



# Access to Information we hold about you

When you ask us for the information we hold on you, it's known as a data subject access request (DSAR). It's different from a freedom of information request (FOIR) which is about information that the Council holds about other things, such as roads, schools, trading standards etc.

## What information can I ask for?

You can ask for any information we hold about you as an individual.

If you have parental rights over a child under the age of 18 you can ask for information we hold about them.

If you have legal responsibility for someone else (e.g. power of attorney) you can ask for information about them.

If you are the executor of a will of a deceased person you can ask for information about them. Technically this is not a DSAR as they relate only to living people, but we will treat it in the same way.

## What do I need to provide?

It will help if you can be as specific as possible. For example, rather than asking for all information we hold you might want to consider if there's a specific incident or a specific time in your life that you want information about.

You will be asked to provide photographic proof of your identity (e.g. a driving licence) and proof of your address (e.g. a utility bill).

If you are asking for information about a child under 18 we will need proof of your parental rights (e.g. a birth certificate). We may already have this in our social care records, but we may sometimes need to check.

Where a child is 12 or over and capable of understanding we will ask for their consent to release their records.

If you are asking for information about a person where you are their legal representative, we will ask you for proof of your status (e.g. as their solicitor, legal power of attorney or as executor of a will). If the person is still living, we may ask for their consent if they are able to give it.

## Do I have to pay?

No, you do not need to pay.

## How is the information prepared?

Once we have received your proof of identity and any consent that we need, your case will be logged on our system as ready for processing.

Any paper documents we hold about you are scanned and converted to .pdf documents. All the documents we hold are then combined into just a few documents.

At some point your case will be assigned to an Information Case Officer and they will read every page of your information and will redact (block out text) anything that we are not allowed to release to you.

## How long will it take?

Legally, we have to provide the information within one month (three months if it is complex) and the clock doesn't start until we have confirmed your identity.

How long it actually takes will depend on a number of things, but one of the main ones is how much information there is to examine. For example, if you ask for information from the past twenty years of your life there may be thousands of pages, with many of them

handwritten; but if you ask for information about a specific time or incident there may be very few pages and these can be examined and released much more quickly.

The Information Case Officer will be working, not just on your case, but also on other DSARs as well as a constant flow of FOIRs and information requests from the Police.

We will keep you informed of the progress of your application and let you know if we are not able to keep to this timescale and the reasons why. If you wish, we may be able to provide the case records in stages.

## **How will I get the information?**

We normally send the information by email and the document links are encrypted so that you cannot access them without a password. To get the password you will need to phone us and answer a security question (which is usually related to the identity documents you have provided).

If you prefer to receive paper copies of the documents, we can arrange for you to collect them from a Nottinghamshire County Council office or for copies to be sent by registered post to an address where you live. We would want to be sure that no one else at the address would interfere with the material we post to you.

## **How much information will I get?**

As already mentioned there may sometimes be thousands of pages – even though we try to remove duplicates. But in some cases it may be disappointing to find that there is very little information available. And sometimes records have been destroyed or damaged by fire or flood or (very rarely) cannot be located.

## **Are there any restrictions on what I can see?**

Data protection law means that we cannot share other people's personal information, usually referred to as "third-party information".

A lot of the text you see blocked out will be this kind of information.

## **Can I keep the records?**

The records we provide to you – whether on paper or by email – are yours to keep.

If you want to keep the records we send by email it is important that you download them and save them securely within one month of getting our email. After that the password will no longer work. But don't worry if you forget to do this – contact us and we can re-send the information.

It is your choice what you do with the information you receive. Some people want to share information from their records with a relative, partner or friend. Others prefer to keep it to themselves.

## **What can I do if the information on the records is not accurate?**

If you believe that any information we hold is inaccurate, you have the right to have this recorded on the case files. Please contact us for assistance.

## **What information will you keep about me?**

In order to provide a subject access service we will keep a record of the service we have provided, and details of your identity verification documents, contact details and any telephone, letter or email contact we have with you.

## **Feedback**

We want to improve our service and welcome your comments and suggestions.

If you are unhappy with any aspect of our service, we have a review procedure. The first step is to contact our office and ask for an internal review.

If you are not happy with the outcome of an internal review you can also involve the

Information Commissioner's Office which is responsible for data protection practice. You can find further details at [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk) or by phoning 0303 123 1113.

## **Contact information**

Phone: (0115) 977 2788 - Monday to Friday:  
8.30am to 5pm.

Email: [accessto.records@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:accessto.records@nottscc.gov.uk)

Website: [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk)