

Privacy Statement for advocacy



What is a Privacy Statement?

This is a privacy statement, and it is about the information we collect about you. We have to have this by law (General Data Protection Regulation, May 2018) so you know what we do with information we have about you.

We are only allowed to keep information about you when you know:

- Exactly who is keeping your information and data
- Why we are keeping your information
- What reasons we have for keeping your information
- The types of personal information we will keep
- Where your personal data has come from
- Who we might share information with and why
- How long we will keep your information
- What your rights are (for example, if you want to see your records)
- What to do if you think the information we have about you is wrong
- How you can stop us from having your information
- How you can make a complaint



1. What information do we collect from you?

We can only keep information that is relevant to our work with you. These are called records. Records have to be accurate, up to date, secure and kept for a limited amount of time only.

From the time we start working with you, we record basic information about who you are (name, age, gender, language you speak, if you are disabled, and your ethnicity), where you live, names of carers, social worker, the work we are doing with you and why you want us to speak up for you or with you.

Most of your personal data comes from you. Sometimes it might come from a carer, social worker, residential worker or personal adviser. For example, if your social worker contacts us on your behalf, they might provide information to help us work with you, eg, if you are unable to speak or have a complex disability.

All the information we have about you we will share with you unless it would put you, or someone else, in danger.



2. Why do you keep this information?

We keep information about you to help us to:

- Look at, and discuss, rights and entitlements along with options and avenues that you may want to explore further
- Keep track of the work we have done with you and what needs to be done
- Assess the type and quality of support you have received
- Check if you (or anyone else) is in serious danger
- Show the work we did to support you and the information we have (see “How long you will keep my information”)

We may also use your information to:

- Investigate your concerns if you need to complain about our services
- Refer you to another service (we would only do this with your agreement)
- Check you have got a good service from us (this is known as an audit and involves us reviewing young people’s records. This is done in such a way that you can’t be individually identified)
- Investigate serious incidents (this is when we notice that something has gone wrong, or nearly went wrong, with the service we provided to you)
- Plan future services to ensure we meet the needs of young people
- Report on our performance to the organisations who fund us and to the Department for Education (this information is always provided in a way that means you can’t be individually identified unless we have your consent to identify you)
- Conduct research and development, with your consent
- Communicate publicly about the difference that we make to young people. This would never be done in a way that would identify individual young people without their explicit permission.

In addition to the staff and volunteers who work in our services, our managers and our small team of data analysts may have access to your data, but only if they need to. **Everyone who works with “Hear Me”, Herefordshire’s children’s rights and advocacy service, has signed an agreement to keep your information confidential.**



3. Who is keeping my information and data?

“Hear Me” advocacy workers record your information on a system which is safe and secure within Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE. Access to the information is restricted only to those people who need it. Any paper records we have are kept in locked cabinets.

4. Who might we share this information with?

We have to report how many people we have worked with and what the general issues have been. If we are asked to share any of your personal details, we will always get your permission before doing this.

However, if you or another young person are unsafe or at risk of being hurt in some way, we would have to share some important information. We would always tell you about this as long as doing this

did not put you at more risk. Occasionally, we may also have to share information for legal reasons. Again we would always talk to you about this if we can.



5. How long will you keep my information?

- If we worked with you when you were under 18 years old, we will keep your information until you are 25.
- If you were older than 18 when we worked with you, we will keep your information for 7 years after we have stopped working with you.

For example, if you were 22 when we stopped working with you we would keep your information until you were 29. We may keep it longer if policy or law means we have to. After that time, your records are securely destroyed.

Anonymised data may be stored on our secure system. This means that we remove any information that would allow you to be identified before we save information on our system.

All workers who have access to your records have been trained in our confidentiality policy where your rights to confidentiality are respected and protected.



6. What are my rights over my information?

We have to have a legal reason to keep information about you. For the “Hear Me” service, there are a few legal reasons, shown here in brackets: you agree and want us to work with you (*give consent*) to make sure we provide you with the support you need (*contractual compliance, legal obligation, vital interests*) and to make sure we give you advocacy support where we are contracted by a local authority, other body or agency (*contractual compliance*).



7. Can I see my records?

You have a right to see all the information we hold on you. To do this, contact your advocate or e-mail Herefordshire Council at Informationgovernance@herefordshire.gov.uk. You should be able to see your file within one month.

8. What if I think the information you have about me is wrong?

It is your right that all information we have about you is correct. If you think that some of the information we hold about you is inaccurate (for example your name is spelt wrong, or we have recorded something incorrectly) please speak to your advocate or contact Informationgovernance@herefordshire.gov.uk. We will give you an answer about your request within one month.



9. How can I stop you keeping my information?

You can say you do not want advocacy support or advice whenever you want. You can stop giving us permission to collect your information at any time and we will do this. We will then keep any information we already have and record that you do not want advocacy from us anymore. You can, of course, come back to us again if you want advocacy any time until you are 26 years old.

If you do not want us to keep any information about the work that we have done with you please speak to your advocate, or contact Informationgovernance@herefordshire.gov.uk



10. How can I make a complaint about the information that you hold on me?

If you are unhappy with how we are using the information we have about you, please speak to your advocate or the Data Protection Officer ct1@herefordshire.gov.uk, to see if they can sort it out.

If you are not happy with the council's reply, you can also complain to:

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House, Water Lane
Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF
Help line: 0303 123 1113