

Citizens Advice County Durham

Privacy Policy

At Citizens Advice , 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 County Durham. Citizens Advice County Durham 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

At Citizens Advice County Durham 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.

What information we collect

We only ask for the information we need. We always let you decide what you're comfortable telling us, explain why we need it and treat it as confidential.

What we use your information for

We collect and use the details you give us so we can help you.

Our confidentiality policy

At Citizens Advice County Durham 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 (e.g. 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

Who we share your information with

We sometimes work with partner organisations who may be better placed to help you with your problem. We will only share your information with these partners with your permission.

Our lawful basis for using your information

We have a 'legitimate interest' to do this under data protection law. This means it lets us carry out our aims and goals as an organisation. We'll always explain how we use your information.

How we use your data for research, feedback and statistics

This section covers how we use your data to carry out our research, feedback and statistical work..

National Citizens Advice covers their use of data for this purpose in their [privacy notice](#).

How we collect your information

- talking with you over the phone, face to face or by email
- accessing your records on our case management system - if you've got advice from us before
- asking your local Citizens Advice to pass your details to us - if you've given them permission
- accessing a survey you completed - for example on our website

What information we collect

We only ask for the information we need to tell your story or inform our research. Depending on how we want you to help us, this might include information about:

- your situation like family, work or financial circumstances - and how it affects you
- how you use Citizens Advice and other organisations' services - and what you thought about them
- your name and contact details - so we can keep in touch with you
- demographic information like your gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation

If you don't want to give us some personal details, you don't have to.

You can withdraw your permission for us to store your personal information at any time - known legally as withdrawing consent. Tell us what personal information you don't want us to store and we'll delete it.

What we use your information for

When we contact you we'll explain how we want to use your information - for example, we might want to:

- ask you to share your story with the media
- include your information in a report or blog as part of our research and design, campaigns, or media work
- use your information to improve our services

Who we share your information with

If we're sharing your story publicly, you can stay anonymous if you want to - we'll change some details of your story to make sure you can't be identified.

We might share your information with government or industry regulators as part of our campaigns and policy work.

Organisations we share your data with must store and use it in line with data protection law - they can't pass it on or sell it without your permission.

We only access your information for other reasons if we really need to - for example, to investigate complaints.

Our lawful basis for using your information

Where we seek to publish client stories in an identifiable format, we will always get client consent. Clients will always be given a genuinely free and fair choice.

How we use your data for fundraising and donations

National Citizens Advice covers their use of data for fundraising in their [privacy notice](#).

How we use your data when applying to work or volunteer

How we collect your information

We only ask for information which is relevant to the role you're applying for.

What information we collect

We'll collect personal details such as name, address, telephone number and email address, previous job history and experience, qualifications, and any support needs you may have.

We'll also ask for diversity information like your gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation. You don't have to tell us this – if you do, it's always anonymised.

We might collect other information depending on whether you've applied for a staff or volunteer role.

What we use your information for

We'll use the information you give us to decide whether or not you've got the right skills for the role.

We'll use the demographic information to make sure we're employing a diverse workforce and volunteer community, this is not considered alongside your application, it is removed and anonymised in a central database.

Staff who access your information have had information protection training to make sure your information is handled sensitively and securely.

Who we share your information with

We may share related information with other organisations when asking for reference or conducting DBS checks.

Our lawful basis for using your information

We will always ask for your permission if we need information to do with applying for a job or to be a volunteer.

How we use your data when using our website

What information we collect

We'll collect any other information you have willingly provided in your query.

How we collect your information

We collect information from online forms on our website.

We'll collect your location data using Google Analytics. If you don't want Google Analytics to collect your data, [you can opt out by downloading the opt-out plug in to your device.](#)

What we use your information for

We use your contact details you have provided to get in touch if we need to.

We only access your information for other reasons if we really need to – for example, to investigate complaints.

Who we share your information with

We don't share your personal information.

Our lawful basis for using your information

By accessing our website you are consenting to us storing and processing this information.

How we use cookies on our website

We use data called 'cookies' to get information about how you're using our website – for example, what pages you click on, location and what device you're using. Find out more how we collect and use cookies when you browse our website.

The information Cookies do collect such as location, you can't be identified from. It is completely anonymous.

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](#).

We keep your data for as long as it is required and a maximum of 6 years, unless your complaint is serious or involves insurance claim or other dispute we keep the data for 16 years.

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
ITC	IT Support	Microsoft 365
Babble	Phone Support	Wildix (Hosted Phones)

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 enquires@citizensadvicecd.org.uk

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 complaints@citizensadvicecd.org.uk

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

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