



Granton Information Centre

Privacy Statement

Granton Information Centre (GIC), established in 1984, provides free, impartial and confidential advice, information and representation to our clients.

Our staff are trained to assist in welfare benefits, housing issues, rent arrears and debt/money advice.

Each staff member at GIC has a confidentiality agreement in place, which specifies that we understand that the service offered by GIC is strictly confidential. This means that we will not disclose any information about our clients, their circumstances or the nature of their enquiry to anyone outside GIC, and that for all exceptions to this, we will not disclose information about a client or their case without the client's prior consent. Furthermore, we will not confirm whether or not an individual is, or has been, a client of GIC to anyone outside of the organisation.

Please take the time to read our privacy statement; as an organisation that deals with sensitive information on a daily basis, GIC believe it is important for our clients to understand how their personal information is used and what rights they have.

More information on data protection and individual rights can be found on the website of the Information Commissioner's Office: <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/>

Why GIC records client data

We collect and use our clients' personal information to enable us to provide them with tailored advice, information and representation. As an advice agency we have a 'legitimate interest' to do this under data protection law, because we need to collect and use data in order to provide the service.

What client data we collect

GIC only collect the information we require; clients should decide what they feel is appropriate to disclose to us. Our staff will continuously explain throughout our dealings with clients why we need the information we collect.

When we record and use client personal information, our staff:

- only access it when we have a good reason
- only share what is necessary and relevant to third parties and will discuss this with clients before we do so
- never sell/share it with commercial organisations

The following personal data is considered 'sensitive' and to enable GIC to record this information we require that clients sign a GIC authorisation form to give explicit consent:

- personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs
- trade-union membership
- genetic data, biometric data processed solely to identify a human being
- health-related data
- data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation.

How we store client data

Our clients may get advice from GIC via a face to face appointment, telephone call, email or letter; in all of these circumstances our staff will log all client information, correspondence, and notes surrounding their case or enquiry into our secure case management system (AdvicePro). At present, we do not record telephone calls.

Some client information might also be kept within our secure email and IT systems.

We have security measures in place to protect against the loss, misuse and alteration of personal data under our control. While we cannot guarantee that loss, misuse or alteration of data will not occur while it is under our control, we take appropriate measures to try to prevent this

In line with GDPR guidance, we hold on to client information for a maximum of 6 years.

When an individual visits our website, we collect a type of data called cookies which tell us what is being 'clicked on'.

When we use client information without permission

On rare occasions, GIC may have to use or share client information without prior consent granted. We will only do this if there is a legal basis for it. Examples may include:

- 'legal obligation': if the police or a court orders us to share information
- to protect someone's life, called 'vital interests' - for example, sharing information with a paramedic if a client was unwell at our office

- to carry out our aims and goals as an organisation, called 'legitimate interests' - for example, to create anonymous case studies and statistics for our funders or for research purposes
- to defend our legal rights - for example, to resolve a complaint regarding advice GIC has given

If you have any questions about how your information is collected or used, please email info@gic.org.uk : we will require 2 working days to deal with all requests.

You can contact us to:

- find out what personal information we hold about you and correct your information if it is wrong, out of date or incomplete
- request we delete or stop using your information
- ask us to give you a copy of the data we hold in a format you can use to transfer it to another service.