



# Confidentiality Policy



**0300 123 1066**  
**[www.adoptionmatters.org](http://www.adoptionmatters.org)**



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## Introduction

This policy explains:

- what personal data and information we hold about you
- how we collect data
- how we use and may share information about you

We are required to give you this information under data protection law.

## Who we are

Adoption Matters collects, uses and is responsible for certain personal information about you. When we do so we are regulated under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

We are responsible as 'controller' of that personal information for the purposes of those laws.

The adoption service approves adopters, and provides them with ongoing support and guidance to ensure they are good adoptive parents. The service ensures that children are matched with the most appropriate adoptive parents to ensure positive outcomes for children and young people that have been in care.

## Personal information we collect and use

In the course of approving, matching and supporting adoptive parents we collect the following personal information when you provide it to us:

- personal information (such as name, address, contact details, date of birth, gender and language)
- special category characteristics (such as ethnicity, disability, religion and medical information)
- family network and relationship information
- employment information
- financial information
- information relating to assessments and approvals for suitability to adopt children

We also obtain personal information from other sources as follows:

- other council departments
- other adoption agencies previously involved
- past and/or present employer
- references (personal and employment)
- previous partners
- health services
- schools

## How we use your personal information

We use your personal information to:

- process adoptive parent applications
- assess suitability to become an adoptive parent
- match approved adoptive parents with children for adoption, to ensure the most successful outcomes for children who have been in care
- provide ongoing support and advice to adoptive parents
- prevent or detect crime or fraud
- assess and evaluate our services
- inform future service planning and the commissioning of services

## How long your personal data will be kept

We keep your information securely in line with the retention periods shown below, after which time it is archived or securely destroyed, unless we are required by legal reasons to retain records for longer than the stated retention period.

**A table showing how long we will retain your data depending on your circumstances.**

Category of information	Retention period
Details of adoptive parents Including both Adoption Matters Agency placements and non-agency placements (step-parent adoptions)	On granting of an adoption order and completion of outstanding work, we transfer all records to the Records Management Service for 100 years from date of adoption order.
Details of adoptive parents who were "counselled out", turned down or approved but they decided not to proceed further	Date approval is terminated after 6 years or 2 years after the date of death of adoptive parent.  In exceptional cases, records may be retained beyond this period on the authorisation of a senior manager.
Details held on Adoption panel records	100 years after the date of the adoption order

**A table showing how long we will retain your data depending on your circumstances.**

<b>Category of information</b>	<b>Retention period</b>
Details of those receiving Post-adoption support	100 years after the date of the adoption order
Details of those who attend information sessions but do not proceed beyond Registration of Interest	2 years from closure of record, pre-registration of Interest.
Notification of intent to adopt (non-agency adoption)	2 years from closure of record if no adoption application has been made

### **Reasons we can collect and use your personal information**

We collect and use your personal information to comply with our legal obligations in the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005, and to carry out tasks in the public interest, and with consent where we need it.

If we need to collect special category (sensitive) personal information, we rely on reasons of substantial public interest (equality of opportunity or treatment) such as for:

- the provision of social care
- social security or social protection law
- the establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims whenever courts are acting in their judicial capacity

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

We may share your personal information with:

- the judiciary
- Ofsted (in the event of a local authority inspection of children's services)
- other local authorities
- adoption agencies
- adoption panel
- Link Maker and Regional Adoption Agencies for matching purposes

We will share personal information with law enforcement or other authorities if required by applicable law.

## Your rights

Under GDPR you have rights which you can exercise free of charge which allow you to:

- know what we are doing with your information and why we are doing it
- ask to see what information we hold about you (subject access request)
- ask us to correct any mistakes in the information we hold about you
- object to direct marketing
- make a complaint to the Information Commissioners Office
- withdraw consent at any time (if applicable)

Depending on our reason for using your information you may also be entitled to:

- ask us to delete information we hold about you
- have your information transferred electronically to yourself or to another organisation
- object to decisions being made that significantly affect you
- object to how we are using your information
- stop us using your information in certain ways

We will always seek to comply with your request however we may be required to hold or use your information to comply with legal duties. Please note: your request may delay or prevent us delivering a service to you.

For further information about your rights, including the circumstances in which they apply, see the guidance from the UK Information Commissioners Office (ICO) on individuals' rights under GDPR.

If you would like to exercise a right, please contact our Data Protection Officer.

## Keeping your personal information secure

We have appropriate security measures in place to prevent personal information from being accidentally lost, or used or accessed in an unauthorised way. We limit access to your personal information to those who have a genuine business need to know it. Those processing your information will do so only in an authorised manner and are subject to a duty of confidentiality.

We also have procedures in place to deal with any suspected data security breach. We will notify you and any applicable regulator of a suspected data security breach where we are legally required to do so.

## Contact

Our Data Protection Officer, Debra Corlett, can be contacted at Adoption Matters.

You have legal rights over your information. For details of those rights, see our corporate Privacy Policy. Your rights will differ depending on our lawful basis for processing your data.

If you have any concerns about our use of your personal information, you can make a complaint to the Data Protection Officer. If you remain unhappy, you can complain via our [complaints procedure](#)— a full copy of our complaints procedure is available on request.



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**Head Office:** 14 Liverpool Road, Chester, CH1 2AE.



Also offices in: Warrington, Manchester, Hale, Blackburn, Stoke, Leeds and Durham.

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**www.adoptionmatters.org**

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