

## **How we use your personal information**

We collect and use information about you to help solve your problems, improve our services and tackle wider issues in society that affect people's lives.

We always let you decide what you're comfortable telling us, explain why we need your information and keep it confidential. When we keep something you tell us, we:

- only access it when we have a good reason
- only share what is necessary and relevant
- don't sell it to commercial organisations

### **How will you use my data?**

First and foremost your information will be used to provide you with advice. We also use information in a way that doesn't directly identify you to understand how different problems are affecting society and to take action to tackle these problems. As this is used for research it is kept separate from your case record.

Where you have given us your permission and contact details, we, or in some instances a trusted research partner, may contact you to ask you for feedback on the service you received and your overall experience of Citizens Advice.

### **Do I have to give my consent for you to use information about me?**

You can decide exactly what information you are happy to tell us. We'll use the information because we have a 'legitimate interest' to do so for the purpose of providing you with advice and carrying out research.

When we ask for more private information about you, like any health conditions or ethnicity, we will need to get your consent. This is because this information is treated in a special way by the law. You can always withdraw this consent and request we remove what you told us.

Some of our specialist services, such as our Money Advice service, are provided on the basis of your consent. We will ask your consent to use your personal information with these services.

### **Where will you store my data?**

The record of your case will be stored securely in an electronic case management system used jointly by all of the Citizens Advice service. We are all responsible for keeping it safe. As part of solving your problem, we might also make written notes, download copies of your case or send emails containing your information. We will make sure any

information is stored securely and only accessed when there's a good reason by staff and volunteers of the Citizens Advice service.

### **How long do you keep records for?**

We keep records for 6 years. We may keep records for 16 years if the advice given could have serious consequences if it was not stored for a longer period.

### **Why might you share my information? Who will you share it with?**

We will generally not share information without your permission, unless required to do so by law or in some very limited situations, like to protect you or someone else from serious harm.

If a particular service involves sharing your information without permission, we will always let you know upfront that it isn't confidential.

### **What if I have a question about how my information has been used?**

You can contact us and ask us:

- what information we've stored about you and get a copy to keep
- to change or update your information
- to delete your information from our records or withdraw your consent
- to stop using your information

If you have any questions about how your information is collected or used, you can contact us at Citizens Advice Warrington, The Gateway, Sankey Street, Warrington, WA1 1SR.

You can read more detailed information about how some of our services use information on our national site: [citizensadvice.org.uk/privacy-policy](https://citizensadvice.org.uk/privacy-policy)

If you're not happy with how we have used your information, you can contact us at:

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/Contact-us-form](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/Contact-us-form)

You can also contact the Information Commissioner's Office to raise a concern about how we have used your information.

[ico.org.uk/](https://ico.org.uk/)

0303 123 1113