



Privacy Notice – Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction & Discretionary Housing Payment

Introduction

The City of Edinburgh Council administer Housing Benefit on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions. We administer the Council Tax Reduction and the Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme on behalf of the Scottish Government.

The City of Edinburgh Council requires your personal information to make assessments of your entitlement to the above schemes.

As part of customer and digital services, the Council needs to collect, store, use, share and dispose of personal data relating to you and your household. This is known as data processing.

This privacy notice provides further information around how we use your personal data.

The digital tools

We use software from Civica, NEC and Govtech in order to administer the Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction and Discretionary Housing Payment schemes.

Civica	Civica provide our document management software. Your information, correspondence and copies of any documents you provide us are stored here. Any information submitted to us in a paper form is scanned and stored here. After being scanned, papers will either be returned to the customer or securely disposed of. Documents are only retained for as long as they are required in line with our document retention policy.
NEC	NEC provide our award processing software. Details of the calculations of your award and payments are found here. Your assessments and payments are only retained for as long as they are required in line with our document retention policy.
Govtech	Govtech provide our online forms. Copies of any online application forms are passed to us and stored on our Civica document management system. Govtech store copies of the forms for a maximum of 3 months to before deleting them.

Outlook	Outlook provides account profile and access to email. All email communication is encrypted. We do not retain any personally identifiable information over Outlook. Email messages relating to cases are stored on Civica.
Teams	Teams provides a storage and collaboration space for a group of specified users. All communication is encrypted. We do not share any personally identifiable information over teams.

What personal data do we process via these tools?

We collect personal information on you and your household in order to make awards of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction and Discretionary Housing Payment. The information collected is for you, your partner if you have one and may also include other people in your household.

Where we hold information on a member of your household, who is aged 18 or over, and is not your partner on the claim we will notify them that we hold their data, what we use the data for and inform them of their right to review the data we hold.

The personal information we hold about you may be collected on paper or online form, by telephone, email, by a member of our staff, or one of our partners.

The information we may hold includes:

- Full name. This may also include a record of changes to your name if the change occurred while resident in Edinburgh.
- Date of Birth
- National Insurance Number
- Address
- Contact details such as telephone number or email. This may include details of a third party you have nominated to act on your behalf.
- Awards of State Benefits awarded by the Department for Work and Pensions or HMRC
- Awards of Scottish Government Benefits
- Earned Income, name of employer, average number of hours worked (this may be sourced directly from HMRC)
- Self-Employed Income
- Private Pensions or Superannuation
- Student Loans and Bursaries
- Charitable and Voluntary payments
- Capital held, including capital that is disregarded for a fixed period of time or which is disregarded indefinitely. This includes details of bank accounts such as sort-codes and account numbers.

- Rent liability (for Housing Benefit and Discretionary Housing Payment only)
- Council Tax liability (for Council Tax Reduction only)

How do we use this personal data?

We use your personal data to administer awards of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction and Discretionary Housing Payment.

We use software provided by NEC, Civica and Govtech in order to do this.

We may employ other companies to make assessments on our behalf.

Our software providers and any subcontractors process data in line with our privacy policy and GDPR.

Your information may be subject to automated decision making.

Testing of data may sometimes be required and this will be done in line with data protection legislation.

Who do we share personal data with?

We may/will share your information with the following third-party organisations so that we can deliver our services in line with Government Regulations.

- Scottish Government
- Department For Works and Pensions
- HMRC
- Social Security Scotland
- NEC Software Solutions
- Experian
- Civica Public Services
- Govtech
- Scott & Company, Sheriff Officers
- Walker Love, Sheriff Officers

What did I agree to when I made a claim for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Reduction?

When you made a claim for one of the above you signed a disclaimer. Copies of this disclaimer is available on our website here:

[Agreement statements for benefit claims – The City of Edinburgh Council](#)

What is the legal basis for processing this personal data?

The City of Edinburgh Council is a local authority established under the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994. As part of its statutory functions and activities, it administers Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction and Discretionary Housing Payment.

Processing personal information is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest of the Council. Consequently, Article 6(1)(e) of UK GDPR has been identified as a lawful basis as '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'.

How this personal data is kept secure.

The Council takes privacy issues very seriously and is committed to ensuring that all data is kept secure and is only accessible to approved users for agreed purposes.

Data Access is restricted and access by a user is monitored and recorded.

How long is this personal data kept?

We will not keep this personal data of customers for any longer than it is needed and will dispose of it in a secure way. The length of time we need to keep information will depend on the purpose for which it is collected. The Council has a Record retention schedule which sets out how long we keep records and the reason why. Further information can be found at: <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/records>

Data rights

Everyone has several rights under data protection law, including the right to request your information and to request that the information is amended or erased if incorrect.

We are relying on public task for this processing, this means our customers have the following rights:

- to be informed about the collection and use of your personal data – this is called '**right to be informed**';
- to ask us for copies of your personal information we have about you – this is called '**right of access**', and is also known as a subject access request (SAR);
- to ask us to change any information you think is not accurate or complete – this is called '**right to rectification**';
- to ask us to stop using your information – this is called '**right to restriction of processing**';
- to **object to processing of your information**, in certain circumstances;

- if a decision has been made on your case using automated processing you have the right to **request for a person to review the decision**;
- to **complain to the Information Commissioner** if you feel we have not used your information in the right way.

You may request that your personal data is removed or hidden from the applications and tools used to deliver Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction and Discretionary Housing Payment.

If you do object to our storage or processing of your personal data, it may impact our ability to deliver your awards.

Please note that there are legitimate reasons why we may refuse your information rights request, which depend on why we are processing it.

To discuss your rights in more detail please contact:

Information.compliance@edinburgh.gov.uk

Data Protection Officer

The Council has a Data Protection Officer who you can contact in the first instance if you have any questions or complaints about how we are processing your personal information.

Data Protection Officer
City of Edinburgh Council
Waverley Court (2.1)
4 East Market Street
Edinburgh
EH8 8BG

Tel: 0131 469 6174

Email: dataprotectionofficer@edinburgh.gov.uk

If you are still unhappy with how the Council have handled your complaint, you can contact the UK Information Commissioner's Office – the regulator for data protection matters in the UK.

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

Tel: 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.gov.uk