

Registration Privacy Notice

National Records of Scotland (NRS) is responsible for overseeing the registration of births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships and other life events in Scotland. This privacy notice tells you what happens to the personal information you provide when you register a life event. NRS and District Registrars take your trust and right to privacy seriously – this privacy notice reflects our joint commitment to the fair and transparent processing of your personal information.

Gathering information on behalf of the Registrar General

NRS acts on behalf of the Registrar General for Scotland and has a legal obligation to ensure all collection and processing of personal data for registration purposes complies with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

District Registrars employed by 32 local authorities across Scotland are required by law to maintain registers of births, still-births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships, and to gather additional information for statistical purposes.

The Registrar General is the owner and controller of registration information and the local authority Chief or Senior Registrar acts as the controller's representative.

Legislation

The main laws relating to registration are:

Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Scotland) Act 1965

Marriage (Scotland) Act 1977

Civil Partnership Act 2004

Local Electoral Administration and Registration Services (Scotland) Act 2006

Certification of Death (Scotland) Act 2011

Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the Social Security (Notification of Deaths) Regulations 2012

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014

Immigration Act 2014

Sharing personal data

The information gathered on behalf of the Registrar General is used to record life events, to administer vital public services, and for research purposes.

Each year the statutory registers are transferred from registration offices to NRS in Edinburgh for permanent preservation. A national index of events registered (with the exception of still-births, adoptions and gender recognition) is searchable online via the ScotlandsPeople service, and extracts of events registered may be purchased from NRS, or from local registration offices, by any member of the public.

There is a requirement in law that notification of certain events is to be made. For example, information gathered for the registers of Births and Deaths is shared with the National Health Service Central Register (NHSCR). Local tax authorities are informed of deaths registered where the deceased was 18 or over, the Procurator Fiscal may be notified of a death which meets certain criteria, and registrars have a duty to inform the Home Office of a proposed marriage or civil partnership if the parties are not exempt from referral due to their immigration status.

Under provisions in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the LEARS Act 2006, personal data may also be shared for the purposes of prevention, detection, investigation or prosecution of offences.

If you require more detail about how your personal data is processed, please see the Registration section of the NRS website, or contact the NRS Data Protection Officer.

Requirement to provide information to the registrar

Knowingly giving false information to a registrar, failure to give information concerning a birth, still-birth or death, and wilful refusal to answer a question put by a registrar relating to the particulars required for the registration, are offences under the 1965 Act.

Any person committing such an offence is liable on conviction to a fine or period of imprisonment.

Accessing your information

You can purchase a copy of information in the statutory registers by ordering an official extract through our ScotlandsPeople service (www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk), or from a local registration office.

Should you wish to receive a copy of any additional personal data NRS holds about you please submit a subject access request to us using the form available on our website (www.nrscotland.gov.uk/about-us/requesting-information). As well as providing you with access to your information, we will tell what we use this information for, how long we will keep it, and who it may be shared with. We will endeavour to respond within one month of either receipt of your written request or receipt of any further information we may ask you to provide to enable us to comply with your request.

How to contact us

If you want to contact the NRS Data Protection Officer you can do so at:

NRS Data Protection Officer
National Records of Scotland
HM General Register House
2 Princes Street
Edinburgh
EH1 3YY

Tel: 0131 535 1314

Email: dataprotection@nrscotland.gov.uk

If you wish to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office

If you are not satisfied with the way NRS has responded to your request or handled your information you should first ask us to conduct an internal review.

Thereafter, if you still believe that NRS has not dealt with your complaint properly or if you believe your personal information is being processed in a way that does not comply with legislation you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office. The ICO helpline number is 0303 123 1113, and website <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>.

Changes to this privacy notice

This privacy notice was last updated on 30 September 2019. We keep the privacy notice under regular review.