



Cabinet Office

Guidance on the Information Charter

Version 1.2 – May 2018

Version History

| SPF Version | Document Version | Date Published | Summary Of Changes |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|---|
| 1.0 | 1.0 | March 2009 | N/A |
| 10.0 | 1.1 | April 2013 | Updated contact details for the ICO and GSS mailbox. Minor amendments to format and branding. |
| 13.0 | 1.2 | May 2018 | Changes in data protection legislation reflected. |

Guidance on the Information Charter

This guidance will be of particular interest to Accounting Officers and SIROs

Background

1. The 2008 Data Handling Review (DHR) required that Departments issue an information charter, setting out the general standards that people could expect from the public body when it requested or held their personal information, as well as how they could get access to their personal data and what they could do if they did not think that standards are being met.
2. The General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 take effect in May 2018, and create a new data protection framework. We have therefore taken this opportunity to review the Charter to ensure that it remains accurate and helpful.
3. While the Charter itself does not provide specific enough information to satisfy the legal requirements under GDPR to tell people how their personal information is being handled, it remains a helpful general statement of the care with which public bodies should be handling personal information. The Charter also provides for a central location for a public body to make available more specific information about how it is handling personal information, for example in relation to correspondence or Freedom of Information requests.
4. Public bodies are also under a new legal obligation to appoint a Data Protection Officer, and to publish their details. The Charter also provides for a convenient place for such information to be made available.

The Information Charter

The text at Annex A gives an example of what the information Charter could cover.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Can I tailor the Charter?

A. Yes, so long as it sets out the general standards that people can expect from you when you request or hold their personal information, as well as how they can get access to their personal data, and what they can do if they do not think that standards are being met.

Q. What should I do with it?

A. Publicise it widely including placing it on your website. Most Charters are already made public on gov.uk.

Q. What supporting arrangements do I need?

A. It needs to be linked to your procedures for making subject access requests, and the details of your Data Protection Officer.

Contacts Enquiries about content should be directed to:

GSSmailbox@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A

Personal information charter

This information charter sets out the standards you can expect from us when we collect, hold or use your personal information.

We will ensure that we will treat all personal information in accordance with data protection legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.

When we, or our agencies, collect, hold, use or process in any way your personal data, you are entitled to be told:

- the purpose for which the data is being used, and our lawful basis for processing it
- how long we will keep your data, who we will share it with
- whether it will be transferred or accessed outside the UK or EU, and what legal safeguards are in place to protect it
- about any rights you may have, including the right to access your information, or to object to its being used.
- about your right to complain to the Information Commissioner if you feel that your personal information has been mishandled, and
- about the identity of our Data Protection Officer (an independent advisor on data protection matters)

You are also entitled to have your personal information:

- protected and kept secure
- kept accurate and up to date

- not used for purposes which are incompatible with those for which it was collected, and
- kept only for as long as it is needed for the purpose for which it was collected (unless it must be kept as part of the historic record)

More Information [optional]

You can get more information about what we use personal information for below under ‘Privacy Notices’.

How to access your personal information

If you would like a copy of any personal information that we hold about you, please [insert link to local procedures]

Data Protection Officer

If you have any concerns about how the department is handling your personal data, you may contact the Data Protection Officer (DPO).

The DPO provides independent advice and monitoring of our use of personal information. They can be contacted here:

[insert DPO contact details]

Privacy Notices [optional]

These privacy notices explain in more detail how we will handle your data in specific circumstances.

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