

Public Service

 **ombudsman**

Employee Privacy Notice

Version 4.4 July 2026

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This privacy notice is intended to give employees information about how the Ombudsman uses and looks after information about you or that could identify you.
- 1.2 We manage this information in accordance with the UK General Data We Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 1.3 If you have any further queries, please email the Data Protection Officer dpo@ombudsman.org.uk
- 1.4 We are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as a Data Controller - registration number: Z6520944
- 1.5 Contact details for the Public Service Ombudsman DPO are:

Alex Daybank
Assistant Director of Privacy / Data Protection Officer
Office of the Public Service Ombudsman
Citygate
47-51 Mosley Street
Manchester
M2 3HQ

Email: DPO@ombudsman.org.uk

2 How your information will be used

- 2.1 We ask you for information about you when you first start working for us and throughout your career with us. This is information required by the law or our contract with you. We do this so that we can pay you, train you, provide you with the right support and tools to do your job and make sure you can access employee benefits.
- 2.2 When you leave, we will retain the information that the law or our contract with you says we need to keep.

- 2.3 We are committed to the safe use and management of your personal data (information about you or that could identify you). We do this in compliance with the law, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

3 What information do we hold about you?

- 3.1 We create information to identify you for security purposes. Examples include photographic ID cards, network usernames and passwords and pre-employment checks.
- 3.2 We create information to identify you uniquely so that you can do your job and we can pay you. Examples include email addresses and payroll numbers.
- 3.3 We hold and use information about your health and wellbeing. Examples include filing fit notes for absences from work, details of disabilities and corresponding reasonable adjustments made, recording accidents in our accident book or information shared during personal conversations in one-to-one meetings with your manager.
- 3.4 We ask all staff to provide us with current contact information in the event of an emergency, serious incident, or systems failure. We test this regularly through SMS messaging. This emergency contact information is kept securely.
- 3.5 Most of the information we hold will have been provided by you, but some may come from other internal sources, such as your manager, or in some cases, external sources, such as referees.
- 3.6 We will ask for your consent before we use or record information relating to your racial or ethnic origin, religious and philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, biometric data or sexual orientation. The only exceptions will be when consent is not required by law or the information is required to protect your health in an emergency.
- 3.7 An example of when we may not need to ask for consent is use of biometric information for security purposes. This is information that is your unique physical or behavioural characteristics, such as your fingerprints, your DNA, your likeness (photographs), your signature and how you walk (gait analysis).

- 3.8 Biometrics are often used as the third level of security (see section 5 for details). Passwords are something you know (single factor), tokens like the ones we use for remote working are something you have (multi- factor) and finally biometrics which are something you are. This is one of the reasons why GDPR includes biometrics as part of a type of information about you that requires additional protection. However, your right to privacy is not outweighed by our need to secure the information we hold on behalf of complainants. Therefore, we can ask you for your photograph as part of our arrangements to control who has access to our buildings and hence our information. This is when your consent is not required by law.
- 3.9 An example of when we will ask for your consent is if we want to take photographs of you at an event and use those in our communications. In these circumstances we must ask you for your consent as there is no legal obligation that overrides your privacy rights.
- 3.10 Where we are processing data based on your consent, you have the right to withdraw that consent at any time.

4 Recording of training and learning events

- 4.1 As part of working for the Ombudsman, we encourage and support all our colleagues to take part in training and continuous professional development. When you participate in a workshop or training event, we may choose to record the session. This is so we can make recordings or videos of sessions available to other members of staff who may not have been able to attend by uploading to our in-house learning platform. As an attendee, your image, voice or other participation such as chat comments, may be captured.
- 4.2 We will always let you know in advance if a session is being recorded and if you have any concerns, please raise them with the session organiser before the event so that they can make the relevant arrangements with you.

- 4.3 Recordings of training and learning events will only ever be available to an internal audience of your colleagues. We will not publish any recordings to the public internet, for example, on our website. Agreeing to recording does not impact on your information rights. This means that you can ask for copies of your personal information or for your personal information to be removed. It may be that we are unable to carry out your request and if so, we will write to you to let you know why. Recordings of training events will usually remain in our systems for 2 years from the recording date.

5 Personal information created through use of IT systems or access to buildings

- 5.1 Whenever you use ICT systems or devices or access an office with your access card, it leaves a data footprint. Examples of these include timestamps of when you completed certain activities such as logging on or off the network, edited a document, completed a training course or logged a call to the HelpHub. Logs of building access will be held by the building's management for security and health and safety purposes.
- 5.2 This information is personal in that it relates to, and identifies, you. Managers can request this information. These requests will be approved on a case-by-case basis only if a valid business reason is provided, such as managing performance, and must be approved by a senior manager. Access to this information is allowed under GDPR if it is necessary to manage our contract with you. In most cases the individual must be informed about the access unless specific circumstances apply.
- 5.3 As this is personal information, you have the right of access to this data. You also have the right to ask us to put the information right if you believe it to be inaccurate (right to rectification), to delete the information (right to erasure), or the right to ask us to stop using this information (restrict processing). If you want to exercise these rights, then please contact: ++informationrights@ombudsman.org.uk
- 5.4 Your request will be considered but please note may not be accepted. If your request is rejected, you will be told why and how to appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office.

- 5.5 When you book a desk or space in the office and the app checks you in, there is a record of this within the Kadence system. We have a contract with Kadence to provide this system and they operate as a data processor. This means that the Ombudsman remains responsible for the data and any subsequent uses of it. The records relating to attendance in the office will be used as part of reporting to monitor office utilisation and observance with the flexible working policy and ways of working framework.

6 Information collected via your use of Microsoft

- 6.1 Everyone uses Microsoft 365 (M365) to do their jobs. M365 is Microsoft's suite of online software, tools and services that supports our work. In order to provide technical support to you we use tools that collect information about your use of these products.
- 6.2 The information collected and made available to colleagues providing Digital support includes login details, usernames, Teams call statistics such as telephone numbers, location data and information about your devices.

7 Biometric data

- 7.1 Biometrics are something you are as explained above. This makes biometric identifiers like fingerprints, iris prints and facial recognition very useful as part of a multi-factor approach to security. Multi-factor authentication is when we use two or more of the following to identify that you really are who you say you are when you log into our network or devices.
- Something you know (a password, a phrase, an answer to a question)
 - Something you have (a token, a device, a phone)
 - Something you are (fingerprint, voice stamp, face)
- 7.2 Using biometrics as part of a sign-in solution can be much more user friendly as there is nothing to remember. But because biometric data relates uniquely to you, we will take steps to ensure that it is kept secure and only used for this purpose.

- 7.3 We undertake to collect and use biometric data solely for the purposes of authentication to our systems, offices and information. This means that we will never use your personal biometric data for any other purpose or share this data with any other organisation unless required to do so by law.
- 7.4 We will also only hold biometric identifiers for one calendar month after employees have left the organisation and will ensure that these are securely destroyed.

8 Use of Artificial Intelligence tools

- 8.1 We make use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to assist with routine administrative tasks. These tasks include:
- summarising emails, chats, meeting transcripts and documents;
 - preparing for meetings
 - creating draft content and presentations
- 8.2 supporting note-taking and communication These tools may include personal data relating to staff. The processing of this information is subject to the same controls as data processed in other office tools and remains under our control.
- 8.3 The data processed is not used by third parties to train future AI models.
- 8.4 Prompts inputted and the responses received are deleted after one month.
- 8.5 AI tools are not used to make any purely automated decisions about staff. Humans are involved in decisions concerning staff.

9 What do we expect from you?

- 9.1 It is your responsibility to update Human Resources, including through HR Self Service, with any changes to your emergency contact information.
- 9.2 We also expect that everyone who works for us will take care when handling information about other people including colleagues and complainants. For more information on this, please see our privacy and cyber security library of policies, hints and tips on which you can find through the How do I? menu on Ombudshub

How do I ▾	Working at PHSO ▾	What we do ▾	Hubs ▾	Report an issue with content
Get help Report an IT or Facilities issue Access my whiteboard notes from Cit... Report an Information Security incident Using OmbudsHub Citygate desk bookings Reporting a Business Continuity Incid...		I want to Book leave View my payslip Book training Book a desk Search for a colleague Book travel and accommodation Submit a DPIA Approve purchase orders		Policies and procedures HR Finance and procurement Health and safety Inclusion & Wellbeing Casework Privacy and cyber security

- 9.3 To find out more about your information rights or if you want to find out more about how long you should be keeping, storing, saving or archiving information, contact the Information Rights Team at ++informationrights@ombudsman.org.uk
- 9.4 For security advice and guidance or to report any concerns you may have, please contact security via HelpHub.

10 Who do we share your information with and why?

- 10.1 We will only disclose information about you or that can identify you to other organisations if we are legally obliged to do so or to comply with our employment contract with you.
- 10.2 In addition, we share your name, work email address, birthday information and start date with our contracted employee benefits provider, Reward Gateway. This is to enable you to access the MyPerks system and use the benefits if you wish to do so. Further information about how Reward Gateway uses personal information is available in the MyPerks privacy notice.
- 10.3 We will normally hold your information for six years but certain information about your employment is retained for longer. For a detailed breakdown, please refer to the [retention schedule for our HR records](#) available on OmbudsHub.
- 10.4 We may amend this privacy notice from time to time and inform anyone who may be involved. If necessary, we will ask for your consent.

11 What about my privacy at work?

- 11.1 You should assume that anything written or created using work communications can be retrieved and viewed, if necessary, for audit, management review or information security purposes. See section 3 and 4 for further information.
- 11.2 If you use work systems for personal use, we will record that activity.
- 11.3 This is detailed in our [Acceptable Use Policy](#) and if you have any queries or concerns, please contact the Data Protection Officer at DPO@ombudsman.org.uk

12 Your rights

- 12.1 You have rights under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- 12.2 You have the right to be informed about how we use your information. This is called a document is a privacy notice.
- 12.3 You have the right to request a copy of the information we hold about you and this is free of charge.
- 12.4 We may, however, not be able to give you the information you are seeking if, for example, it contains personal information about other people or if the information has been given to us in confidence.
- 12.5 You have the right to ask us to delete your personal data, also known as the right to be forgotten. If we agree to delete your personal data, we may still need to keep just enough information for us to record that we have completed your request. There are circumstances where we cannot agree to delete your data. This is when we are bound by law to keep information for longer such as pension or tax information.
- 12.6 You have the right to ask us not to use information about you or that identifies you for certain purposes. This is limited in practice given that we only use this information in accordance with the law or our contract with you. However, when appropriate we will try to accommodate your wishes or explain why we can't fulfil your request.
- 12.7 If we can fulfil your request, we will retain just enough information about you to make sure your wishes are respected in the future.
- 12.8 We will not sell your information or use it for commercial purposes.
- 12.9 If you would like a copy of some or all the personal information we hold about you, you can ask your manager, Human Resources or contact the Information Rights team by writing to the address above or emailing: informationrights@ombudsman.org.uk

13 How to complain

13.1 If you are unhappy with how we have handled your personal information, please contact our Data Protection Officer at DPO@Ombudsman.org.uk in the first instance.

13.2 You may also contact the Information Commissioner's Office.

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

13.3 Phone: 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.gov.uk

14 Related documents

14.1 You may find the following documents useful.

Version control

Date	Version	Amends	Owner of amends
25 April 2018	1	Draft	AJ
24 Nov 2020	2	Added ICT generated metadata	AJ
29 Jan 2021	3	Tweaks to language for accessibility	AJ
11 Oct 2022	4	Updated to reflect hybrid working, biometrics and Nulia	AJ
25 Aug 2023	4.1	Learning and Development update	AD
25 March 2025	4.2	Clarifying employee benefits sharing and updates relating to IT data and building access data	AD
09 July 2026	4.3	Updates to reflect use of AI productivity tools and Kadence data.	AD
07 Oct 2026	4.4	Rebranding amendments	CC