Micro-provider has been trained to administer invasive medication, they can only administer this medication under the supervision of a community health professional. This means that a community health professional has trained a Micro-provider in the use of this particular medication and is responsible for checking the correct administration.

You should talk to your insurance adviser about whether you will need extra cover because you are assisting with medication.

For further information please see: [Managing medicines for adults receiving social care in the community NICE guideline \[NG67\]](#)

Safeguarding Adults

All Micro-providers should be familiar with their responsibilities under the Portsmouth Safeguarding Adults Policy

This includes:

- Understanding how to recognise signs of abuse or neglect
- Knowing how to respond to safeguarding concerns
- Following the correct reporting procedures without delay
- Promoting the safety, wellbeing, and rights of the person receiving care at all times

Micro-providers must ensure they are aware of local procedures set out by the: Portsmouth Safeguarding Adults Board (PSAB)

- Further information and guidance can be found via Portsmouth Safeguarding Adults Board resources.

Portsmouth Safeguarding Adults Board

Mobility aids and equipment

Micro-providers must have formal training to use mobility aids and equipment. You must have a record of the training provided, signed by the person delivering the training. Client specific training can be provided by the person themselves and/or their family.

Micro-providers should check their insurance to make sure they are covered if there is an accident to their client when using the mobility aid

In return for your commitment to the Portsmouth Code of Good Practice Portsmouth City Council will:

- Provide advice and guidance to help make your enterprise safe, legal and sustainable.
- Signpost you to sources of specialist training and support.
- Review this document to drive a shared vision and expectations for quality services.
- Give you access to local work opportunities.
- Facilitate opportunities for you to connect and link with fellow Micro-providers and referrers.
- Collect feedback to evidence the impact, outcomes and quality of the services Portsmouth Micro-providers offer.

For further Information

Contact us at: Micro-enterprise@portsmouthcc.gov.uk