

Your Personal Information and how we use it.

Sunderland City Council's Advice Services Development Team needs to collect information about you to help us offer welfare rights advice and information, to provide you with the best possible support.

We will only use information collected lawfully in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and future UK Data Protection legislation.

We will not use any information we hold about you for any purpose other than that for which it was collected, unless we have obtained your consent beforehand.

What information do we collect?

We collect information about you, your family and financial circumstances. This enables us to assess your entitlement and provide the appropriate support that you require. This information may be recorded in writing, or electronically on a computer, or a mixture of both.

The type of information we will collect:-

- Personal information (such as name and address, family details)
- The reasons why you are seeking advice
- Appropriate income/ financial information
- Information regarding any debts
- Health information
- Religious or similar beliefs
- Racial or ethnic origin
- Housing tenure

How is the information we collect used to help you?

The information we collect may be used to help you in the following ways:

- To identify any benefits/ tax credit entitlement
- To support a claim to benefit
- To support you to help you to improve your circumstances
- To help challenge a decision you / we think is wrong

Do we share information about you with anyone?

There are times when it will be appropriate for us to share relevant information with other agencies/organisations to help us work together for your benefit. We may share your information with the following main partners, and they may share it with us to support your claim:

- GPs
- NHS professionals
- Department of Work and Pensions

- Council Departments
- Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs
- Housing and Council Tax Benefits Service
- Housing Providers/Landlords
- Welfare Rights Service (Specialist service)
- Other Advice agencies
- Support groups / agencies that could help you
- Creditors

We do not share information about you with anyone without your consent unless the law requires or allows us to do so. We will always seek your positive consent to share information if there is no legal basis to share.

In all cases where we must pass on information, we will only share the minimum amount of information required and will use the most secure method to transfer; wherever possible data will be pseudonymised (i.e. does not identify you personally) or encrypted.

The lawful basis on which we use this information

We need to collect and use your personal data in order to comply with the relevant local policy for providing welfare rights advice and information. This local policy includes the:

- First Tier Welfare Rights Contract Specification & Monitoring Framework
- Delivery Agreement with the DWP
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Our lawful basis for processing is therefore as we have a statutory obligation as defined by Article 6(1)(c) of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Some of the information we need to hold is classed as special category information - primarily ethnicity, gender and any health conditions. Our lawful basis for processing this data is provided by Article 9(2)(h) of GDPR - the provision of health or social care.

How we look after your information

All information is held securely with physical, organisational and electronic access controls to ensure it is secure both at rest and when in transit.

How long we will look after your information

We will keep information in line with Sunderland City Council's [Retention Schedule](#) for the Advice Services Development Team, and we will only keep it as long as we need it. When we no longer need your information it will be destroyed securely by deletion of electronic records and shredding of paper files.

Requesting access to your personal data

You can find out if we hold any personal information about you by making a 'subject access request' under the General Data Protection Regulation.

In addition, you have the right to request the rectification or erasure of your personal data, and to object to, or request restriction of, processing your data.

If you have any concern about the way we are collecting or using your personal information, we request that you raise your concern with us in the first instance.

Alternatively, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

Further information

<https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/information-charter>
<https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/data-protection>

Contact Us

Data Protection Officer
Sunderland City Council
Civic Centre
Sunderland
SR2 7DN

Email: Data.Protection@sunderland.gov.uk

Tel: 0191 5205555