

---

# **Age Concern Central Lancashire**

---

Home Help Customer Agreement

---

Part A

---

**Contents**

The Home Help Service..... 2

Key conditions/ requirements of the service provision ..... 2

Delivering the service ..... 2

Changes to the service ..... 3

Charges ..... 3

VAT relief..... 3

Customer conditions ..... 4

Age Concern Central Lancashire conditions..... 4

Insurance..... 4

Liability..... 4

Behaviour policy ..... 5

Ending the agreement ..... 5

Post termination clause ..... 5

Complaints..... 5

## **The Home Help Service**

The Age Concern Central Lancashire Home Help Service is a low cost not for profit welfare service for older people residing within Central Lancashire which supports independent living.

The Home Help service provides the right amount of help in a timely manner to support individuals to maintain daily living within their own home. This high quality and value for money service can be tailored to meet individual's needs, the type of support could include;

- Cleaning, dusting, vacuuming, washing and ironing to help to keep on top of domestic chores around the home.
- We can either take customers shopping or take a shopping list and shop for customers, if they prefer. Sometimes it's difficult to get out to the shops, particularly in the cold weather or if the individual is feeling a little off-colour. We can also prepare snacks.
- Running errands: collecting a prescription or pension, posting a letter or taking out the rubbish.
- Our Home Helps can spend time with the customer doing whatever they feel like doing, providing the company and reassurance. Sometimes having someone to sit and chat can be just what is needed to brighten up someone's day.

This list is not exhaustive

As part of the initial assessment we will discuss the customers' needs with them and mutually agree what type of support they require and when they would like it.

## **Key conditions/ requirements of the service provision**

- There is a minimum package of one hour per week; additional hours can be purchased, along with additional variable hours.
- Fees are calculated on an agreed purchase of hours per week, multiplied by 48 weeks of the year. This figure is then divided into twelve equal instalments
- Payment for services agreed is by Direct Debit in advance with money collected on the first working day of every month
- All changes to the service must be done through the office and not through the Home Help staff.

This agreement for a Home Help Service is between Age Concern Central Lancashire and the customer/ or their authorised representative. The Home Help staff are employed directly by Age Concern Central Lancashire and are not allowed to undertake work directly for the customer. Should they undertake work privately this is a breach of their contract of employment and may result in disciplinary action and also negates any insurance cover in place by Age Concern Central Lancashire.

## **Delivering the service**

Age Concern Central Lancashire will endeavour to provide the service on the days we have agreed with the customer. Although we will aim to provide continuity of support we may need to change Home Help staff on occasions.

If customers require the Home Help staff to undertake an additional task to that already agreed they must give the Home Help staff the opportunity to contact the local office for authorisation prior to undertaking the task.

## Changes to the service

The only changes to this agreement, which will be valid, are changes that the customer has agreed and signed with the Age Concern Central Lancashire Independent Living Coordinator for Home Help services. We will give you a copy of these changes.

## Charges

Charges are agreed by the Board of Trustees on an annual basis and customers are notified by post of any changes giving 28 days' notice. For the majority of customers VAT is not charged as this is a welfare service. This will be discussed with the customer at the initial assessment. Charges are calculated on an hourly rate,

- Support within the home setting £15.50 + VAT
- Support outside of the home setting e.g. shopping £18.00\* + VAT

\* Within the £18.00 is a contribution towards travel costs. Additional travel costs may be charged for visits outside of a three mile radius of the customer's home.

Customers will still be charged for the service in the following circumstances:

- If the Home Help is not available and the customer refuses the offer of another Home Help, as we have an obligation to provide customers with cover
- If the customer cancels the visit or is not at home when the Home Help arrives for their appointment
- If the customer is in hospital or on holiday and wishes to reserve their appointment and their Home Help for when they come home
- If the customer gives the required notice to end the service and declines to have further visits.

Late payments may be subject to additional charges. All un-cleared accounts will be passed to our collections agency

If the customer does not have cleaning detergents and asks us to purchase requested items on their behalf, additional charges over and above the cost of the products will be charged.

## VAT relief

VAT law states that you must be 'chronically sick or disabled' to qualify for VAT relief. This means to qualify you must;

- have a physical or mental impairment that has a long-term and severe effect on your ability to carry out everyday activities
- have a condition that doctors treat as a chronic sickness (like diabetes, for example) or
- be terminally ill

A person with a temporary injury like a broken leg would not qualify, nor would a frail older person who was otherwise well and non-disabled.

If you are in any doubt as to whether you are eligible to receive goods or services zero-rated for VAT you should consult Notice 701/7 VAT reliefs for disabled people or contact the National Advice Service on 0845 010 9000 before signing the declaration.

## **Customer conditions**

- The customer accepts and understands that poor service, breakage/damage or theft must be reported within 24 hours from the service date. Failure to do so will entitle customer to no refunds or recovery cleanings.
- All fragile items must be secured or removed.
- If the customer has any equipment within their home that the Home Help staff will be using it is the customer's responsibility to ensure the equipment is serviced on a regular basis. In order to comply with Health and Safety at work law the staff may require training to use the equipment. This will be agreed with the customer at the initial assessment and included in their risk assessment.
- Customers must agree to provide a task list and all necessary cleaning detergents and equipment for the required work, unless other arrangements have been made with Age Concern Central Lancashire. All cleaning products must be stored within the original container; failure to comply will result in the Home Help not being permitted to use the product.

## **Age Concern Central Lancashire conditions**

- If we are unable to provide a Home Help at the agreed time this will be communicated to the customer at the first available opportunity and an alternative timeslot will be offered.
- If we are unable to provide appropriate cover due to unforeseen reasons, i.e. staff absence the Independent Living Coordinator for the Home Help service may agree to credit the customer's account for up to a maximum of four weeks.

## **Insurance**

- Age Concern Central Lancashire holds a Public and Employer's liability insurance. The policy will cover any accidental damages caused by a member of staff working on behalf of the organisation providing it is reported within 24 hours of service date.
- There is £250 excess on any claim; this will be paid by Age Concern Central Lancashire.

## **Liability**

Items excluded from liability are: cash, jewellery, items of sentimental value (the customer will be credited with the items present cash value), art and antiques.

Age Concern Central Lancashire reserves the right not to be liable for:

- Completing tasks which are not stated on in agreed task list;
- Cleaning jobs not complete due to the lack of suitable cleaning detergents and/or equipment in full working order, hot water or power;
- A third party entering or present at the customer's premises during the cleaning process;
- Wear or discolouration of fabric becoming more visible once dirt has been removed;
- Failing to remove old/permanent stains that cannot be removed using standard cleaning methods;
- Existing damage or spillage that cannot be cleaned/removed completely using cleaning detergents and equipment or standard carpet cleaning equipment provided by the customer
- Any damages caused by a faulty detergents/equipment supplied by the customer.

## **Behaviour policy**

In compliance with Health and Safety law, Age Concern Central Lancashire will not allow its staff to be subjected to abusive behaviour of any nature and reserves the right that staff leave the premises forthwith, therefore terminating this agreement with immediate effect. Should a situation require an investigation, this will be carried out by the Independent Living Manager with the outcomes reported to the appropriate persons.

Age Concern Central Lancashire has a No Smoking Policy. This policy forbids staff to smoke whilst visiting customers at home. Also included in this policy is a request that customers using the organisations services must NOT smoke whilst the staff member is visiting them. Customers who do not respect this requirement will not have Age Concern Central Lancashire services provided to them.

Customers must not ask the Home Help for their personal telephone number

Home Help Staff are not allowed to perform any personal care or administer medication

## **Ending the agreement**

The customer can end this agreement by giving Age Concern Central Lancashire at least one month's notice in writing.

If the customer cancels the Direct Debit with their bank but continues to use the service, the customer will be liable for the full cost of the Home Help service and be invoiced accordingly

Age Concern Central Lancashire can end this agreement:

- If the customer has not paid the invoice after four weeks
- At the end of the one month's notice we have given to you in writing or
- Immediately if we cannot be certain of the safety of our staff while they are working at the customers' home, because of something the customer does do or fail to do.

## **Post termination clause**

By entering into a service agreement with Age Concern Central Lancashire, the customer agrees that after the termination of the Home Help Service he/she will not hire or use any domestic services provided by a present or past Home Help introduced to the customer by Age Concern Central Lancashire. If the customer wishes to hire or use domestic services provided by such a Home Help then he/she must pay a referral fee of £400.

## **Complaints**

As an organisation we aim to provide quality services and strive to continuously improve and develop our services for the benefit of all our customers. In order to help us to evaluate and improve the Home Help service, we would very much appreciate your comments and experience of that service, this includes any complaints. You can do this through the local office on 01772 552850 and ask to speak to the Independent Living Manager or the Complaints Officer.