



## YOUR RIGHT TO SEE PERSONAL INFORMATION

Under the data protection act 1998 you have the right to see information held on you by Community Services.

This factsheet tells you what information the law allows you to see.

It tells you what to do if you want to see this information.

### Who should read this leaflet?

- Current service users.
- People who work for the Council, the Health Service, voluntary organisations and other organisations who work with adults.
- Anyone who has been assessed by Community Services and has been offered a service.
- Their family, carers and for people who might need or want to know more about charges for services.

### Why are records kept?

It is essential that we keep accurate details about the work we do and the people we deal with. This helps us provide as efficient a service as possible, ensures that we comply with the law and ensures that we can be held accountable for what we do.

### What information can I see?

The Data Protection Act 1998 gives you the right to access your personal information held on Community Services records.

### What information may I not be allowed to see?

Some information is exempt from disclosure. You will not be able to see:

- Information about other people (including relatives), or organisations, without their prior agreement.

- Information given by other people, again, without their prior consent.
- Information which is considered seriously harmful to you.
- Legal information that would normally remain confidential, for example, court proceedings.

### How long are records kept?

This varies, depending on the service you received from us. Some records are kept longer than others. For example, those people who have received 'Help at Home', we would keep their records for 7 years after the service is no longer required.

### How do I request to see my records?

You can either ask your social worker (if you have one) or write to:

**The Office Co-ordinator,**  
Community Services,  
Heston Social Care Office,  
41 New Heston Road,  
Heston, TW5 0LW

You should give as much detail as possible to assist in locating your files. In order to comply with identity security arrangements, please enclose a photocopy of either your passport details or driving licence and a recent household utility bill with your request.

There is no charge to see your records or for any photocopies you may require.

## What happens next?

The Office Co-ordinator will write to you to acknowledge your request and advise you as to the likely time it will take before your case is allocated.

The length of time you will have to wait to see your files will vary depending on initial allocation and preparation time. Preparation time will be influenced by how many files there are, their complexity and third party requests for viewing consent.

We try to supply you with your information as near as possible to 40 days after the date of your application.

When the files have been prepared, you will be contacted by either the Office Co-ordinator, or Social Worker involved and invited to come in to view your information. The meeting will help you to fully understand the contents, word terminology and handwriting and, due to the very personal nature of some of the material, to ensure that should there be the need, counselling is available.

If you consider that the information we hold about you is inaccurate, you may request that this is amended or taken out. You can also request photocopies of any of the paperwork.

## What if I am not satisfied?

If you are not happy with our response to your request for personal information, or any request you have made to amend or erase information from your files, you have the right to appeal within 28 days. You can do this by contacting:

**The Customer Relations Manager**  
Community Services, The Civic Centre,  
Lampton Road, Hounslow TW3 4DN

**Telephone:** 020 8583 3333  
**Fax:** 020 8583 3071

## Who do I contact if I need to know more information?

If you have further queries, or would like to have more information about any of the above items, please contact:

**The Office Co-ordinator,**  
Heston Social Care Office,  
41 New Heston Road,  
Hounslow TW5 0LW

**Telephone:** 020 8583 3124

## Access for all

We will provide support appropriate to your communication needs. BSL Signers can be provided on request:

**Telephone:** 020 8583 3132 or  
**Minicom:** 020 8583 3122

Interpreters can be provided in most languages, if asked for in advance. For Panjabi, Hindi, Urdu and Gujarati, this can be arranged most easily by phoning the Council's Language Line in the language of your choice:

**Telephone:** 020 8583 2299

On request most information can be provided in Braille, audio tape, large print or in most other accessible formats. Contact our Social Care Office.

## How to contact us

Heston Adult Social Care Office  
41 New Heston Road,  
Heston, TW5 0LW

**Telephone:** 020 8583 3124  
**Minicom:** 020 8583 3186  
**Fax:** 020 8583 3187

**Email:**  
adultsocialcare@hounslow.gov.uk

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.