

PRIVACY POLICY



This notice explains when and why we collect personal information about you; how we use it, the conditions under which we may disclose it to others and how we keep it secure.

As a client of Virtus Law Ltd, you should read this notice alongside our general terms and conditions which provide further information on confidentiality, data privacy etc.

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WHO WE ARE:

Data is collected, processed and stored by **Virtus Law Ltd**; and we are what is known as the ‘data controller’ of the personal information you provide to us.

Virtus Law Ltd is a limited company, authorised and regulated by the **Solicitors Regulation Authority** under number **623016**.

Our Data Protection Officer is **Rossanna Schurink** who can be contacted by email – rossanna.schurink@virtuslaw.co.uk

CHILDREN:

Our website and services are not aimed specifically at children because in legal work children are generally represented by their parent or guardians. If you are a child and need further advice or explanation about how we would use your data, please e-mail rossanna.schurink@virtuslaw.co.uk

WHAT WE NEED:

The exact information we will request from you will depend on what you have asked us to do or what we are **contracted** to do for you.

There are two types of personal data (personal information) that you may provide to us:

- **Personal data:** is the general information that you supply about yourself – such as your name, address, gender, date of birth, contact details, financial information etc.
- **Sensitive personal data:** is, by its nature, more sensitive information and may include your racial or ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, political opinions, health data, trade union membership, philosophical views, biometric and genetic data.

In the majority of cases personal data will be restricted to basic information and information needed to complete ID checks. However some of the work we do may require us to ask for more sensitive information.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

Information about you may be obtained from a number of sources; including:

- You may volunteer the information about yourself
- You may provide information relating to someone else – if you have the authority to do so
- Information may be passed to us by third parties in order that we can undertake your legal work on your behalf. Typically these organisations can be:
 - Banks or building societies
 - Panel providers who allocate legal work to law firms
 - Organisations that have recommend work to us
 - Medical or financial institutions – who provide your personal records / information

WHY WE NEED IT:

The primary reason for asking you to provide us with your personal data, is to allow us to carry out your requests – which will ordinarily be to represent you and carry out your legal work.

The following are some examples, although not exhaustive, of what we may use your information for:

- Verifying your identity
- Communicating with you
- To establish funding of your matter or transaction
- Obtaining insurance policies on your behalf
- Processing your legal transaction including:
 - Providing you with advice; carrying out litigation on your behalf; attending hearings on your behalf; preparing documents or to complete transactions
- Keeping financial records of your transactions and the transactions we make on your behalf
- Seeking advice from third parties; such as legal and non-legal experts

- Responding to any complaint or allegation of negligence against us

WHO HAS ACCESS TO IT:

We have a data protection regime in place to oversee the effective and secure processing of your personal data. We will not sell or rent your information to third parties. We will not share your information with third parties for marketing purposes.

Generally, we will only use your information within **Virtus Law Ltd**. However there may be circumstances, in carrying out your legal work, where we may need to disclose some information to third parties; for example:

- Court or Tribunal
- Solicitors acting on the other side
- Asking an independent Barrister or Counsel for advice; or to represent you
- Online portal – Claim Notification Form
- Ask MID (motor insurance details)
- Medco (medical expert allocation)
- ELTO (Employers Insurance details)
- Non legal experts to obtain advice or assistance
- Translation Agencies
- Contracted Suppliers
- External auditors or our Regulator; e.g, SRA, ICO etc.
- Bank or Building Society; or other financial institutions
- Insurance Companies
- Providers of identity verification
- Any disclosure required by law or regulation; such as the prevention of financial crime and terrorism
- If there is an emergency and we think you or others are at risk

In the event any of your information is shared with the aforementioned third parties, we ensure that they comply, strictly and confidentially, with our instructions and they do not use your personal information for their own purposes unless you have explicitly consented to them doing so.

There may be some uses of personal data that may require your specific consent. If this is the case we will contact you separately to ask for your consent which you are free to withdraw at any time.

HOW DO WE PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL DATA:

We recognise that your information is valuable and we take all reasonable measures to protect it whilst it is in our care.

We have exceptional standards of technology and operational security in order to protect personally identifiable data from loss, misuse, alteration or destruction. Similarly, we adopt a high threshold when it comes to confidentiality obligations and both internal and external parties have agreed to protect confidentiality of all information; to ensure all personal data is handled and processed in line with our stringent confidentiality and data protection policies.

We use computer safeguards such as fit for purpose firewalls, anti-virus software continuously scans the server and cloud penetration testing protect **Virtus Law Ltd**; and we enforce, where possible, physical access controls to our building and files to keep data safe.

We restrict access to personal information to Virtus Law employees, contractors and agents who need to know that the information in order to operate, develop or improve our services. These individuals are bound by confidentiality obligations and may be subject to discipline, including termination and criminal prosecution, if they fail to meet these obligations.

HOW LONG WILL WE KEEP IT FOR:

Your personal information will be retained, usually in computer or manual files, only for as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes for which the information was collected; or as required by law; or as long as is set out in any relevant contract you may hold with us. For example:

- As long as necessary to carry out your legal work
- For a minimum of 6 years from the conclusion or closure of your legal work; in case you, or we, need to re-open your case for the purpose of defending complaints or claims against us
- Personal injury matters which involve lifetime awards or PI Trusts may be kept indefinitely

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

Under GDPR, you are entitled to access your personal data (otherwise known as a 'right to access'). If you wish to make a request, please do so in writing addressed to our Data Protection Officer Rossanna Schurink; or contact the person dealing with your matter.

A request for access to your personal data means you are entitled to a copy of the data we hold on you – such as your name, address, contact details, date of birth, information regarding your health etc.- but it does not mean you are entitled to the documents that contain this data.

Under certain circumstances, in addition to the entitlement to 'access your data', you have the following rights:

1. The right to be informed: which is fulfilled by way of this privacy notice and our transparent explanation as to how we use your personal data

2. The right of access: you are entitled to be provided with a copy of your personal details upon request

3. The right to rectification: you are entitled to have personal data rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete

4. The right to erasure / ‘right to be forgotten’: you have the right to request the deletion or removal of your personal data where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing. This right only applies in the following specific circumstances:

- Where the personal data is no longer necessary in regards to the purpose for which it was originally collected
- Where consent is relied upon as the lawful basis for holding your data and you withdraw your consent
- Where you object to the processing and there is no overriding legitimate interest for continuing the processing
- The personal data was unlawfully processed
- Where you object to the processing for direct marketing purposes

5. The right to object: you have the right to object to processing based on legitimate interests; and direct marketing. This right only applies in the following circumstances:

- An objection to stop processing personal data for direct marketing purposes is absolute – there are no exemptions or grounds to refuse – we must stop processing in this context
- You must have an objection on grounds relating to your particular situation
- We must stop processing your personal data unless:
 - We can demonstrate compelling legitimate grounds for the processing which override your interests, rights and freedoms; or
 - The processing is for the establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims.

6. The right to restrict processing: you have the right to request the restriction or suppression of your data. When processing is restricted, we can store the data but not use it. This right only applies in the following circumstances:

- Where you contest the accuracy of the personal data – we should restrict the processing until we have verified the accuracy of that data
- Where you object to the processing (where it was necessary for the performance of a public interest or purpose of legitimate interests), and we are considering whether our organisation’s legitimate grounds override your right
- Where processing is unlawful and you request restriction
- If we no longer need the personal data but you require the data to establish, exercise or defend a legal claim

COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE USE OF PERSONAL DATA:

If you wish to raise a complaint on how we have handled your personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer who will investigate further. Our Data Protection Officer is Rossanna Schurink and you can contact her at rossanna.schurink@virtuslaw.co.uk

If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are not processing your personal data in accordance with the law, you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

MARKETING DATA:

We may contact you for the purpose of direct marketing. This means that we may use your personal data that we have collected in accordance with this privacy policy to contact you about our products or services, events etc. which we feel may interest you. The direct marketing communications may be provided to you by social media channels, email or post. We will never send marketing communications via SMS or call you without your specific consent; nor do we ever pass on or sell your details to a third party.

HOW WE COLLECT PERSONAL DATA:

The following are examples, although not exhaustive, of how we collect your personal information:

- Submitting an online enquiry
- Following/liking/subscribing to our social media channels
- Agree to fill in a questionnaire or survey on our website
- Ask us a question or submit any queries or concerns you have via email or on social media channels
- Post information to the our website or social media channels, for example when we offer the option for you to comment on, or join, discussions
- When you leave a review about us on Google Reviews or other review site.

Whenever we collect your personal data, you will be provided the opportunity to 'opt in' to receiving marketing communications from us. We hope you will provide this information so you find our communications useful but if you choose not to this will have no effect on accessing our legal services.

Virtus Law Ltd handles enquires at different stages and we group those enquiries in three main ways. We will take the following steps in each instance:

Prospects: Consent will need to be recorded before being added to marketing campaigns.

Fixed fee clients: Legitimate interest will be the legal basis.

Retainer clients: Legitimate interest will be the legal basis.

What we collect: Information about your computer or device and about your visits to, and use of, this website (including your IP address, geographical location, browser type, referral source, length of visit and number of page views). This data is considered "non-identifying information", as it does not personally identify you on its own.

How we collect it: We use Google Analytics and similar technologies to analyse the use of this website. Google Analytics generates statistical and other information about website use by means of cookies, which are stored on users' computers. The information generated relating to our website is used to analyse how people use our website and provide statistical

reports about aggregate user behaviour. Google will store this information. Please visit google.com/policies/privacy/ to view Google's [privacy policy](#).

HOW WE USE YOUR DETAILS:

The following are examples, although not exhaustive, of how we may use your personal information for our legitimate business interests:

- fraud prevention
- direct marketing
- network and information systems security
- data /analytics /enhancing, modifying or improving our services
- identifying usage trends
- determining the effectiveness of promotional campaigns and advertising.

We may use your personal information for legitimate interests such as direct marketing or under reasonable expectation to provide you with information you would expect to receive or that would benefit and enhance our relationship. This information will help us review and improve our products, services and offers.

YOUR RIGHTS:

You have the right to object to this processing. Should you wish to do so please email rossanna.schurink@virtuslaw.co.uk

HOW WE PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION:

We will only ever use non sensitive personal information to target individuals with marketing materials; such as name, address, telephone, email, job description. Sensitive information or specific details will never be used to target marketing communications. We may use personalisation to collect analytics to inform marketing and produce relevant content for the marketing strategy to enable it to enhance and personalise the “consumer experience”.

If you do not wish us to continue to contact you in this way, you can either follow the unsubscribe instructions on any of our communications to you or contact us by email rossanna.schurink@virtuslaw.co.uk with your name and email address. Your details will be removed immediately. Once unsubscribed, you may still receive transactional emails from us regarding your legal case.

CONTACTING US ABOUT PRIVACY:

If you have any questions regarding our privacy statement, the information we have collected from you online, the practices of this website, or your dealings with this website, please contact, Rossanna Schurink, rossanna.schurink@virtuslaw.co.uk.

POLICY MODIFICATIONS:

We may change this Privacy Policy from time to time especially when new Regulation or better practices become available to us. When **Virtus Law Ltd** makes changes to this Privacy Policy, the updated version will be posted on this page. We encourage you visit this page periodically.

