

**Privacy Notice
Durham County Council
Resources
Financial Support Services
Assessment and Awards**

1. Who we are and what we do

Durham County Council
Resources
Financial and Transactional Services
Assessments and Awards Team

For the purposes of Data Protection, Durham County Council is the Data Controller.

What we do

The Assessment and Awards team is responsible for the administration of the Councils discretionary awards and payments for Welfare Assistance and Discretionary Housing Payments for Universal Credit/Housing Benefit.

We will only collect and use personal information to enable us to identify you and locate your personal data on our systems. Ensuring that any discretionary payments are calculated and paid correctly in accordance with the Council's Welfare Assistance and Discretionary Housing Payment policies.

2. What type of personal information do we collect and how do we collect it?

You may be asked to enter personal data on one of our forms or asked to give personal information if you call us. 'Personal data' means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person.

The personal information we collect could be:

- name
- address
- family make-up including names and date of birth of dependent children
- occupancy status such as how many adults reside in the property and who they are
- who the liable party for council tax is
- who the Universal Credit claimant is
- employment and benefit details including employer name, payslips, type of benefit and amount
- contact details: telephone number, email address
- income and expenditure details
- bank details for payments to be made.

The above list is not exhaustive. The information we request will be the minimum necessary in order to provide our services effectively and to perform our statutory duties.

How we collect personal information

We collect information about you in the following ways:

- paper based forms
- by telephone
- by email
- by paper correspondence
- online web forms and web enquiries from the council's website
- information received from other council departments such as housing solutions
- information given to staff within customer service centres and to our call team

This information is then stored on our Open Revenues database.

3. What is our power to obtain and use the personal data?

When we collect and use your personal information we rely on the following power:

- **Public task:** The processing is necessary for us to perform our official function - to administer payments in accordance with the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (the DFA regulations).
- **Legitimate interests:** To make a discretionary award in-line with our Welfare Assistance Policy. To monitor performance and seek your views on our services. Enabling us to ensure we are delivering an effective and efficient service.

4. What is your personal information used for?

We collect and process information about you for the following purposes:

- to calculate any entitlement to a discretionary housing payment
- to calculate any entitlement to a welfare assistance claim;
- to respond to requests for advice and guidance;
- seek your views or comments on the services we provide;
- notify you of changes to our services;
- to respond to a complaint;
- to respond to Councillor or Member of Parliament enquiries;
- to monitor our performance;
- assess your entitlement to discretionary awards in line with Council policies;

5. Will your personal information be shared?

We may share your personal information in certain circumstances:

- where we have a statutory obligation to do so, such as for the purposes of the prevention, detection and prosecution of crime or in the interests of public safety.
- for enforcement action and legal proceedings in respect of unpaid taxes,
- if the benefits to a child or young person that will arise from sharing the information outweigh both the public and any individual's interest in keeping the information confidential.

To enable us to administer payments in accordance with the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 and in accordance with our Welfare Assistance Policy we may share your information with the following organisations:

- our housing solutions team
- private sector housing

- customer service centre network
- Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- Family Fund Trading Ltd
- East Durham Partnership
- County Durham Furniture Help Scheme

We share information with the above to prevent fraud and to ensure we are making awards and payments to the correct liable parties.

We share information with our housing department and private sector housing to confirm application and residency details are correct.

We share information with Family Fund Trading Ltd, East Durham Partnership and County Durham Furniture Help Scheme as these are our partners who fulfil any entitlement to a Welfare Assistance claim.

6. How do we keep your personal information secure?

The security of your personal information is important to us. This is why we follow a range of security policies and procedures to control and safeguard access to and use of your personal information.

7. How long will we keep your personal information?

After we deliver a service to you, we have to keep your information as a business record of what was delivered. The type of service will determine how long we have to keep it and this is detailed in our corporate retention guidelines.

We will keep your personal data in the following cases;

- while you have an active Discretionary Housing Payment for Universal Credit.

For all other cases the retention period for the personal data we hold in respect of Discretionary Housing Payments and Welfare Assistance claims is the current year plus a further six years.

We review our retention periods for personal information on a regular basis. We are legally required to hold some types of information to fulfil our statutory obligations (for example accurate council tax billing). We will hold your personal information on our systems for as long as is necessary for the relevant activity, or as long as is required for us to satisfy our statutory obligations.

8. Is your personal information processed outside the EU?

We do not process your personal information outside the EU.

9. Marketing (if applicable)

At no time will your information be passed to organisations external to us and our partners for marketing or sales purposes or for any commercial use without your prior express consent.

10. What are your Information Rights?

Your Information Rights are set out in the law. Subject to some legal exceptions, you have the right to:

- to have any inaccuracies corrected;
- to have your personal data erased;
- to place a restriction on our processing of your data;
- to object to processing; and
- to request your data to be ported (data portability).

You also have the right to request a copy of the personal information council holds about you. To do this, you can apply on line or download an application form from the [DCC website](#) or you can contact the data protection team at dataprotection@durham.gov.uk

To learn more about these rights please see the [ICO website](#).

If something goes wrong with your personal information, or you have questions about how we use it, please contact Roger Goodes the Data Protection Officer at DPO@durham.gov.uk

If we have not been able to deal with your complaint, you can also contact the [Information Commissioner's Office](#)

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or 01625 545 745

Fax: 01625 524 510