

Data protection policy

1. Overview

The Data Protection Acts 1998 to 2018 give individuals the legal right to privacy in relation to their personal data. The Acts place obligations on those, including the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General, holding and processing such data.

Personal data means data relating to a person who is, or can be, identified either from the data itself, or together with other data that is in, or is likely to come into, the possession of the Office. It covers any data that relates to an identifiable, living individual. The Office may hold this data electronically or in manual files.

We only collect, hold and process data in accordance with our statutory functions of audit, examination or inspection, or in relation to the administrative operations of the Office.

We have appointed a Data Protection Officer who advises us on data protection obligations, monitors compliance and is the first point of contact in dealing with data protection enquiries or reports. The Data Protection Officer's contact details are set out below.

2. How we handle your personal data

We fully commit to protecting your data as required under the Data Protection Acts. We must follow the key principles when processing your information:

- transparency
- purpose limitation
- data minimisation
- accuracy
- retention and storage limitation
- security and confidentiality.

We also demonstrate our accountability for data protection and compliance with our obligations under data protection legislation.

We treat all personal data received as confidential and use such data only for the purposes that it was obtained. However, we may share data with third parties, such as other government departments or public authorities, when permitted or required by a specific legislative provision.

We ensure that information sought and retained is the minimum needed for our statutory and administrative purposes.

3. Why we hold and process personal data

We hold and process personal data in relation to our current and former staff and in relation to administration of the Office (e.g. supplier details).

We also hold data arising from our financial audit of the accounts public bodies and examinations of value for money. In undertaking this work we perform tests of records held to support findings and conclusions in our reports. We have a statutory right of access to data held by public bodies where it is for the purpose of our audit and examination work. This data may contain personal information.

Data protection policy

4. When do we share personal data with others?

We are obliged to protect the confidentiality of all information given to us. We fully commit to safeguarding data given to us from use or disclosure, except as provided for by law.

We may share your data with third parties when permitted or required by a specific legislative provision to do so.

5. Keeping your personal data safe

We take our obligations very seriously and strive to ensure that we maintain the privacy of personal data. Any employee found to be in breach of the data protection rules will be held accountable by the Office.

We employ high standards of physical and technical security to protect the confidentiality of your personal data. All staff are aware of the standard of data security expected of them. We restrict access to data to authorised staff. Staff access rights extend only to the data necessary to carry out their appointed duties.

We are obliged under a wide range of legislative and administrative provisions to protect the confidentiality of official data. This includes the protection of records against unauthorised access, unnecessary use, alteration, destruction or disclosure.

We will hold accountable any employee found to be in breach of the data protection rules.

6. Making a request under the Data Protection Acts

You can make a request in writing by contacting us at the address below. To help us provide your data and deal with your request more quickly, you should include sufficient details so that we can identify you.

How soon will you receive a reply?

We will deal with your request promptly and issue a response as soon as possible. The Data Protection Acts require us to issue a response within 30 days of receipt of the request.

Can someone make an access request on your behalf?

Yes. You can ask someone else to request data on your behalf, for example, a friend, relative or solicitor. We must have your authority to do this. This is usually a signed letter authorising the person to write to us for your data and/or receive our reply.

Can you obtain all data held about you?

No, not always. The Acts allow us to withhold data in certain circumstances, for example, where the data is kept for the performance of the statutory functions of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Further details on the restrictions of the right to access can be obtained from the Data Commission's website at 'Exceptions to the right of access'.

7. Appealing a refusal

You can appeal against a refusal for access to your data directly to the [Data Protection Commission](#). Before doing so, we recommend that you contact us to establish the circumstances and to indicate your intention to appeal to the Commission.

Data protection policy

8. Rectifying your personal data

We make every effort to ensure that your personal data is accurate and up to date.

If you think that your personal data is not accurate or relevant you can contact us either in writing or by email. You should set out clearly the personal data involved and the reasons why you consider it to be inaccurate and or irrelevant.

We will amend the data within 40 days or explain to you why we will not do so.

Authorised employees may amend personal details by accessing your account held by the National Shared Services Office.

9. Report suspected unauthorised access to your personal data

You can contact us in writing or by email if you have concerns that a data breach has occurred in relation to your personal data. Please contact our Data Protection Officer at the address below.

We will investigate the matter fully and notify you of the outcome as soon as possible.

10. Our Data Protection Code of Practice

We have a Protection of Personal Data Code in place which has been circulated to all staff.

11. Enquiries about data protection

If you have any enquires concerning Data Protection in the Office, you can contact our Data Protection Officer who will be happy to assist you.

Data Protection Officer

Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General
3A Mayor Street Upper
Dublin 1
D01PF72

Phone (01) 863 8600 or email dpo@audit.gov.ie

Data Protection Commission

The [Data Protection Commission's](#) website explains your rights and responsibilities under the Data Protection Acts.

We are a registered Data Controller with the Data Protection Commission. Each year we provide a list of personal data holdings and legal data exchanges to the Commission. For details of our registration with the Data Protection Commission please see [reference 0419/A](#).