

Freedom of Information request 390/2013

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Information request

Context:

I was recently shocked to discover my name and National Insurance Number (NINo) has been sent to the PCS Trade Union without my knowledge or consent.

Desired Outcome:

(for the avoidance of doubt, I want the minimum information to reach my desired outcome if possible, so that the cost of providing the information is minimised).

To be given enough information to determine if the provision of my National Insurance to a provat organisation outside the DWP is an action that contravenes any DWP rules.

Request:

All guidance, rules, regulations and policies concerning the handling, storage and transmitting of National Insurance Number by DWP.

If the request is too wide, then please can you narrow it using the following filter:

All guidance, rules, regulations and policies concerning the handling storage and transmitting of National Insurance Number by DWP Jobcentres.

And if still too wide:

All guidance, rules, regulations and policies concerning the handling, storage and transmitting of National Insurance Number by DWP with regards to unacceptable behaviour at Jobcentres.

DWP response

The National Insurance Number (NINo) is the unique administrative reference number used by the Department for Work and Pensions and as such is treated by the Department as comprising part of individual's personal data as defined by Section 1 of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). In terms of

protecting that data, this means that the Department is required to follow all the Data Protection Principles, and also with published guidance from the Information Commissioner. These also require that we take appropriate technical and organisational measures to prevent that personal data from being accidentally, or deliberately, compromised in accordance with the Seventh Data Protection Principle of the Act.

Therefore, and within the context of the Department's arrangements for handling personal data, the NINo is not afforded any separate or special rules concerning handling storage or transmission.

The Department publishes on the Internet an explanation of how we handle personal data supplied to us. I attach a link to that information:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/dwp-your-personal-information.pdf>

Finally in your request, you said that your NINo had been sent to the PCS Trade Union without your knowledge or consent. You will see from the above published information, that there are circumstances when it is lawful for the Department to share certain information with third parties, without the consent of the individual data subject.