

# PRIVACY POLICY



West View Advice & Resource Centre Limited (WVARC) is committed to protecting and respecting your privacy.

This notice explains when and why we collect personal information about people who use our service, how we use it, the conditions under which we may disclose it to others and how we keep it secure.

Any questions regarding this Policy and our privacy practices should be sent by email to [reception@wvarc30.org.uk](mailto:reception@wvarc30.org.uk) or by writing to The Community Centre, Miers Avenue, Hartlepool, TS24 9JQ. Alternatively, you can telephone 01429 271275.

## Who are we?

WVARC are a company limited by guarantee (Company No. 2994776) and a registered charity (Charity No. 1084632) and have been delivering free independent advice across Hartlepool for over 30 years.

## How do we collect information from you?

We obtain information about you when you use our service. This information is obtained when you make an appointment to see an advisor or complete a client registration form during an appointment with an adviser and/or if you are referred to us by another organisation using our online referral system.

## What type of information is collected about you?

The personal information we collect might include your name, address, email address, telephone number, date of birth, national insurance number, NHS number, marital status, ethnicity, household status, employment status, income details and information about any health conditions you may have.

## Our commitment

When we handle and store our clients' personal information we follow the law, including the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation [GDPR] (EU) 2016/679.

When we ask you for personal information we promise to:

- explain why we need it
- only ask for what we need
- treat it as confidential

When we record and use your personal information we promise to:

- only access it when we have a valid reason to do so
- only share what is necessary and relevant
- protect it and make sure nobody had access to it who shouldn't

When we share your personal information with another organisation we promise to:

- ensure that this is only done with your consent, or if we're required to do so by law
- follow the ICO Data Sharing Code of Practice from time to time to ensure the other organisation treats your information with the same level of care that we do.

All staff who handle personal information are given training and we take it very seriously if someone fails to use or protect it properly.

If you're unhappy with how we record and use your information you can ask for a copy of our complaint's procedure.

Please let us know as soon as possible if anything relating to your contact details or situation changes, which may affect the information we hold.

### **Giving your consent**

We must ask for your consent to record, use, or share personal information, except when we are required by law to do so.

### **What you're agreeing to**

If you give us your consent, you are saying that we can record and use your personal information to help with your issue(s).

Where we have consent or the law allows us to, we will share information across partners in order to ensure that the right services are received at the right time. We will store personal information securely and in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.

We may use your information for the purposes of research and evaluation, when making a case for the funding of our services and for providing monitoring returns to our funders. In these situations your information is used in such a way that you cannot be identified from it.

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 to maintain our Advice Quality Standard). We will hold your personal information on our systems for as long as is necessary for the relevant activity, or as long as is set out in any relevant contract you hold with us.

### **How we'll store your information**

We'll store your personal details and the record of your case on secure internet based systems, which are only accessed by us. Paper copies of your information are also stored securely and only accessed when necessary by staff and volunteers of the advice service.

We will never share your information with any other parties without your prior consent unless you have requested us to do so, or we are required to do so by law, for example, by a court order or for the purposes of prevention of fraud or other crime.

### **How you can access and update your information**

The accuracy of your information is important to us. If any of the information we hold is inaccurate or out of date, please email us at: [reception@wvarc30.org.uk](mailto:reception@wvarc30.org.uk), or write to us at: The Community Centre, Miers Avenue, Hartlepool, TS24 9JQ. Alternatively, you can telephone 01429 271275.

You have the right to ask for a copy of the information we hold about you (known as a 'subject access request'). To make this request please email [reception@wvarc30.org.uk](mailto:reception@wvarc30.org.uk) with 'Subject Access Request' in the subject line or write to us at: The Community Centre, Miers Avenue, Hartlepool, TS24 9JQ. Your request will be carried out within one month unless there is a good reason for this not to be possible. In this event we will contact you and explain why we cannot carry out your request within one month.

We will provide the information free of charge unless the request is manifestly unfounded or excessive in which case we will charge a reasonable fee.

If you have a concern you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Find out how to report a concern to the ICO <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

### **Security precautions in place to protect the loss, misuse or alteration of your information**

When you give us personal information, we take steps to ensure that it's treated securely. Once we receive your information, we make our best effort to ensure its security on our systems. Any personal information stored electronically will be on a password protected database.

This policy is regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate.

**Last Updated:** 25 February 2022