

INFORMATION CHARTER

Introduction

This information charter sets out the standards that you can expect from the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) when you request information from PBNI. This includes personal and non personal information which we hold and process in keeping with our obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018, Freedom of Information Act 2000, and Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

It will tell you how you can get access to information, including your personal data and what you can do if you think standards are not being met.

This charter will be kept under review and updated to take into account any changes in legislation or to PBNI's current policies and practice.

Responsibilities

The **Chief Executive of Probation** has a duty to ensure that PBNI complies with the requirements of legislation.

Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) at Director level has overall responsibility for risk management within PBNI. The SIRO has delegated the overall responsibility and control for security, policy and implementation to the PBNI Information Technology Security Officer.

The **Head of Information Technology**, reporting to the Director level, is responsible for IT security as well as all information technology matters.

The **Information Technology Security Officer** (ITSO) is responsible for creating, maintaining, giving guidance on and overseeing the implementation of Information Security.

The **Data Protection Officer** has responsibilities that include informing and advising PBNI of its data protection obligations and monitoring its compliance with legislative requirements. The Data

Protection Officer reports directly to the Chief Executive and the Board and acts as a direct contact both for data subjects and the Information Commissioner.

The Compliance Section of the Communications Unit has a duty to provide guidance and support on issues relating to Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Records Management.

All Managers are responsible for ensuring that information systems and processes in their areas conform to PBNI policies and guidance and to the requirements of legislation.

All Members of Staff are responsible for applying the correct principles when dealing with the information that they process and hold. Training is provided to staff to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities in respect of the management of information.

How our information is managed

PBNI maintains and protects all information according to legislation, current policies and best practice. It has security measures in place to maintain and safeguard the confidentiality, integrity and availability of our systems and data. All information is stored, processed and communicated in a secure manner making it readily available to authorised users.

PBNI is committed to the proactive dissemination of information (non personal), to be open and transparent and will routinely publish information unless restricted by legislation or public policy considerations.

Personal information

Personal information is information about you. PBNI is responsible for ensuring an adequate and efficient probation service. It holds information for this purpose, in particular preparing reports for court, supervising offenders, giving information to victims and employing staff. PBNI recognises how important it is to protect employees and other service users' privacy and to comply with the Data Protection Act. PBNI's Data Protection policy can be accessed [here](#). PBNI's privacy notices in respect of the information it holds for key areas of its work are also available on the [internet](#).

If we hold information on you, PBNI will safeguard your information and in most circumstances will not disclose personal data without consent. PBNI may have to disclose information without consent but only if the law allows it and/or it allows it and we believe it is important to do so.

If we ask you for personal information we will:

- let you know why we need it;

- only ask for what we need, and not collect excessive or irrelevant information;
- ensure that it is accurate and where necessary kept up to date’
- make sure nobody has access to it who should not;
- let you know if we share it with other organisations and why;
- only keep it for as long as we need to in accordance with our retention and disposal schedule;
- keep it secure
- let you know how you can access your information

In return, to assist PBNI to keep information reliable and up to date, we ask you to:

- give us accurate information, and
- tell us as soon as possible of any changes, such as a change of address.

Access to personal information

You can find out if we hold any personal information about you by making a ‘subject access request’ under the Data Protection Act. We will confirm whether or not personal information about you is being processed and where that is the case access to that personal data and information. This includes:

- the personal data and categories of personal data held,
- the purposes of and legal basis for the processing,
- the sources and recipients or categories of recipient to whom the personal data has been disclosed
- how long we hold your data for,
- other rights including: right to be forgotten
- right to have incorrect data corrected,
- right to be informed if we make automated decisions about you
- right to complain.

We handle all information in a manner that respects the rights of individuals and which complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

To request any of your personal information held by PBNI you can email dpa@pbni.gsi.gov.uk or write to us at the address provided below. You can also complete the form attached to our leaflet '[Your Right to Know](#)' and leave it in to your local probation office – this leaflet contains contact details for all our current offices.

If we do hold information about you that you believe is incorrect, you can ask us to correct any mistakes by contacting us using the same contact details.

There is no charge for requests for personal information however where a request from a data subject for access to, rectification or erasure of information is manifestly unfounded or excessive, we can charge a reasonable fee for dealing with the request or to refuse to act on the request. If that is the case we will notify you.

Access to non-personal information

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 enables the public to have access to unpublished information from a public body subject to certain conditions. Like all other public sector organisations PBNI is required to make the information it holds available unless subject to an exemption.

PBNI is committed to the proactive dissemination of information, to be open and transparent and will publish information unless restricted by legislation. All information available under our publication scheme (as listed in our '[Guide to Information](#)') is provided free of charge on line and in hard copy unless otherwise stated.

If you need to make a written request or if you require the information in a different format or language, there **may** be a charge for this. We will let you know in advance if there is a charge.

Refer to PBNI's Freedom of Information Policy for more information.

If you wish to request information (not personal) or have a query about a request please email
FOI@pbni.gsi.gov.uk

Complaints

If you are not satisfied with how your request for information has been handled, you can make a complaint through PBNI's [complaints procedure](#). If you are not happy with the outcome of our internal complaints procedure you can appeal against the decision to the Information Commissioner who will decide if your request has been handled properly. For more details please go to the Information Commissioner's [website](#).

Legislation – disclosure of information – exemptions.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018 have a number of exemptions which must be considered before publication or disclosure. If we use an exemption, within the relevant legislation, we will explain it to you. However, PBNI will not withhold information simply because it falls into a relevant exemption. We will assess the impact of disclosure in relation to the requested information and make a decision on a case-by-case basis (except where we have decided that

information of that type should be published proactively). For more information on exemptions and your rights under FOI and DPA legislation please go to the Information Commissioner's website www.ico.org.uk

To request information you can also write to

The Data Protection Officer:

Communications Unit (Compliance Section)

Probation Board for Northern Ireland,

Headquarters,

80/90 North Street

Belfast

BT1 1LD

Or email

DPO@pbni.gsi.gov.uk