

Privacy Notice for Adoption Services

1. Who we are

PACT is a Voluntary Adoption Agency registered with Ofsted. We provide adoption and adoption support services. We are a **data controller**, which means we decide how and why your personal data is used.

2. Who this notice applies to

This notice applies to:

- People who contact us to ask about adoption (telephone or online enquiries)
- People who apply to adopt (applicants)
- People who provide references (referees)

3. How the adoption process works and how we use your data

We use your data at different stages of the adoption process.

3.1 Enquiry stage

If you contact us to ask about adoption, we will:

- Record your name and contact details
- Keep notes of your enquiry

Why we use this data: To respond to your enquiry and provide information about adoption.

Legal basis: Consent and legitimate interests.

3.2 Application and assessment stage

If you apply to adopt, we will collect detailed information about you.

This includes:

- Identity and contact details
- Family and relationship information
- Employment and financial details
- Health information
- Background checks (such as DBS)
- References from people who know you
- Reports written by social workers

Why we use this data: To assess whether you are suitable to adopt and to meet legal requirements.

Legal basis: Legal obligation and public task

3.3 Approval stage

Your information will be reviewed as part of a formal decision-making process.

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This may include:

- Adoption panel review
- Recommendations and decisions about your suitability

Why we use this data: To decide whether you can be approved as an adopter.

Legal basis: Legal obligation and public task

3.4 Matching and placement stage

If approved, we use your information to:

- Match you with a child
- Share relevant information with agencies and professionals
- Support placement planning

Why we use this data: To ensure the best possible match and to protect the child's welfare.

Legal basis: Public task and vital interests

3.5 Post-adoption support

After adoption, we may continue to use your data to:

- Provide support services
- Keep records of the support we provide

Why we use this data: To support families and meet ongoing legal responsibilities.

Legal basis: Public task and legitimate interests. For further information, please refer to the FACT – Post Adoption Privacy Notice.

4. What personal data we collect

We only collect data we need for adoption services.

4.1 Applicants

We may collect:

- Name, address and contact details
- Date of birth and identity information
- Family and relationship details
- Employment and financial information
- Health information
- Background and safeguarding checks
- References and assessments
- Case notes and reports

4.2 Referees

We may collect:

- Name and contact details

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- Relationship to the applicant
- Your views about the applicant

4.3 Enquiries

We may collect:

- Name and contact details
- Basic information about your enquiry
- Notes of conversations

5. Sensitive and criminal offence data

Some information we use is more sensitive. This includes:

- Health information
- Ethnicity
- Safeguarding information
- Background and criminal record checks

We use this data because it is required for adoption and safeguarding under the law.

6. Where your data comes from

Your data may come from:

- You directly
- Referees
- Local authorities
- Health professionals
- Other organisations involved in the adoption process

7. Who we share your data with

We only share your data when necessary.

This may include:

- Local Authorities
- Regional Adoption Agencies
- Adoption panels
- Courts
- Health and education professionals
- Regulators such as Ofsted
- Government bodies

We may also share anonymised information for reporting and research.

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8. Safeguarding and sharing without consent

We have a legal duty to protect children and vulnerable people.

We may share your information without your consent if:

- There is a safeguarding concern
- Someone is at risk of harm
- We are required to do so by law

9. How we store your data

We keep your data secure by:

- Using secure systems
- Limiting access to authorised staff
- Applying technical and organisational security controls

10. How long do we keep your data?

We keep your data only as long as required by legal and safeguarding requirements.

Type of Data	Retention Period	What Happens Next
Enquiries (no application)	1 year	Data is anonymised
Applicants (not approved)	Up to 10 years	Securely deleted
Approved adopters (no placement)	Up to 10 years after case closes	Securely deleted
Adoption records (child placed)	Up to 100 years	Retained in line with legal requirements
Referee information	Same as applicant record	Retained as part of the file

Exceptions: We may keep data longer if there is a complaint, safeguarding concern, or legal action.

10. International transfers

We do not transfer your data outside the UK unless appropriate safeguards are in place.

11. Your rights

You have rights under data protection law. These include:

- The right to know how your data is used
- The right to access your data
- The right to correct inaccurate data
- The right to restrict or object to processing
- The right to request deletion (in some cases)

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Some rights are limited in adoption work due to legal requirements.

12. Contact us

If you have questions or want to use your rights:

- Email: dataprotection@pactcharity.org
- Post: PACT Head Office, 7 Southern Court, South Street, Reading RG1 4QS
- Phone: 0300 456 4800

13. Complaints

If you are unhappy with how we use your data, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

- Telephone: 0303 123 1113
- Email <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email>
- Post: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

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