What’s on My Record?

A practical guide to your rights of access to personal information

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SCOTTISH CONSUMER COUNCIL
Many different organisations keep records that contain personal information about you. Your records may be kept on a computer or in manual files. You have a right to see many of these records and to have the information corrected if it is wrong. If they are kept on a computer, you also have a right to compensation if you are damaged by incorrect information.

This guide tells you:
- which records you can see
- how to apply to see your records
- how much it costs
- what information you can't see
- how to get errors put right
- how to enforce your rights

The guide covers:
- computer records
- credit reference records
- education records
- health records
- housing records
- medical reports
- social work records

This guide explains your rights under the law. It does not affect any voluntary arrangements that organisations may have to give you access to your records.
Computer Records

The Data Protection Act 1984 gives you the right to see personal information about yourself held on a computer. This includes computerised records held by public sector organisations and private companies, such as:

- computer dating agencies
- credit card companies
- the Department of Social Security
- employers
- gas, electricity and telephone companies
- high street retailers
- hospitals and doctors
- housing departments
- the Inland Revenue
- mail order companies
- social work departments

You can also see housing, social work, education and health records that are kept in manual files, credit reference records and medical reports. These are described in separate sections of this guide.

Computer users (known as data users) who keep information about individuals must, by law, appear in the Data Protection Register. The register will tell you:

- if an organisation is registered;
- the sort of information held;
- the types of individuals about whom information is held;
- what the information is used for, where it comes from and to whom it may be passed;
- to whom, and where, to send your application for information.

For details of entries in the register, contact the Registration Department of the Data Protection Registrar (see inside back cover).

How do I apply?
You should apply in writing. If you have consulted the register, write to the person who deals with subject access requests. If not, telephone the head office of the data user and ask if there is a particular person you should write to, such as a Data Protection Officer or company secretary, and if there is an application form they can send you. Ask them to help you identify the records you want.

The data users can ask you to prove your identity and provide enough information to help them find your records. It will save time if you tell them what your relationship is with them – customer, employee, patient, etc – and give relevant dates or reference numbers. They must give you a copy of your record and explain any terms that you may not understand.

How long does it take?
Once the data user has enough information to identify you and locate your records, they must respond within 40 days.

What does it cost?
You can be charged up to £10 for each request. Some data users charge less and others nothing. If the
data user has more than one registration, you may have to make separate applications, each with a fee, to get all your records.

**What information can’t I see?**

Some information on your record can be withheld from you. This includes information that:

- could identify someone else. If the person objects to being identified, you can be refused access to all or part of your record;
- could cause serious harm to your or another person’s physical or mental health;
- would help to prevent or detect crime;
- is held to assess or collect tax or duty;
- is confidential because it was provided in the context of a lawyer-client relationship;
- concerns national security;
- shows any actions the data user intends to take against you;
- the data user has a legal obligation not to disclose;
- is held by organisations that regulate financial services.

The data user does not have to tell you if information has been withheld. But if you suspect that information has been withheld without justification, you can complain either to the Data Protection Registrar or by going to court – see **How can I complain?** below.

**How can I correct errors?**

If the information about you on your record is incorrect or misleading, you

are entitled to have it corrected or removed. This does not apply to opinions, unless the opinion is based on factually inaccurate information.

You can ask the Registrar or a court to order the correction or erasure of the inaccurate information if the data user refuses to amend your record.

**Is compensation available?**

If you suffer financially or physically as a result of inaccurate information, you have a right to compensation. You cannot claim for distress unless it is as a result of the financial or physical injury.

You can also apply for compensation if your records have been lost or destroyed or disclosed without the authority of the data user.

**How can I complain?**

You can complain to the Data Protection Registrar if you are dissatisfied with the way a data user has dealt with your application. The Registrar's address is inside the back cover of this guide.

If a data user has refused to give you access to your records, or to correct or erase inaccurate information without proper reason, you can go to court.
Credit Reference Records

The Consumer Credit Act 1974 gives you the right to see personal information about yourself held by credit reference agencies. You can see what information they have about you even if you have not applied for credit.

How do I apply?
If you have applied for credit, you have the right to know the name and address of any credit reference agency that was approached for details about you. You must write to the shop or loan company within 28 days of the last time you contacted them about the deal. They must tell you the name and address of any credit reference agency they approached, within seven working days of receiving your letter.

You can see what information the credit reference agencies have about you - even if you have not applied for or been refused credit. You can write to them at any time and ask for a copy of your file. You must:

- send £1 which is not refundable;
- give your name and address, including the post code;
- give any addresses that you have lived at during the past six years.

The large agencies keep information on almost every address in the country. The three main agencies are:

CCN Systems Ltd
Consumer Affairs Dept
PO Box 40
NOTTINGHAM NG7 2SS

Equifax Europe Ltd
Consumer Affairs Dept
Spectrum House
1A North Avenue
CLYDEBANK G81 2DR

Infolink Ltd
CCA Dept
38 Whitworth Street
MANCHESTER M60 1GH

How long does it take?
The agency has seven working days from when it received your letter to send you the information on your file or tell you that it has no information about you. If it asks you for more details, the seven day period starts from when it receives these.

How can I correct errors?
If any of the details on your records are incorrect, you can ask the agency to correct them. You cannot ask it to alter information that is correct but embarrassing.

You must write to the agency within 28 days of receiving your record, asking it to remove or change any details that you think are wrong. It must reply within 28 days and tell you whether it will correct your record.

If the agency does not reply within 28 days, you can send it a note up to 200 words long containing the corrections that you want to be added to your file. You must send this "notice of correction" within a further 28 days. You can also send a notice if the agency refuses to remove or change any details that you believe are wrong.
If the agency corrects your record or adds your notice of correction, it must send the details to anybody who asked about you in the previous six months. It must get the permission of the Director General of Fair Trading if it does not want to add the notice. The agency can refuse to add a notice of correction if it thinks it is incorrect, frivolous, defamatory or scandalous.

The Director General can only get involved in a complaint if you have followed all the steps described above, within the time limits. Otherwise, he can only give advice.

You should:

- say that you are writing under Section 159(5) of the Consumer Credit Act 1974;
- give details of the incorrect entry on your record, and say why they are incorrect and why you will suffer if they are not corrected;
- give the date you sent the notice of correction to the agency. If you cannot remember, give a rough idea;
- include copies of any correspondence with the agency and your notice of correction.

The Director General will ask the agency to comment. You will usually see the reply and be asked for your views. He will decide how to settle the matter.

If you need help with any of the procedures, contact your local Trading Standards Department (see under your Regional or Islands Council entry in the phone book). Your local Citizens Advice Bureau can also give advice (see the phone book).
Education Records

The Data Protection Act 1984 gives you the right to see personal information about yourself in education records that are held on a computer.

The School Pupil Records (Scotland) Regulations 1990 give school pupils and their parents the right to see personal information held on records kept in manual files by education authorities (the Regional and Islands Councils). The Further Education Student Records (Scotland) Regulations 1990 give further education students, and in certain circumstances their parents, the right to see personal information held on records kept in manual files by college boards of management. The right of access applies to pupils and students, past and present. You can see the records if you are:

- a pupil or student aged 16 or over;
- a pupil or student aged under 16, if you have your parent’s or guardian’s permission;
- a parent or guardian where the pupil or student is under 18, or where the pupil or student is not capable of understanding the information.

You can only see information in manual records that was recorded after 1 October 1990. You have no right to see information recorded earlier unless the information recorded later would be unintelligible without the earlier information.

However, this does not affect any voluntary arrangements to let you see information recorded before 1 October 1990.

Higher education students can only see information about themselves in records that are held on a computer unless the institution allows access to manual records.

How do I apply?
You should apply in writing. Before you write, telephone the head teacher, principal of the college or head office of the education department and ask if there is a particular person you should write to, such as a Data Protection Officer, and if there is an application form they can send you. Ask them to help you identify the records you want.

They can ask you to provide enough details to help establish your identity and find the record, and may ask you to pay a fee if the record is held on a computer.

You are entitled to see your record and to get a copy. You must be given an explanation of any abbreviations or jargon in the record that you may have difficulty in understanding.

How long does it take?
They may have to contact someone else identified in your record to get their consent to being identified, or get the opinion of a doctor or reporter to the Children’s Panel who has supplied information for the record. This must be done within 14 days of receiving your request.
You must be given access to your record within 40 days of your request. However, if you have to supply further details, the 40-day period starts from when these have been received. If they have to contact someone else for consent or an opinion, the period may be extended by up to 20 days.

Examination marks are an exception to the 40-day time limit. Here, the time limit is either five months, or 40 days after the results were announced, whichever is earlier.

What does it cost?
You can be charged up to £10 for each request to get access to records held on a computer. The education department or college can charge less or waive the fee altogether. There is no charge for access to manual records but you may be charged for a photocopy if you want one.

What information can't I see?
Some information on your record can be withheld from you. This includes information that:

- could identify someone else. If the person objects to being identified, you can be refused access to all or part of your record;
- could cause serious harm to your or another person's physical or mental health;
- is in a reference concerning education, training or employment;

- is about adoption records or reports, or a record of the special educational needs of a child or young person;
- was supplied by a reporter to a Children's Panel;
- would help to prevent or detect crime;
- is confidential because it was provided in the context of a lawyer-client relationship;
- is about any actions the education department or college intends to take against you;
- the education department or college has a legal obligation not to disclose.

They do not have to tell you if information has been withheld. But if your record is kept on a computer and you suspect that information has been withheld without justification, you can complain either to the Data Protection Registrar or by going to court - see How can I complain? overleaf.

How can I correct errors?
You can ask for any information about you that you think is wrong to be removed or corrected. This includes inaccurate factual information or an opinion based on inaccurate or misleading information.

Where your record is kept in a manual file and the education department or college accepts that there is an inaccuracy, your record must be corrected and they must give you a copy of the amended information. If they disagree, a note
of your views must be added to the record. They must give you a copy of the note and the information it applies to and a statement of the reasons for disagreeing. In either case, the copy must be provided free of charge.

Is compensation available?
If your record is kept on a computer and you suffer financially or physically as a result of inaccurate information, you have a right to compensation. You cannot claim for distress unless it is as a result of the financial or physical injury.

You can also apply for compensation if your record has been lost or destroyed or disclosed without the authority of the education department or college.

If your record is kept in a manual file, you have no right to compensation for damages.

How can I complain?
If your record is held on a computer and you are dissatisfied with the way your application has been dealt with, you can complain to the Data Protection Registrar. The Registrar's address is inside the back cover of this guide.

If the education department or college has refused to give you access to your record, or to correct or erase inaccurate information without proper reason, you can go to court.

If your record is kept in a manual file and you are unhappy with the way that your application has been dealt with, or if your request to correct or remove inaccurate information has been refused, you can ask for the decision to be reviewed. You must do this in writing within 28 days of the decision. The review must be carried out by a sub-committee of the education authority or college board of management, none of whose members took part in the original decision.

At the review hearing you can present your case in writing, or in person, in which case you can bring someone to help you.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the review, you have the right to apply to the courts for a review of the decision. If you believe there has been maladministration by an education authority you can complain to the Commissioner for Local Administration in Scotland (the ombudsman). Your local Citizens Advice Bureau (see the phone book) will advise you how to do this.
Health Records

The Data Protection Act 1984 gives you the right to see personal information about yourself in health records that are held on a computer.

The Access to Health Records Act 1990 gives you the right to see personal information about yourself on health records kept in manual files made by a health professional concerning your care and treatment. The Act also applies to the records of employers who hold information about your health. It does not apply to any record made about your health concerning a criminal offence, fitness for employment, compensation or litigation.

Health professionals include hospital doctors, general practitioners, dentists, pharmacists, opticians, nurses, midwives and health visitors, chiropodists, dieticians, occupational therapists, orthoptists, physiotherapists, clinical psychologists, child psychotherapists, speech therapists and art or music therapists employed by a health service body, and scientists employed as head of department of a health board.

You can only see information in manual records recorded after 1 November 1991. You have no right to see information recorded earlier unless the information recorded later would be unintelligible without the earlier information. However, this does not affect any voluntary arrangements to let you see information recorded before 1 November 1991.

How do I apply?
You should apply in writing to your doctor, dentist or other health professional. To see records held by a hospital, or if you are not on a doctor’s list, telephone your local Health Board or NHS trust and ask if there is a particular person you should write to, such as a Data Protection Officer, and if there is an application form they can send you. Ask them to help you identify the records you want.

They can ask you to provide enough details to help establish your identity and find the record, and may ask you to pay a fee. This must be done within 14 days of receiving your request.

You can make a request through someone else acting for you. The holder of your record must be satisfied that this person has your authority.
You can also make a request on behalf of:

- your child aged under 16;
- someone who is unable to manage their own affairs, and where you have been appointed by a court to do so;
- a patient who has died, if you have a claim arising from that person's death.

In these cases, the holder must be satisfied that giving you access is in the patient's best interests or that the patient did not give the information in the expectation that it would not be disclosed to you.

You are entitled to see your record and to get a copy. Any abbreviations or jargon in the record that you may have difficulty in understanding must be explained to you.

How long does it take?
Where your record has been created or added to within the past 40 days, you must be given access within 21 days from the date of your application. Otherwise, the period is 40 days. If you have to supply further details, the period starts from when these have been received.

What does it cost?
You can be charged up to £10 for each request if your record is held on a computer or if it is kept in a manual file that has not been added to within the past 40 days. The holder can charge less or waive the fee altogether. There is no charge to see a manual record that has been added to within the past 40 days.

If your record is in a manual file and has not been added to within the past 40 days, you can avoid paying a fee to see it by applying after your next appointment, or by making a new appointment so that your record is added to.

If you want a copy of your record, the holder can charge you for the photocopying and any postage if it is sent to you.

What information can't I see?
Some information on your record can be withheld from you. This includes information that:

- could identify someone else. If the person objects to being identified, you can be refused access to all or part of your record;
- could cause serious harm to your or another person's physical or mental health;
- is about adoption records or reports, or a record of the special educational needs of a child or young person;
- was supplied by a reporter to a Children's Panel;
- would help to prevent or detect crime;
- is confidential because it was provided in the context of a lawyer-client relationship;
- is about any actions the holder intends to take against you;
- the holder has a legal obligation not to disclose.

The holder does not have to tell you if information has been withheld. But if your record is kept on a computer
and you suspect that information has been withheld without justification, you can complain either to the Data Protection Registrar or by going to court – see How can I complain? below.

How can I correct errors?
You can ask for any information about you that you think is inaccurate to be removed or corrected. This includes inaccurate or incomplete factual information or an opinion based on inaccurate or misleading information.

Where your record is kept in a manual file and the holder accepts that there is an inaccuracy, your record must be corrected. If the holder disagrees, a note of your views must be added to the record. In either case, you should be given a copy of the amended information free of charge.

Is compensation available?
If your record is kept on a computer and you suffer financially or physically as a result of inaccurate information, you have a right to compensation. You cannot claim for distress unless it is as a result of the financial or physical injury.

You can also apply for compensation if your record has been lost or destroyed or disclosed without the authority of the holder.

If your record is kept in a manual file, you have no right to compensation for damages.

How can I complain?
If your record is held on a computer and you are dissatisfied with the way your application has been dealt with, you can complain to the Data Protection Registrar. The Registrar's address is inside the back cover of this guide.

If the holder has refused to give you access to your record, or to correct or erase inaccurate information without proper reason, you can go to court.

If your record is kept in a manual file and the record holder fails to correct your record, or make a note of any disagreement, or provide you with a copy of the amended record, you should make a written complaint to the record holder. This must be done within three months of asking to have your record corrected. The record holder must tell you within three months what action has been taken or, if no action has been taken, the reasons for this.

If you are dissatisfied with the record holder's decision, you can go to court. You must do this within twelve months of the decision. You can also apply to court if you have had no reply to your complaint after three months.

Your local Health Council (see inside the back cover) will advise you how to make a complaint to the record holder or an appeal to a court.
Housing Records

The Data Protection Act 1984 gives you the right to see personal information about yourself in housing records that are held on a computer.

The Access to Personal Files (Housing) (Scotland) Regulations 1992 give you the right to see personal information about yourself held on housing records kept in manual files. The Regulations only apply to records kept by District, Regional or Islands Councils, Scottish Homes and New Town Development Corporations (referred to as your landlord). You have no right to see manual records kept by housing associations or private landlords.

You have a right of access to manual records if you are a tenant, a former tenant, or are applying to be a tenant. You can see information about other members of your family only if it is in your record. You cannot see information about a joint tenant unless that person is a member of your family. Also, you cannot see information about lodgers or sub-tenants unless they are members of your family.

You can only see information in manual records that was recorded after 20 August 1992. You have no right to see information recorded earlier unless the information recorded later would be unintelligible without the earlier information. However, this does not affect any voluntary arrangements that your landlord has to let you see information recorded before 20 August 1992.

How do I apply?
You should apply in writing. Before you write, telephone the head office of your landlord and ask if there is a particular person you should write to, such as a Data Protection Officer, and if there is an application form they can send you. Ask them to help you identify the records you want.

Your landlord can ask you to provide enough details to help establish your identity and find the record, and may ask you to pay a fee.

You can make a request through someone else acting for you. Your landlord must be satisfied that this person has your authority.

You are entitled to see your record and to get a copy. Any abbreviations or jargon in the record that you may have difficulty in understanding must be explained to you.

How long does it take?
Your landlord may have to contact someone else identified in your record, or a doctor or other health professional who has treated you and supplied information for the record. This must be done within 14 days of receiving your request.

You must be given access to your record within 40 days of your request if it is held on a computer, or within 42 days if it is held in a manual file. If you have to supply further details, the period starts from when these are received.
What does it cost?
You can be charged up to £10 for each request. Your landlord can charge less or waive the fee altogether. There is no charge for a copy of your record if you want one.

What information can’t I see?
Some information on your record can be withheld from you. This includes information that:

- could identify someone else. If the person objects to being identified, you can be refused access to all or part of your record;
- could cause serious harm to your or another person’s physical or mental health;
- would help to prevent or detect crime;
- is confidential because it was provided in the context of a lawyer-client relationship;
- shows any actions your landlord intends to take against you;
- your landlord has a legal obligation not to disclose.

Your landlord does not have to tell you if information has been withheld. But if your record is kept on a computer and you suspect that information has been withheld without justification, you can complain either to the Data Protection Registrar or by going to court – see How can I complain? below.

How can I correct errors?
You can ask for any information about you and your family that you think is wrong to be removed or corrected. This includes inaccurate factual information or an opinion based on inaccurate or misleading information.

Where your record is kept in a manual file and your landlord accepts that there is an inaccuracy, it must be corrected and you must be given a copy of the amended information. If your landlord disagrees, a note of your views must be added to the record. You must be given a copy of the note and the information it applies to, and a statement of the reasons for disagreeing. In either case, the copy must be provided free of charge.

Is compensation available?
If your record is kept on a computer and you suffer financially or physically as a result of inaccurate information, you have a right to compensation. You cannot claim for distress unless it is as a result of the financial or physical injury.

You can also apply for compensation if your record has been lost or destroyed or disclosed without the authority of your landlord.
If your record is kept in a manual file, you have no right to compensation for damages.

How can I complain?
If your record is held on a computer and you are dissatisfied with the way your application has been dealt with, you can complain to the Data Protection Registrar. The Registrar’s address is inside the back cover of this guide.
If your landlord has refused to give you access to your record, or to correct or erase inaccurate information without proper reason, you can go to court.

If your record is kept in a manual file and you are unhappy with the way that your application has been dealt with, or if your request to correct or remove inaccurate information has been refused, you can ask for the decision to be reviewed. You must do this within 28 days of the decision. The review must be carried out by members of your housing authority who took no part in the original decision. If you are a council tenant, this may be the full council.

At the review hearing you can present your case in writing, or in person, in which case you can bring someone to help you.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the review, you have the right to apply to the courts for a review of the decision. If you believe there has been maladministration you can complain to the Commissioner for Local Administration in Scotland (the ombudsman). Your local Citizens Advice Bureau (see the phone book) will advise you how to do this.
Medical Reports

The Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 gives you the right to see any medical report on you that a doctor has written for an insurance company or an employer.

This includes any doctor who is or has been responsible for your medical care – not only your GP but any hospital doctor, consultant or any other doctor who has treated or advised you. It does not include an independent doctor acting exclusively for the insurance company or employer.

How do I apply?
You don’t have to apply. Before an insurer or employer contacts a doctor for a report on you, they must get your written consent and explain your rights under the Act.

The insurer or employer must ask you if you want to see the report before the doctor sends it. If you do, the doctor must be told this when asked for the report. You then have 21 days to arrange to see it. If you have not been in touch by this time, the report can be sent off.

Even if you do not tell the insurer or employer in advance, you can still see the report – as long as you contact the doctor before it is sent off.

Once you have seen the report, the doctor must get your written consent before sending it.

The doctor must keep a copy of any report for six months, and you have the right to see it during this period.

How much does it cost?
There is no charge for inspecting the report. You are entitled to a copy but the doctor can charge a reasonable fee for providing it.

What information can’t I see?
You can be refused access to any part of a report that would:

- in the doctor’s opinion, cause serious harm to your or someone else’s mental or physical health;
- indicate the doctor’s intentions towards you;
- reveal information about someone else or the identity of another person, unless that person has given consent.

The doctor must tell you if, and why, any information has been withheld from you.

How can I correct errors?
You can ask the doctor to correct any part of the report that you believe is wrong or misleading. If the doctor refuses, you are entitled to prepare a written statement of your views, which must be attached to the report when it is sent.

You can refuse to allow the report to be sent. However, this may result in the refusal of the insurance cover or job offer.

How can I complain?
If you feel that there has been a breach of the Act – by the doctor, insurer or employer – you can go to court for an order to comply with it.
Social Work Records

The Data Protection Act 1984 gives you the right to see personal information about yourself in social work records that are held on a computer.

The Access to Personal Files (Social Work) (Scotland) Regulations 1989 give you the right to see personal information about yourself held on social work records kept in manual files by Regional or Islands Councils. The Regulations apply even if you are not a user of their social work services. You have no right to see records kept by voluntary organisations, a reporter to the Children's Panel or the prison service.

You can only see information in manual records recorded after 1 April 1989. You have no right to see information recorded earlier unless the information recorded later would be unintelligible without the earlier information. However, this does not affect any voluntary arrangements that the Social Work Department has to let you see information recorded before 1 April 1989.

How do I apply?
You should apply in writing. Before you write, telephone the head office of the Social Work Department and ask if there is a particular person you should write to, such as a Data Protection Officer, and if there is an application form they can send you. Ask them to help you identify the records you want.

They can ask you to provide enough details to help establish your identity and find the record, and may ask you to pay a fee.

You can make a request through someone else acting for you. The Social Work Department must be satisfied that this person has your authority.

You are entitled to see your record and to get a copy. Any abbreviations or jargon in the record that you may have difficulty in understanding must be explained to you.

How long does it take?
They may have to contact someone else identified in your record or someone who has supplied information for your record – for example, a doctor or other health professional who has treated you, or a reporter to the Children's Panel. This must be done within 14 days of receiving your request.

You must be given access to your record within 40 days of your request. However, if you have to supply further details or if they have to contact someone else for consent, the 40-day period starts from when these are received.

What does it cost?
You can be charged up to £10 for each request. The Social Work Department can charge less or waive the fee altogether. There is no charge for a copy of your record if you want one.
What information can't I see?
Some information on your record can be withheld from you. This includes information that:

- could identify someone else. If the person objects to being identified, you can be refused access to all or part of your record;
- could cause serious harm to your or another person's physical or mental health or emotional condition;
- is about adoption records or reports, or a record of the special educational needs of a child or young person;
- was supplied by a reporter to a Children's Panel;
- would help to prevent or detect crime;
- is confidential because it was provided in the context of a lawyer-client relationship;
- is about any actions the Social Work Department intends to take against you;
- the Social Work Department has a legal obligation not to disclose.

They do not have to tell you if information has been withheld. But if your record is kept on a computer and you suspect that information has been withheld without justification, you can complain either to the Data Protection Registrar or by going to court – see How can I complain? below.

Is compensation available?
If your record is kept on a computer and you suffer financially or physically as a result of inaccurate information, you have a right to compensation. You cannot claim for distress unless it is as a result of the financial or physical injury.

You can also apply for compensation if your record has been lost or destroyed or disclosed without the authority of the Social Work Department.

If your record is kept in a manual file, you have no right to compensation for damages.

How can I complain?
If your record is held on a computer and you are dissatisfied with the way your application has been dealt with, you can complain to the Data
Protection Registrar. The Registrar's address is given below.

If the Social Work Department has refused to give you access to your record or to correct or erase inaccurate information without proper reason, you can go to court.

If your record is kept in a manual file and you are unhappy with the way that your application has been dealt with, or if your request to correct or remove inaccurate information has been refused, you can ask for the decision to be reviewed. You must do this within 28 days of the decision. The review must be carried out by a committee of three councillors. Only one of them can be a member of the social work committee.

You can make your complaint in writing, or in person.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the review, you have the right to apply to the courts for a review of the decision. If you believe there has been maladministration you can complain to the Commissioner for Local Administration in Scotland (the ombudsman). Your local Citizens Advice Bureau (see the phone book) will advise you how to do this.

For advice and assistance about access to computer records, or to complain, write to or telephone:

Office of the Data Protection Registrar
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF
Tel: 0625 535777

To find out the address of your local Health Council, contact:

Scottish Association of Health Councils
5 Leamington Terrace
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For advice and information about how to take legal action, including making an application to a court, contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau.
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