



# POST OFFICE LTD PRIVACY POLICY

The Post Office® is able to supply customers with this leaflet, free of charge, in an alternative format for people who are visually impaired. To obtain a copy call the Post Office® helpline on **08457 22 33 44** or Textphone **08457 22 33 55**. Quote **PL2657**.

Calls may be monitored and recorded for training purposes.

\*Local call rates apply. Call costs may vary depending on your service provider.

Royal Mail, the Cruciform, the colour red, Parcelforce Worldwide and the Parcelforce Worldwide logo are registered trade marks of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Post Office is a registered trade mark and the Post Office logo is a trade mark of Post Office Limited. Post Office Limited is registered in England and Wales. Registered No. 2154540. Registered Office: 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. 'Your Guide to Customer Service' leaflet® Post Office Limited 2007. All rights reserved. All information correct at time of going to print, September 2007.

We know that your privacy is very important to you. We make it our business for it to be as important to us.

We aim to be as clear as possible about how and why we use personal information about you. If your questions are not fully answered by the information below, please contact us as detailed in section headed, **Maintaining the personal information we hold for you**. We'll be happy to help.

#### Our guiding privacy principles

Compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 underlies all of our privacy practices. We also have a set of guiding principles which govern how we use the personal information that we collect about you. These principles are:

- We aim to continuously improve our website, communications, products and services for you. We use personal information about you to help us to do this.
- We give you control over the personal information that we hold about you, who is allowed to see it and how it is used.
- We will not use your personal information to contact you for direct marketing purposes unless you specifically allow us to by giving us your consent.
- We take all reasonable care to safeguard your personal information through security policies and secure business processes.

#### Why we collect personal information about you

- To provide you with products and services. Each product and service has different information requirements. Therefore the personal information we need, and what it is needed for, can differ. For full details please refer to the terms and conditions for each product or service.
- To enhance or improve your user experience with us. When you indicate your marketing preferences, we may use this information to personalise the website or our communications with you to better meet your needs.
- To provide you with information about products and services that we, Royal Mail Group Limited (including Parcelforce Worldwide) or our partner companies believe will be of interest to you. We will only do this with your consent. If you have registered online to use the website or applied online for a product or service, you can change your mind and remove or add your consent at any time through "Your Profile" page on our website. You will need to sign in to your account in order to do this.
- To keep your personal information secure. To minimise the risk of unauthorised access to your personal information, we use some of your personal information to authenticate your identity when using the website and our customer service helpdesk.

#### How we collect personal information about you

We collect personal information from you in a number of ways:

- Directly from you. Sometimes we'll ask you for personal information about you, for example in our registration form, when you communicate with our customer services team, or when you buy any product or subscribe for any service.
- From what you do on our website. This can show us for example which products or services you use most and least. We will use this information to personalise the website to better meet your needs and, where you have given us your consent, to provide you with information about our products and services that we believe will be of interest to you.

- From third parties. We may ask third parties for personal information about you, for example when we acquire third party marketing lists or get authorisation for a payment you make using a credit or debit card or to complete a credit or fraud check.

#### Personal information we receive from third parties

##### Credit reference and fraud prevention agencies

We may receive personal information about you from credit reference and fraud prevention agencies.

When you order any product or subscribe for any service we or our partner companies may check your records at credit reference and fraud prevention agencies.

When credit reference agencies receive a search request, they will place a search footprint on your credit file that may be seen by other organisations (whether or not your application proceeds). Credit reference agencies supply to us or our partner companies both public (including the electoral register) and shared credit and fraud prevention information.

If you are making a joint application or tell us you have a spouse or financial associate we may link your records together so you must be sure that you have their agreement to disclose personal information about them. Credit reference agencies also link your records together and these links will remain on your and their files until such time as you or your partner successfully files for a disassociation with the credit reference agencies to break that link.

If you require details of those credit reference and fraud prevention agencies from whom we obtain and with whom we share your personal information or further details about the use of your personal information by credit reference and fraud prevention agencies please contact our Data Protection Act Services Team (see section below, **Maintaining the personal information we hold for you**).

##### Network operators and service providers

We may receive personal information about you from other network operators and service providers in connection with some of our services and you agree to such operators and service providers providing us with access to, and transferring to us, any of your personal information to allow us to connect you to, and to provide you with, the services.

##### Information providers

We may receive personal information about you from information providers, for example marketing lists or lifestyle, interest and preference information. We may add this information to the existing personal information we hold about you.

##### Who sees your personal information?

- The personal information we collect about you will be used within the Royal Mail group of companies and, where appropriate, by and on behalf of our partner companies (see below). Exactly who sees your personal information depends on the context in which you provided it and whether or not you have given any marketing preferences. You can change your mind about your marketing preferences at any time through "Your Profile" page on our website. You will need to sign in to your account in order to do this on our website or by contacting us in the manner set out in any relevant product or service literature.

Sometimes we'll share your personal information with third parties outside the Royal Mail group. We may do this for the following reasons:

- To provide you with a product or service. Some of our products and services are provided in conjunction with our partner companies, and we'll need to share your personal information with them to provide you with the products or services. We make it clear in the terms and conditions for each service whether personal information will be shared with such third parties or not.
  - To assist us or our partner companies to provide products or services to you. To enable third parties to provide us or our partner companies with such assistance, we may need to share your personal information with them. When we do so, these companies are required to act in accordance with our or our partner companies instructions and they must keep your personal information secure.
  - To provide you with information about other products, services and promotions. If you have given your consent, we may share some of your personal information with our partner companies so that they can provide you with information about other products, services and promotions that may be of interest to you.
  - To protect the Royal Mail group or others. We may share your personal information with third parties when we believe it is necessary to protect our or another person's rights, property, or safety. This includes exchanging personal information with third parties to protect against fraud and reduce payment risks.
  - To provide personal information collected during the application process to credit reference agencies. This personal information may be recorded by them. We may give details of your account and how you manage it to them. If you do not pay us or our partner companies in full and on time credit reference agencies may record the outstanding debt. This personal information may be supplied to other organisations by credit reference agencies to perform similar checks and to trace your whereabouts and recover debts that you owe. Records remain on file with the credit reference agencies for 6 years after they are closed, whether settled by you or defaulted.
  - If you give us false or inaccurate information and we suspect or identify fraud we will record this and may also pass this information to fraud prevention agencies and other organisations involved in crime and fraud prevention.
  - To comply with applicable laws, regulations and codes of practice or in response to a valid request from a competent authority
- We will only deal with third parties that we trust to treat our customers' personal information with the same stringent controls that we apply ourselves.
- Your personal information may be processed outside the European Economic Area (EEA) where privacy laws may not provide protection to the same level as in the UK, but before any such processing takes place we will take steps to ensure that your personal information will be adequately protected as required by the Data Protection Act.

#### Use of your personal information

We may use your personal information for the following purposes:

- to process any application you may make (including to carry out checks with credit reference and fraud prevention agencies);
- to provide products and services to you;
- to communicate with you about your access to, and use of, any products or services we or our partner companies may provide;
- to inform you about any changes to the products or services we or our partner companies provide;
- to provide customer service and technical support;
- to help improve our website, communications, products and services;
- to bill, process and collect payments from you;
- to build up a profile of your interests and preferences for marketing purposes (including by combining your personal information with third party lifestyle, interests and preferences information);
- subject to your consent, to provide you with marketing information about our, or third party, products and services;
- for research purposes (including to improve our understanding of how our customers use our products and services and to help us to develop and improve our products and services);
- prevent and detect crime, fraud and misuse of or damage to our or our partner companies products and services;
- to provide any competitions or promotions you enter;
- to personalise your user experience; and
- for purposes required or permitted by law.

#### How long do we keep your personal information?

How long we keep your personal information depends on the context in which you provided it and the marketing preferences you have expressed. In particular:

- We will keep any personal information we or our partner companies need to provide you with any product you buy or service you subscribe to for the period during which we or our partner companies provide that product or service to you.
- We may keep your contact details for as long as we have your consent to send you marketing information and/or pass your contact details to third parties.
- We may keep records of any transactions you enter with us or our partner companies for up to six years. This is so that we can respond to any complaints or disputes that arise in that period.
- We will keep other personal information about you if it is necessary for us to do so to comply with the law.

## Maintaining the personal information we hold for you

We aim to give you control over the personal information we hold about you. If you have registered on our website or applied online for certain products or services, you can see certain personal information you have provided to us through the website by accessing the "Your Profile" page on our website. You will need to sign in to your account in order to do this. You can also use this page to update this personal information, correct any inaccurate information and change the marketing preferences you have given us. Alternatively, you can contact us and we will make the necessary changes.

You can request details of all the personal information we hold about you by contacting our Data Protection Act Services Team. They will send you an application form which you should complete and return. The charge for this service is £10 for each request. You can contact the team by writing to Royal Mail Group Limited, PO Box 341, ALDERSHOT, GU11 1WW, telephone: 01252 806513.

## Marketing Preferences

If you have given your consent, we, Royal Mail Group Limited (including Parforce Worldwide) or our partner companies may provide you with information about products, services and promotions that we, Royal Mail Group Limited or our partner companies believe will be of interest to you. You can change your mind and remove or add your consent at any time through the "Your Profile" page on our website. You will need to sign in to your account in order to do this or by contacting us in the manner set out in any relevant product or service literature.

Please note:

- The marketing preferences you give will not prevent you from receiving information about the benefits and features of specific products or services we already supply you.
- When you select your marketing preferences, these preferences will only apply to the personal information stored about you on the database appropriate for that particular product or service or the database used to manage registrations on our website. If you have provided personal information to a business in the Royal Mail group through another channel, or have purchased other products or subscribed for other services, the use of that personal information may not be affected by the marketing preferences you select.

## Keeping your personal information secure

We take the security of your personal information seriously.

We've implemented technology and security policies, rules and measures to protect the personal information we have under our control, both on and off-line, from improper access, use, alteration, destruction and loss.

Here are some of the ways we protect your personal information:

- If you provide personal information to us online the transmission of that information to us is protected by SSL 128 bit session encryption. Encryption is the process through which sensitive information is scrambled before it is transmitted so that it remains private even if it is intercepted. However, unless your Internet browser supports 128-bit encryption you will not be able to take advantage of this level of security.
- Off-line, your personal information is kept securely in our databases and offices, or, where relevant, by our partner companies.

We will take all reasonable steps to protect your personal information, but data can never be guaranteed 100% secure. Please note that we will not be liable for any breach of security unless we have been negligent.

## How you can help keep your personal information secure

As you would expect of us, we will take all reasonable measures to ensure that the personal information you provide through our website is held and managed securely. However, there is a lot that you can do to help keep your personal information safe – not just on our website, but whenever you provide personal information online.

For some simple ways you can improve the security of your personal information please see below:

### Use a strong password

Read our advice on choosing a strong password. This will help you choose a password that will be difficult for other people to guess but easy for you to remember.

### Use a secure password hint

Do not make your password hint the same as your password! Your password hint should not give away your password to someone you know well, for example 'my road' or 'my dog's name'.

### Keep your password private and secure

Your password is a key to your personal information and online identity. Don't tell anyone your password or write it down. If you are concerned that somebody else knows your password, you can change it on our website by going to the "Your Profile" page on our website. You will need to sign in to your account in order to do this. We recommend that you change your password from time to time.

### Use a secure browser

Encryption is the process through which sensitive information is scrambled before it is transmitted so that it remains private even if it is intercepted. 128-bit encryption is the strongest encryption currently available, but not all browser versions support it.

Two popular browsers that support 128-bit encryption are:

- Microsoft Internet Explorer version 5.5 and later versions
- Netscape Navigator version 6 and later versions

Security upgrades for some older browser versions are available. We recommend that you contact your preferred browser provider for further information.

### Use a Personal Firewall

Personal firewalls use a security policy under your control to ensure that only traffic you wish to flow to and from your computer is allowed to. They are available, normally as a paid for product or service from many reputable suppliers.

### Install Anti-Virus Software.

Anti-virus software protects your computer from most of the main viruses that are prevalent on the internet. Whilst you are unlikely to get a virus from reputable websites, there are many sites on the internet designed to catch the unwary.

Anti-virus software is available, normally as a paid for product or service from many reputable suppliers.

Keep up to date with Internet Security trends.

We recommend the following site which has both free and subscription services: [www.e-secure-it.com](http://www.e-secure-it.com).

## How we use cookies

A cookie is a small text file that is saved to the hard drive of your computer when you use a website.

Our website use both session and persistent cookies. Session cookies are transferred to your computer only for the duration of your visit to our website. Session cookies help you to move round our website faster and, if you are a registered customer, they allow us to give you information relevant to the services you receive. These cookies automatically expire when you leave our website or shut down your browser. Persistent cookies are cookies that stay on your computer permanently until you manually delete them.

We may use persistent cookies to:

- recognise you as an individual customer when you log on to our website;
- identify your settings if you have set up a customised homepage;
- track links you take to our website from other websites;
- track the number of times you visit particular pages and advertisements; and
- control how often you see particular content or information, including notices and advertisements on our website.

If you would prefer us not to collect your information for website analytics you can opt-out by going to the "Your Profile" page of our website. This will cause a "don't use" instruction to be added to the Website Analytic cookie. You should not delete the Website Analytic cookie from your hard drive because doing so will cause a new, active Website Analytic cookie to be saved on your computer next time you visit our website.

Please note that the opt-out will only work for the computer and browser you are using when you opt-out. If you use more than one computer or browser you will have to opt-out on each.

You may choose whether to accept, reject or be warned before accepting cookies by changing the settings on your browser. If you choose not to accept cookies you may find that certain parts of our website will not function properly or your user experience may be affected.

For more general information on cookies, including how to change your browser settings and find and delete cookies on your hard drive, please visit [www.aboutcookies.org](http://www.aboutcookies.org).

## Links to other sites

Our website includes links to other sites. We make every effort to provide links to high quality, reputable sites but we're not responsible for their privacy practices or, website content, or the services they offer.

## Your Communications with our Customer Services Teams

Your communications with our Customer Services teams (including by telephone or email) may be monitored and/or recorded for training, quality control and compliance purposes to ensure that we continuously improve our customer service standards.

## Changes to our Privacy Policy

We may change our Privacy Policy from time to time. Any changes will be published on our website which can be accessed at any time.

## Who we are

Post Office Limited is a company registered in England and Wales, company number 2154540. Our registered office is 886 Old Street, London, EC1V 9NN. The Royal Mail Group VAT registration number is GB 243170002. Post Office Limited is registered under the Data Protection Act in the United Kingdom.

For further information about our privacy practices please contact our Data Protection Act Services Team. You can contact the team by:

- writing to Royal Mail Group Limited, PO Box 341, ALDERSHOT, GU11 1WW; or
- calling 01252 806513.

Date last updated 2 October 2007