

Information Charter

This charter explains how the Legal Services Commission manages your personal information. It sets out how you can find out what information the Commission holds about you and also how we look after your information and how you can access the information held by the Commission.

Why does the Legal Services Commission hold information about you?

We will hold information about you mainly if you have applied, through your legal representative under the Access to Justice Act 1999, for public funding for legal services. To determine whether or not you are eligible to receive public funding for legal services, we require you to provide us with information about your finances and about your case. When we request information we will comply with the law, including the Data Protection Act 1998, which regulates the management of personal information.

When we ask you for information, we promise: -

- to make sure we tell you why we need it;
- to only ask you for what we need;
- to protect it and make sure that no one has access to it who shouldn't;
- to let you know if we share it with other organisations to give you a better service;
- to make sure we do not keep it longer than necessary; and
- not to make your personal information available for commercial use without your permission.
- consider your request to stop processing data about you.

In return, we ask you to: -

- give us accurate information; and
- tell us as soon as possible where changes occur, such as change of address.

You can obtain more details on: -

- how to find out what information we hold about you, and how to ask us to correct any mistakes;
- agreements that we may have to share information about you with third parties;
- circumstances where we can share your information without telling you, e.g. to produce anonymised statistics;
- our instructions to our staff on how to collect, use and delete your personal information;
- how to check the information we hold is accurate and up to date; and
- how to make a complaint.

More information

Information on how to make a request for your personal data is available in our Access to Information leaflet, including fees payable. You can access the leaflet from the LSC

Website (www.legalservices.gov.uk) from the About us > Requesting information pages. You can send your request to FOI@legalservices.gov.uk

Other relevant information

Where the information you are seeking is contained in files that are not appropriately structured or referenced, it may not be easy to locate and to identify whether personal information is held or being used. We keep as little 'unstructured' information as possible, since it is difficult to access and use.

If you require access to information held in these 'unstructured' manual files, you should describe the information in a way that would allow us to find it. It will help us to process your subject access request if you can be as specific as possible about what you want. Even if you describe the information, we are not obliged to provide you with access to unstructured manual data if the cost of locating and extracting the information would exceed the 'appropriate limit' as set by the Regulations made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. For organizations like the Legal Services Commission, this is currently £450 or 18 hours of staff time.

Complaints

When we ask you for information, we will keep to the law. If you consider that your information has been handled incorrectly you can contact the information Commissioner for independent advice about data protection, privacy and data-sharing issues or you can ask us to undertake an internal review of our handling of your data (please refer to the Access to Justice leaflet). You can contact the Information Commissioner at:

Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow, Cheshire. SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545745
Fax: 01625 524510
www.ico.gov.uk

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