

PEOPLE FIRST HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Manchester Office

179 Royce Road
Hulme
M15 5TJ
Tel: (0161) 226 1917
Fax: (0161) 232 8422

Northwich Office

54A Station Road
Northwich
CW9 5RB
Tel: (01606) 333731
Fax: (01606) 40768

Tameside Office

63-65 Grosvenor Street
Stalybridge
SK15 2JN
Tel: (0161) 331 2714
Fax: (0161) 331 2101

Rochdale Office

5 Fenwick Street
Rochdale
OL12 6XE
Tel: (01706) 647693
Fax: (01706) 649868

Web: www.peoplefirsthousing.co.uk

E-mail: admin@peoplefirsthousing.co.uk

People First HA is registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965, Registration Number 27746R. It has Charitable Status.



CONFIDENTIALITY & DATA PROTECTION

People First requires information about support clients, tenants and licensees, to undertake its functions as a housing and support provider. Everybody has a right to privacy and People First is bound by the Data Protection Act 1998 which means we have an obligation to hold information securely and use it for its intended purpose.

What is personal information?

Personal information is any information which could allow an individual to be identified, such as name, date-of-birth or address. Some personal information can be classed as 'sensitive personal data', for example, information about your ethnicity, mental or physical health, sexuality and so on.

Who gets to see personal data?

Usually, our staff members are the only people who get to see your personal data and they will only disclose it to other people or agencies outside People First with your knowledge.

Within People First, a team confidentiality approach is adopted. This means your personal information will only be discussed within the team responsible for the service, where it is necessary to do so to reduce elements of risk and to make sure we meet your needs.

Sometimes, we may give information about you to other people without your consent. Examples of circumstances where we may have to disclose information without consent are:

- If we feel there is a risk to you or those living with you
- If the Police ask for information relating to a crime
- If we feel there is a risk to staff
- If there are legal and/or statutory requirements to disclose information
- If we need to arrange for another service to be provided and they need information relating to your circumstances

In most cases – even if we do not require consent – we will advise you of our intention to give information about you to someone else and the reason why. We will also inform you of the implications of you giving your consent.

How do we keep personal information about you safe?

- We ensure our systems of record keeping are safe and secure by locking all files away in cabinets
- Locked cabinets are only accessible to certain staff
- We only hold relevant information about you
- Our records are accurate and up to date
- We do not keep records longer than necessary

What you should do if you think a member of staff has disclosed information about you to others?

If you are unhappy about a situation where you think a staff member has told someone else personal information about you, you can use the associations complaints procedure. All information given will be treated in the strictest confidence. A copy of the complaints procedure is available on request.

How can I find out what information is held about me?

Most of the information we hold is fairly obvious and in most cases we hold it because you or others living with you gave it to us. Information may be held on computer, in emails and on files. Under Data Protection legislation you have a right of access to personal information held by the association. However, there are exceptions. We may not be required to give you access to personal data if this involves giving you information about another individual, or in the case of manual files the information is not in an accessible format.

If you want to see the information we hold on you in our records, please contact your support worker/housing officer. They will provide you with a data access request form. An administration fee of £10 is payable and we will need to confirm your identity before dealing with your request. Following receipt of your request and payment we have 41 days to arrange access.

You have the right to have your information corrected if you do not agree with it, and if necessary, removed.

A full copy of our data protection and confidentiality policy is available on request.

Providing consent for information to be held and processed and exchanged

If you are accepted for support or offered housing we will ask you to sign a form consenting to allow the association to hold and process information about you that is relevant to the service we deliver. We may also ask you to sign an information disclosure consent form to allow us to share information, for example, about a claim for housing benefit. We will explain all the types of information that we need to hold and why. If you fail to sign the consent forms it may not be possible for us to provide support/housing.