

Parsonage & Co | Solicitors

PRIVACY POLICY

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018

In May 2018 the Data Protection Act 1998 was replaced by the Data Protection Act 2018, in line with the GDPR which came into force across the EU. The substance of the laws is to ensure that personal data is used in a way that is fair and only for the purpose for which it is given. The new laws affect how the data we collect from our clients can be used, managed and stored.

Collection of Data

Personal data is anything that makes an individual identifiable. This could be a name, number or even an IP address in some instances. The personal data that we collect will be limited to what is sufficient to fulfil the purpose for which it is required. We will only reuse this data if:

- it is consistent with the original reason for obtaining it;
- we obtain your consent;
- there is a legal requirement to do so.

Retention of Data

Our general policy regarding the retention of personal data is that we will not hold this any longer than is necessary. What is necessary depends upon many factors, such as the nature of the data we have collected and our requirements under the Solicitor's Regulation Authority. Other considerations include, but are not limited to data in documents that:

- may be relevant to an appeal
- can be used as precedents
- are specifically retained for legal purposes only
- are of significant value or benefit to others in related or similar matters.
- contain research material
- contain instructions, facts or opinion in a previous case which are relevant to a current case
- are records which will assist in conflict searches
- are relevant to potential or actual complaint actions against an employee of the firm or a third party
- clients specifically wish to be retained such as original Wills or Deeds.

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Data Storage and Protection

Our policy in relation to the storage of data and its ongoing protection is multifaceted. It includes how we deal with data on a daily basis and in the long term, either electronically or in paper form. We:

- store printed paper on file promptly after obtaining such a document. Our files can only be accessed by authorised personnel
- shred all documents when they are no longer required
- use password protection on all computers and mobile devices
- keep our servers in a secure location on and off-site and use reputable security software at all times
- backup our data frequently
- archive all files as soon as possible once a matter has completed
- ensure that archived physical files are stored securely at an off-site location.

Use and Transmission of Data

We cannot guarantee the safety of data sent to us electronically, although we do our best to protect your personal data all electronic transmissions are at your own risk. We have procedures in place to prevent data security breaches and in the event that there is a breach, we will notify you and any other party that we are legally required to.

Sharing Data

We will only disclose information provided by you to third parties where:

- you have given us consent to do so
- it is necessary to do so to carry out your instructions, for example where we need to instruct barristers or other experts on your behalf
- we are under a legal obligation to do so, such as a court order
- we are required to enforce terms, conditions or agreements between us

Special Category Data

Special Category Data is data that was considered to be personally sensitive under the previous Act. This could include data pertaining to a person's religious beliefs, political views or medical history. Special Category Data may be retained by the firm completion of a matter. Examples of this include where:

- in a litigated matter, an appeal out of time may be possible
- a matter relating to family matters or children which could be re-opened at a later date
- trusts or Wills have been drafted and are to be stored by the firm
- there are Probate matters
- consent has been given to retain ID documents on a subsequent matter that will arise within six months

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Clients' Rights

There are some instances where legally you have the right to request from us the personal information that we hold. This is referred to as a "data subject access request". In some instance you may ask us

- what data we hold in relation to you and we must comply within 30 days of such a request. There is no fee chargeable
- to access your personal data
- to restrict the use of your personal data
- to amend any information that we are retaining about you that is incorrect
- for your information to be erased if it is being held for no good reason
- to transfer your personal data to another third party.

Contact for enquiries or complaints

Should you wish to obtain more information about our GDPR policy or make a complaint in relation to this, please contact our Data Protection Officer, Sylvia Parsonage [**sylvia@parsonageandco.com**](mailto:sylvia@parsonageandco.com)