



Subject Access Requests

How do you prepare & what do you do if you get one?



Subject Access Requests (SAR's) are getting more common but if you get one & haven't before it's quite likely to cause confusion.

If you aren't aware - with SAR's individuals have the **right** to receive a copy of personal data relating to them & that puts a **legal onus** onto organisations to comply.

Naturally the amount of information that sometimes has to be provided is **very significant** indeed. Commonly they run to 100's of pages.

So – it's not something that can be ignored & you need to ensure you are both **ready** & have the **right processes** to deal with them when they land.

One of the biggest issues is the need for '**redaction**'. Records that have been requested need to have content 'blacked out' where for instance it refers to other people or has sensitive data which is **exempted**.

Knowing what to blank & what to not can be a bit of a **minefield**.

If you want to prepare there are quite a few things to consider.

Key amongst these though:

- Make sure you have a policy in place which details how a SAR can be made.
- Know what personal data you hold where.
- Keep on top of retention & disposal - you need a Record of Processing Activities (RoPA).
- Make sure staff will recognise one if it comes in – they have to know where to direct it too.
- Know where to turn if redaction is needed.

And if you have to process a SAR:

- Know your obligations in terms of provision or refusal (as well as charging).
- Know what you have to do by way of response & ongoing communication.
- Once a SAR is agreed work to required timescales (1 month if straightforward – 3 months if deemed complex)
- Get an understanding when processing what can be redacted or exempted (& note this in your return).
- Provide the information if at all possible in the way requested (mail, electronic, collected).
- Explain what they can do if they want to complain.

Lots of organisations look for **help** when they receive a SAR. That's where we can come in & we would be glad to help.

We have a full **advisory & redaction** service as part of our broader offer covering a broad range of professional services.

Interested? If so we would be happy to **talk**.

Just drop us a line and we will arrange to speak at your convenience.

Contact steve_debruin@bathnes.gov.uk or jo_buchan@bathnes.gov.uk



Copyright © 2022 One West, All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

One_West@bathnes.gov.uk

Want to change how you receive these emails? Just let us know
