

It's your information

Your rights to police information



This guidance is to help you:

- find out whether the police hold information about you;
- get a copy of your police record; or
- get a statement from the police saying that they have no information to give you.

The Data Protection Act 1998 (the Act) gives you the right to have a copy of the personal information the police hold about you. A request for your personal information is called a subject access request.

This guidance is for people who wish to make a subject access request. It does not cover criminal records checks for employment purposes. If a criminal records check is required for your work, then your employer should explain how to apply for this.

1 How can I make a subject access request?

You should make your request in writing. If you wish, you can apply using standard application forms, available from the police.

You should normally make your request to your local police force, which will be able to access all the information held centrally. If you no longer live in the UK, contact the police force for the area where you last lived.

If you have been in contact with the police because you were a witness or victim, or because of a traffic accident, then this information may not be available to other police forces. In these cases you should contact the particular police force you dealt with.

2 What will happen next?

You will need to provide the police with:

- a request in writing, or a copy of their form filled in correctly;
- a fee for £10 (this is the maximum fee and covers all information);
- proof of your identity; and
- a photograph (only if you are requesting CCTV footage).

The police do not have to fulfil your request until they have received any information they reasonably need to identify you and find the information you want. The police application forms will explain what details they will need to find the information you have requested, and what proof of ID they will need to see. For example, they may ask you when you have been in contact with the police and why, and whether you have lived in another part of the UK. Using the form will help the police to find all your information and may therefore speed up your request.

3 Will the police be able to refuse my request?

The Act includes exemptions which allow the police not to release information in some circumstances. In particular, they do not have to release information to you if this 'would be likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime' in a particular case. This could include situations where information relates to an ongoing investigation.

The police may also have to edit the information they send you to remove information about other people.

4 How soon should I get a reply?

The police must deal with your request promptly, and at most within forty days of receiving the request, the fee and any other information they need to identify you and find the information you have requested.

Keep a copy of your request. If you do not receive your information in forty days, then you should contact the police again. If they still do not respond, or if they do not give you all the information you think you should have, then you can contact us. Please explain clearly why you think the police have not responded properly. You can find a complaints form and guidance on our website.

More information

If you need any more information about this or any other aspect of data protection, please contact us.

Phone: 08456 30 60 60
01625 54 57 45
E-mail: please use the online enquiry form on our website
Website: www.ico.gov.uk