

# Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton Privacy Policy

At Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton, we collect and use your personal information to help solve your problems, improve our services and tackle wider issues in society that affect people's lives.

This privacy policy explains how we use your information and what your rights are. We handle and store your personal information in line with data protection law and our confidentiality policy. The following pages tell you more about how we use your information in more detail.

## Our network

Citizens Advice is a membership organisation made up of the national Citizens Advice charity and many local offices across England and Wales, including Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton. Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton is an independent charity and a member of the national Citizens Advice charity.

All members of the Citizens Advice network are responsible for keeping your personal information safe and making sure data protection law is followed.

Members of the network also run some jointly designed services and use some of the same systems to process your personal data. In these instances we are joint data controllers for these activities.

## Jointly controlled data

All offices in the Citizens Advice network use some joint systems to carry out our activities. These include joint case management systems, telephony platforms and more.

Staff from a different local Citizens Advice can only access your personal information in a joint system if they have a good reason. For example when:

- you go to a different office to seek advice
- more than one office is working together in partnership
- they need to investigate a complaint or incident

We have rules and controls in place to stop people accessing or using your information when they shouldn't.

Tell an adviser if you're worried about your details being on a national system. We'll work with you to take extra steps to protect your information - for example by recording your problem without using your name.

National Citizens Advice has a [privacy notice](#) available on their website that covers general advice and nationally managed systems, including our case management systems. This policy covers the processing we carry out in our office.

## How we use your data for advice

This section covers how we use your data to provide you with advice.

For general advice and nationally funded advice programmes please see the national Citizens Advice [privacy notice](#).

## **How we collect your information**

When we provide advice we either collect this data directly from you or receive it through a referral from a partner organisation.

We collect information in several ways, including:

- When you contact us – in person, by phone, by video, email, webchat, or through online forms
- Through third parties – if you've been referred to us by another organisation with your consent

## **What information we collect**

To support your enquiry we collect information about you and your circumstances. You can choose which information you give us, but not providing certain information may limit the advice we can give you. This may include:

- your name - you can ask to remain unnamed but this may limit the advice we are able to provide
- contact details such as your address, phone number and email address
- profile information such as your date of birth and whether you have any accessibility requirements

We will also collect any information about your issue which could help us provide you with advice which can include:

- information about your finances - for example your income, expenditure, debts, benefits or pension
- credit reports - we may get copies of your credit history with your permission
- details of the products or services you are having issues with
- details of your housing such as your rent, mortgage and housing conditions
- information about your health or disability
- details of any discrimination you face

If you contact us by phone we will also record the phone call for training and monitoring purposes.

You may also be asked to provide demographic information at your advice session. This will not affect the advice you receive and will be used to understand more about our service. For more information see the section on statistical processing.

## **Information about third party individuals**

We may also gather information about you if you aren't one of our clients. We will do this if it is relevant to provide a client with advice. For example, to assist a client with a debt assessment we will need relevant financial information about members of their household.

## What we use your information for

We use the information you give us to:

- provide you with advice, guidance and information
- stay in touch with you about the advice we are providing
- help with applications such as a debt recovery order or benefit claim
- training our staff and volunteers
- assess the quality of our advice
- investigate complaints or claims
- get feedback from you about our services
- help us improve our services
- address the root causes of the issue you are experiencing
- share stories about your experience with Citizens Advice, with your permission

We may also record any unacceptable behaviour from clients if we deem this to cause disruption to our service or threaten the wellbeing of our staff, volunteers or any other person.

In some circumstances we may also use your information to carry out legal obligations, including for:

- safeguarding
- fraud prevention
- regulatory compliance

## Our confidentiality policy

At Citizens Advice we have a confidentiality policy which states that anything you tell us as part of advice will not be shared outside of the Citizens Advice network, unless you provide your permission for us to do so.

There are some exceptions to this such as needing to share:

- to prevent an immediate risk of harm to an individual
- in select circumstances if it is in the best interests of the client
- where we are compelled to do so by law - for example a court order or meeting statutory disclosures
- where there is an overriding public interest, such as to prevent harm against someone or to investigate a crime
- to defend against a complaint or legal claim
- to protect our name and reputation - for example to provide our side of a story reported in the press

There are also some services which may be exempt from this policy. For example there are some services which we deliver jointly with partner organisations using joint systems. Where this is the case you will always be advised of this when you are seeking advice.

## **Who we share your information with**

In addition to the categories of recipients below, we may also ask to refer you to another organisation who we think will be able to provide you with more support. We will ask your permission to make any such referral.

### **Referral partners**

We will share your information with partners when we want to refer you to another service. This may be as part of a jointly run service or where we believe another organisation may be better placed to provide you with the advice you need. We will only make a referral when you have given us your permission to do so.

Some established referral partners include:

- The Extra Help Unit - run by Citizens Advice Scotland who manage complaints with energy suppliers on behalf of people who may be considered vulnerable or at risk of disconnection
- Trussell Trust - to issue you with a food bank voucher
- Fuel bank foundation - to issue you with a fuel voucher

### **Funders**

We share information with our funders in order to demonstrate that we are meeting the funding requirements. Information will normally only be shared in a de-identified manner unless you give us your permission to do so or we need to in order to investigate a quality issue, complaint or claim.

### **Regulators**

We are legally required to provide information to regulatory bodies in some circumstances. These include but are not limited to:

- Ofgem - the regulator for gas and electricity
- Ofcom - the regulator for the broadcasting, telecoms and postal industry
- the Financial Conduct Authority - the regulator for financial and banking services
- the Competition and Markets Authority
- the Food Standards Agency
- the Legal Services Board
- Trading Standards

### **Auditors**

We share information with our internal and external auditors to allow them to carry out audits to ensure that we are complying with our legal obligations and standards of best practice in how we run the organisation.

### **Banks, credit reference agencies and creditors**

We may also share your information with banks or creditors to help get information to assist in our advice. We will only do this with your permission or where we are legally required to do so. Information we share will be used for purposes including:

- getting a credit report to assist with financial enquiries
- understanding more about your income and expenditure
- understanding more about the debts you owe

### **Employers or benefit providers**

We may also contact your employer or benefit provider to understand more about your income, we will only do this with your permission.

### **Translation and interpretation services**

We may share your information with a translation or interpretation service to enable us to communicate with clients who prefer communication in different languages.

### **Our lawful basis for using your information**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Lawful basis for collecting personal data</b>	<b>Lawful basis for collecting special category or criminal convictions data</b>
General advice provision and funded services (unless listed below)	Legitimate interests - we have a legitimate interest to provide advice to our clients	Establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims - where we are helping clients establish their legal rights  Substantial Public Interest (provision of confidential counselling, advice or support) - where we are providing advice to clients which doesn't relate to their legal rights.

Consumer service and energy advice	Public task - we have a statutory obligation to provide consumer and energy advice	Substantial public interest (statutory obligation) - we have a statutory obligation to provide consumer and energy advice
Pensionwise advice	Public task - we have a public task through our funder the Money and Pensions Service to deliver pension advice	Establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims - where we are helping clients establish their legal pension rights
Debt relief orders	Public task - we have a public task through our funder the Money and Pensions Service to assist with debt relief orders	Establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims - where we are helping clients establish their legal pension rights
Accessibility requirements	Legal obligation - we have legal obligations in accordance with the equalities legislation	Substantial public interest (statutory obligation) - obligations under equalities legislation.
Marketing new advice services	Legitimate interests - we have a legitimate interest in promoting advice services which could benefit our clients  Consent - where marketing rules require consent to do so	N/A

<p>Maintaining quality and standards</p>	<p>Legitimate interests - we have a legitimate interest in ensuring that our service is run properly and that standards are maintained</p>	<p>Establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims</p> <p>Substantial public interest (protecting the public against dishonesty etc) - where we are carrying out functions to protect against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- dishonesty, malpractice or other seriously improper conduct</li> <li>- unfitness or incompetence</li> <li>- mismanagement in administration</li> </ul>
<p>Safeguarding</p>	<p>Public task - in complying with safeguarding obligations</p>	<p>Substantial public interest (Safeguarding of children and of individuals at risk)</p>
<p>Fraud prevention</p>	<p>Legitimate interests - we have a legitimate interest in defending against fraudulent activity</p> <p>Legal obligation - in some circumstances there are legal obligations to disclose actual or suspected cases of fraud</p>	<p>Substantial public interest - (preventing and detecting unlawful acts, preventing fraud, Suspicion of terrorist financing or money laundering)</p>

# **When you participate in research and give feedback**

## **How we collect your information**

We carry out research and statistics using data from a number of sources including:

- Client case data - we use client case information to carry out research and produce statistical information
- Surveys and questionnaires - we carry out specific questionnaires and surveys to get data on specific topics
- Focus groups and studies - we invite key stakeholders to take part in studies and discussions

We will only contact you directly about research and feedback if you have given your permission for us to do so.

## **What information we collect**

We use a wide range of information which can include:

- Information about the issues you sought advice or guidance about
- Your demographic information such as what area of the country you live in, your age or any minoritised groups you identify with
- Your opinions about our service or themes relevant to them such as benefits or housing

## **What we use your information for**

We use our research and statistics to inform our campaigns and to improve our service. This includes work to promote equity, diversity and inclusion within our service and society as a whole. We will not use any of this data in a way that identifies you or to make a decision about you as part of our research unless you give us your permission to do so.

Sometimes we like to include real client stories in our campaigns, if we want to use your story in a way that you can be identified we will only do so with your permission.

## **Who we share your information with**

We will not share directly identifiable information about you outside of Citizens Advice unless you give your permission for us to do so.



Activity	Our lawful basis for collecting personal data	Our lawful basis for collecting special category or criminal convictions data
EDI monitoring	Legitimate interests - we have a legitimate interest in ensuring our services are being delivered in a fair way and reaching people from all backgrounds	Substantial public interest -‘equality of opportunity or treatment’
Research, feedback and statistics	Legitimate interests - We have a legitimate interest to understand how our service is working and to understand the issues which underlie the problems people are facing	Archiving, research and statistics
Publishing client stories	Consent	Explicit consent

## How we use your data when applying to work or volunteer

### How we collect your information

Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton collects this data in a variety of ways. For example, data is collected through:

Information collected directly from you, such as:

- application forms
- your passport or other identity documents such as your driving licence or right to work documents
- forms completed by you at the start of, or during, employment
- correspondence with you
- interviews, meetings or other assessments
- Call recordings for quality purposes

Information we have collected about you such as:

- References from previous employers

- information from HMRC

Data is stored in a range of different places, including in your employee record file in Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton's HR management systems, Bright HR and in other IT systems such as Casebook, our server platform and cloud-based IT Infrastructure.

### **What information we collect**

Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton collects and processes a range of data about you. This includes:

- your name, address and contact details, including email address and telephone number, date of birth, sex
- the terms and conditions of your employment
- details of your qualifications, skills, experience and employment history, including start and end dates with previous employers and your performance during the recruitment process
- data about your remuneration, including entitlement to benefits such as pensions
- details of your bank account and national insurance number
- data about your emergency contacts
- data about your nationality and entitlement to work in the UK
- data about your criminal record - for certain roles
- details of future periods of leave; holiday, sickness absence, family leave and sabbaticals.
- details of any disciplinary or grievance procedures in which you have been involved, including any warnings issued to you and related correspondence
- details of training you have participated in, performance improvement plans and related correspondence
- data about medical or health conditions, including whether or not you have a disability for which Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton needs to make reasonable adjustments
- details of any trade union membership
- equal opportunities monitoring data, including data about your ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, health and religion or belief

### **What we use your information for**

Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton needs to process data to enter into an employment contract/volunteer agreement with you and to meet its obligations under your employment contract/volunteer agreement . For example, it needs to process your data to provide you with an employment contract, to pay you in accordance with your employment contract and to administer benefits, pension and insurance entitlements.

In some cases, Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton needs to process data to ensure that it is complying with its legal obligations. For example, it is required to check an employee's entitlement to work in the UK, to deduct tax, to comply with health and safety laws and to enable employees to take periods of leave to which they are entitled. For certain positions, it is necessary to carry out criminal records checks to ensure that individuals are permitted to undertake the role in question.

In other cases, Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton has a legitimate interest in processing personal data before, during and after the end of the employment relationship such as call recordings

Processing employee data allows Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton to:

- run recruitment and job change processes including employment checks
- maintain accurate and up-to-date employment records and contact details (including details of who to contact in the event of an emergency), and records of employee contractual and statutory rights
- ensure effective general HR and business administration
- respond to and defend against legal claims
- maintain and promote equality in the workplace

## **Who we share your information with**

Your data will be shared with:

- The management team and Business Support administrators who will have access to personal and relevant special category data, to progress your application
- Third parties in order to obtain pre-employment references from other employers
- Obtain necessary criminal records checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service for certain roles
- Third parties in the context of a transfer of undertakings. In those circumstances the data will be subject to confidentiality arrangements

Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton will not directly transfer your data to countries outside the European Economic Area. This should be checked against your suppliers. National Citizens Advice systems do not transfer your data outside of the EEA.

Some special categories of personal data, such as data about health or medical conditions, are processed to carry out employment law obligations (such as those in relation to employees with disabilities and for health and safety purposes).

Where Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton processes other special categories of personal data, such as data about ethnic origin, sexual orientation, health or religion or belief, this is done for the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring. Data that Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton uses for these purposes is anonymised or pseudonymised.

## **Our lawful basis for using your information**

Activity	Our lawful basis for collecting personal data	Our lawful basis for collecting special category or criminal convictions data
Recruitment of staff	<p>Legitimate interests - for assessing suitability of candidates</p> <p>Contract - for entering an employment contract</p> <p>Legal obligation - for carrying out legal checks as part of employment screening</p>	Employment, social security, and social protection - for complying with legal requirements as an employer including DBS checks
Recruitment of volunteers	<p>Legitimate interests - for assessing suitability of candidates</p> <p>Legal obligation - for carrying out legal checks as part of employment screening</p>	Employment, social security, and social protection - carrying out DBS checks

## How long we keep your data for

National Citizens Advice is responsible for managing any data in joint client case records. For more information please see their [privacy notice](#).

Data	Purpose	Retention
Advice case records*	General advice	6 years

	Cases with historical significance	16 years
	Cases with an increased risk of a legal claim	16 years
	Cases that form part of an active inquiry	16 years or until the closure of the inquiry, whichever is longest
Call recordings	Adviceline calls	6 months
	Pensionwise	2 years
Complaints	General complaints	6 years
	Complaints involving a financial claim or court action involving insurers	16 years
Donations	General donation records	7 years from end of financial year
	General donation records	7 years from end of financial year
	Legacies, Wills, Bequests	7 years from closure of estate
Information requests	Information requests under Data Protection or Freedom of Information Law	6 years

Safeguarding concerns	Any concerns relating to the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults	16 years
-----------------------	--	----------

\*Case information will be de-identified at the end of its retention period. We will retain summary level data for statistical and research purposes after this period has passed.

## Third party processors

Third party processors are other organisations that carry out data processing on our behalf. Third party processors don't use data for their own purposes and we have agreements in line with data protection law.

Processor name	Activities	Data hosting location
Amazon Web Services	Data on our case management systems	Republic of Ireland (EEA)
Google	Email and document management system	EEA
Jobtrain	Recruitment platform	UK
Freshworks	Ticketing platform to process enquiries	Main data servers are in the UK/EEA
Avast	Cyber security	EEA
BackUp Vault	Google data loss prevention system	UK/EEA

## Your data protection rights

You have rights in relation to your personal data that we hold. Your rights include being able to request:

- Access to copies of your data
- Corrections are made to inaccurate data
- Deletion of your personal data
- Object to how we use your personal data

These rights are not absolute and may not apply in every circumstance. For more information about your rights you can visit the [ICO website](#).

To make a data protection rights request you can do so by emailing:  
[business.support@dudleycabx.org](mailto:business.support@dudleycabx.org)

### **Raising a concern about how we use your information**

If you are concerned about how we have handled your personal information please contact us at: [business.support@dudleycabx.org](mailto:business.support@dudleycabx.org)

You can also contact the national charity if you are unhappy with how we have used your personal data or wish to raise a concern about how a local office has handled your personal data. To do so you can email us at [DPO@citizensadvice.org.uk](mailto:DPO@citizensadvice.org.uk)

### **Contacting the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)**

You can also raise your concern with the Information Commissioner's Office which regulates data protection law in the UK. if you are unhappy with how we have used your personal information. They will normally expect you to have made a complaint to us directly in the first instance.

- [Visit the ICO website](#).
- Address: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF
- Helpline number: 0303 123 1113