

# Being a Volunteer

## What do I need to know about Data Protection & GDPR?

---

### What are the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)?

These are a set of new regulations introduced by the European Union to replace the old Data Protection Act 1998 – they come into force on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. These regulations are very similar to the old regulations but have been strengthened to give individuals more say in how their own information is collected, stored and used by organisations. Organisations are held more accountable for following the wishes of the individuals whose information they use in their day-to-day operations.

### What are the principles we have to abide by?

There are six principles that everyone has to abide by:

- 1) To be **lawful, fair and transparent** when collecting, storing and processing someone's information.
- 2) To collect information only for a **specific purpose**, and not use that information for any other purposes you have not informed the individual of.
- 3) To **minimise** the information collected from an individual and not be excessive in collecting data for no reason.
- 4) To ensure the information collected is **accurate and complete** and where this is to be stored, it is kept up-to-date.
- 5) To ensure we **limit the time information is kept for** so that masses of information is not kept unnecessary and risk security of the information.
- 6) To ensure the **integrity and confidentiality** of any information is maintained at all times so only those people who needs to see it, can do so.

In addition, the new regulations provides a number of legal rights to all individuals concerning their own information. All individuals will have **the right to:**

- **be informed** if an organisation is using their information and for what purpose
- **access** and see what information an organisation holds on them
- **correct** their information if it is incorrect or incomplete
- **delete** their information if they wish
- **restrict processing** of their information if they are unhappy
- **object to processing** if they are unhappy with how their information is used
- **object to automated decision making** by electronic means
- **move your data** elsewhere if you wish

All of these are shown in Independent Age's new **Privacy Policy** which can be seen on the website. This can be downloaded or a copy requested from the volunteering team on [volunteering@independentage.org](mailto:volunteering@independentage.org) or 020 7605 4255. The policy tells individuals why we are collecting their information, what this information is likely to be and how it is used to provide the various services we offer.

## What does this mean for you?

Data Protection and the new GDPR is a legal requirement we have to follow, but it is also an opportunity for us to review how we manage the information we collect from older people, volunteers and supporters, to ensure we are mindful of their wishes and conscientious when handling and storing their information – some of which could be highly sensitive and cause harm if it is in the hands of unscrupulous individuals.

The consequences of not protecting information are very serious, not only for yourselves and the organisation, but also the person whose details you have access to. Information could be sent or emailed to the wrong person, or lost or stolen, or inadvertently retrieved by others after being discarded – all of these could constitute a 'breach' of the regulations and have to be reported to the police and the Information Commissioner. This could lead to a loss of trust and confidence in Independent Age by the public as a whole, its reputation being severely damaged, and a large fine imposed.

All information should be handled carefully, but the regulations clearly define two specific types:

### PERSONAL DATA

**Any data that relates to a living person who can be directly or indirectly identified from the data, or from the data and other information which could be added to it.**

**Personal data** can include any information that identifies a specific individual, whether it relates to personal or family life, business or profession.

### SPECIAL CATEGORY DATA

**Any personal data that is more sensitive, so needs more protection.**

**It relates to:**

the racial/ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetics, biometrics (where used for ID purposes), health, sex life or sexual orientation of a person.

As an Independent Volunteer, you are likely to come into contact with 'personal' and in some cases, 'special category' data as shown above, about the older people you support. This data could be in an email, by a letter, as part of a phone call, or a face-to-face conversation with your Independent Age contact. If this information were to fall into the wrong hands it could have serious implications for the older person, potentially making them vulnerable to fraud or scamming.

## What steps can I take to protect personal information?

Always be vigilant when you come into contact with any information belonging to another individual and think,



- In your home, please keep printed information in a lockable drawer or cabinet



- Please make sure any personal and sensitive information is not taken out of your home, for example when visiting the older person, unless it is needed for the purpose of your visit
- Please keep the amount of data you store on the older person to a minimum



- When doing assessment visits, you should follow specific guidelines as outlined in your training



- Please do not store or copy any information on to another medium, like another computer or a USB key



- Please do not discuss personal or sensitive information with professionals, family or friends and always ensure any conversations about the person you support are not overheard



- If you need to store contact details of the person you support on your phone, it should be in a way that the minimum amount of detail is stored e.g. initials and just the first line of the address only. No identifiable sensitive information should be stored on your phone at any time. The phone should be locked with a secure code at all times.

**Any concerns about the older person should only be shared with your Independent Age contact.**

### **Safety Online**

- Please do not email details of the older person you support to any other person or organisation, except where approved by your Independent Age contact
- If you need to send personal or sensitive information to an Independent Age staff member, please phone or email first to agree the preferred method
- If you have access to Independent Age electronic systems you should store all information relating to your volunteering and anyone you support on the system only
- When using social media, do not post anything that could cause reputational damage to Independent Age, or relates to another volunteer, staff member or an older person you are supporting (this could be their name and/or address or other personal information)– either directly or indirectly, this may be a 'post' or by you corresponding directly with them
- Volunteers involved in training or giving presentations on behalf of Independent Age should use only Independent Age approved materials and these should not be edited. If you are in doubt, you can contact the volunteering team
- Never take or publish photographs of the person you visit without their written consent to do so. Any consent must always be recorded on Independent Age's database

## **What do you do if someone wants to see the information Independent Age holds on them?**

Everyone has the right to see what information we hold on them. We have one month to supply them with the information. All requests should be forwarded to the Data Protection Lead, Richard Ella, at email address [dp@independentage.org](mailto:dp@independentage.org), immediately. Please ensure you provide all the contact details of the person making the request, and any specifics of what information they would like a copy of – this will enable us to make a speedier response to them. With all Subject Access Requests, it may be necessary to confirm the identity of the person making the request so we are not divulging information to a person who is not entitled to it.

## **What is a 'data breach', and what do I do if one happens?**

A data breach happens if you accidentally or unlawfully destroy, lose, alter or disclose to others the personal or special data of individuals who should not have access to it. This can happen by accident or on purpose in many different ways. We must respond to all these types of security incident, immediately, as there is a time limit in which the regulations say we have to respond within.

If you witness, are told of, or accidentally disclose details to others who should not be privy to the information, please report the incident to the data protection lead at Independent Age, Richard Ella, at email address [dp@independentage.org](mailto:dp@independentage.org), immediately, who will start an investigation and carry out all necessary actions.

**Please note:** *If you are unsure that a breach has taken place, err on the side of caution and report the incident anyway.*

## **When your volunteering comes to an end**

Please make sure you safely dispose of any information relating to the older person/people you have supported during your time with Independent Age by:

- Shredding all the paperwork you have using a cross-cut shredder
- Handing the information back to us via one of our offices
- If you have a small amount of information you need to destroy, you can post it back to Independent Age using the Royal Mail Signed for First Class service and we will reimburse your costs
- If you have a lot of information you need to destroy, please contact us on 020 7605 4255 and we will arrange with you to have this collected and/or destroyed.

## **What you should do next**

As well as complying with the guidelines and procedures outlined above, we ask you to take the following steps:

- All personal and sensitive information not currently in use, should be securely disposed of or given to your Independent Age contact for secure destruction
- If you haven't already done so, please sign and return the data protection and confidentiality form to us to confirm you have read and agreed to follow these good practice guidelines.