



BEING THERE WHEN IT MATTERS

Supporting someone with a lasting power of attorney



WHAT IS A LASTING POWER OF ATTORNEY?

A lasting power of attorney (LPA) is a legal document. It allows someone to choose a person they trust to make decisions on their behalf if they're ever unable to.

This could be due to an accident, an illness, or just a time in life when making decisions feels difficult. An LPA means they stay in control by deciding who can step in — and when. If someone has chosen you for this role, it means they trust you to be there for them when it matters.

There are two types of LPA. The person you are supporting may have one or both.

Health and Welfare LPA

This LPA covers decisions about medical care, daily routine, and future living arrangements. It can only be used if the person is unable to make these decisions themselves.

Property and Financial Affairs LPA

This LPA covers paying bills, managing bank accounts or pensions, and selling a home. It can be used as soon as it is registered, with the person's permission.

To make an LPA, a person needs to be 18 or over and able to make their own decisions at the time of application. Only they can make their own LPA — you can not do this on their behalf.



What about 'next of kin'?

You might expect that being 'next of kin' would automatically allow you to make decisions for those closest to you — but this isn't the case.

Without an LPA, no one, not even family, can act on someone's behalf if they can't make decisions for themselves. This includes accessing bank accounts, making care choices, or handling other affairs. An LPA makes this possible.





BEING PREPARED

While the person you're supporting (**donor**) can still make their own decisions, you won't usually need to act. We understand this new role might feel daunting at first, but there are a few simple things you can do now to feel more prepared.

- **Plan ahead where possible:** Have open conversations about what matters to them, including care choices, finances, gifting, or future plans. Knowing their wishes now will help you feel more confident if you ever need to act quickly or in an emergency.
- **Know where important information is kept:** For example, details of bank accounts, pensions, property, or key contacts.
- **Know how to prove your role:** Services like 'Use a lasting power of attorney' or certified copies can make this easier.
- **Let organisations know early:** You don't have to wait until you need to use the LPA. Letting banks or other services know it exists now can make things much smoother when the time comes.



i

What is a 'donor'?

A donor is the person who has created the LPA.



BEING THERE

You may need to step in if the person you're supporting is unable to make decisions for themselves. This is called 'loss of mental capacity', and it can be hard to recognise. If you're ever unsure, a healthcare professional can support you with this.

Whenever possible, you should support your donor in making their own choices. Before acting on their behalf, consider:

- **THINK**
Is this what your donor would have wanted?
- **CHECK**
Can you help your donor make this decision by explaining things differently – using pictures, simpler language or a different approach?
- **REMEMBER**
Every decision must be done in your donor's best interests

You may need to talk to organisations, manage finances, or make care decisions, depending on the type of LPA. Taking a moment to think through each choice can help you feel more confident in your role.

It can also help to keep a note of the decisions you make and the money you spend on their behalf. This can be useful if you ever need to refer back to these choices later.

USING AN LPA ONLINE

A simple and secure way to share your role

Instead of paper copies, you can prove you're an attorney by sharing a secure access code. It's a simple way to show organisations you have the right to act.

Places like banks and care providers can use the code to check your role before sharing information with you. This is often quicker and can make things easier when you need support fast.

To get started, you'll need an activation key. This is posted to you when the LPA is registered. If you can't find it, you can ask for a new one through the 'Use a lasting power of attorney' service.

Find out more: www.gov.uk/guidance/getting-started-with-use-an-lpa

Office of the Public Guardian
PO Box 16185
Birmingham
B2 2WH
United Kingdom

Email: customerservices@publicguardian.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 456 0300

Scan for more attorney
and LPA guidance

