

Your personal data: Benefits

What we need

Mid Sussex District Council will be what's known as the 'Controller' of the personal data you provide to us. The data we collect may include personal data and sensitive personal data. This may consist of name, address, bank details, health, work, financial details etc.

Legal basis for processing

Processing of personal information is carried out in accordance with Article 6 of the General Data Processing Regulation (GDPR):

- Processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation
- Processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller

The information we collect and the information provided to us by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is required for the calculation of your Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Reduction/Support claim, an application for a Discretionary Housing Payment award as required by the [Social Security Administration Act 1992](#) and the [Welfare Reform Act 2012](#).

- We use the information in order to administer Housing Benefit under the [Housing Benefit Regulations 2006](#) and other associated regulations.
- If Housing Benefit is incorrectly paid to you, we may use the information held to assist in the recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments.
- We use this information to administer a Discretionary Housing Payment under the [Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001](#).
- We use the information in order to administer our Council Tax Reduction/Support scheme under S13A and Schedule 1a of the [Local Government Finance Act 1992](#) and associated regulations.

We also use the information to process Test and Trace payments and energy rebates

Why we need it

We will use this information so we can:

- Decide who should be eligible and make awards where appropriate for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction/Support
- Issue Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction/Support notices and other appropriate documentation
- Decide who should be eligible and make awards where appropriate for Discretionary Housing Payments and/or Hardship Relief Payments (including crediting it to the Council Tax account)
- Issue notices regarding Discretionary Housing Payments and Hardship Relief
- Help identify vulnerable people to help provide financial and other support
- Undertake recovery action where housing benefit overpayment is established and not paid
- Consider and award entitlements to Test and Trace Payments
- Protect the public purse

What we do with it

All the personal data we process is processed by our staff in the UK on servers located within the UK. We may use data processors to assist with some data collection and storage, all their data is stored in the UK. No 3rd parties have access to your personal data unless the law allows them to do so. We have a duty to protect the public funds we administer, and we may use information held about you for all lawful purposes, including and not limited to the prevention and detection of fraud and statutory enforcement duties.

We share information as required in legislation for the administration and payment of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payments, Hardship Relief, energy rebates and/or Test and Trace Payments. This includes:

- The Department of Works and Pensions (DWP)
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)
- National Fraud Initiative (NFI)
- Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- Cabinet Office
- The Valuation Office Agency (VOA)
- The Valuation Tribunal
- Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS)
- Enforcement agents
- Credit Agencies and other approved companies to help collect a tax or benefit overpayment, including identifying vulnerable customers who may struggle to pay.
- Other councils for fraud purposes

We may share some of your information, for example your name and address, internally with other departments in the Council if this:

- helps you to access services more easily
- promotes the more efficient and cost-effective delivery of services
- helps recover monies owed to the council

We also share data with the following agencies for statistical purposes, the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

We will also share data with Public Health England for purposes of self isolation payments. Please see our separate privacy notice titled PN for self isolation payment.

How long we keep it

We carefully consider the personal data that we store, and we will not keep your information in a form that identifies you for longer than is necessary for the purposes set out in this notice or as required by applicable law. In some instances, we are required to hold data for minimum periods: for example, certain UK laws currently specify fixed time periods for retention of some of your personal data. We will keep your data while we deal with any claims and for 7 years after you cease to become entitled to Benefits

What are your rights?

You have the right to request a copy of the information that we hold about you. If you would like a copy of some or all of your personal data please email or write to the Data Protection Officer – see contact details below.

We want to make sure that your personal information is accurate and up to date. If at any point you believe the information we process on you is incorrect you may request to see this information and even have it corrected or deleted.

If you wish to raise a complaint on how we have handled your personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer who will investigate the matter.

If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are not processing your personal data in accordance with the law you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) - <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>.

To contact our Data Protection Officer you can email dataprotection@midsussex.gov.uk or write to

Data Protection Officer
Digital & Customer Services
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath, RH16 1SS

Last updated July 2024