



Supportmatch

Homeshare Service

www.supportmatch.co.uk

Supportmatch Homeshare Policy

Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy

POLICY TITLE: Confidentiality and Data Protection

ISSUED: October 2020

REVISED: October 2021

REVIEWED: October 2024

NEXT REVIEW DUE: October 2025

1. Policy Statement

Supportmatch is committed to protecting the privacy, dignity, and data of all individuals involved in our Homeshare service. This includes Householders, Homesharers, volunteers, staff, and any other service users. We recognise that the information we collect is often highly personal and must be managed in accordance with both ethical responsibilities and the legal requirements of the **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)** and the **Data Protection Act 2018**.

2. Confidentiality Commitment

We understand that information is confidential when it has been given or shared in private. Having accurate and up-to-date information is essential to meet individuals' needs safely and effectively. However, confidentiality must always be respected. Information will only be shared with those who genuinely need to know it for legitimate reasons.

3. How We Maintain Confidentiality

All personal records held by Supportmatch are stored securely to prevent unauthorised access. Digital files are encrypted, and paper records are held in locked storage. We will seek permission (consent) from the individual before disclosing their information to any other person or organisation—unless there is a legal or safeguarding reason that requires us to act without consent.

We will not share confidential information with family members, friends, or external parties unless:

- The individual has given explicit permission, or
- There is a serious concern about the individual's safety or the safety of others.

In any situation where information must be shared without consent, we will explain why this is necessary and what information will be disclosed.



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4. Legal Basis for Sharing Information

Supportmatch will only share personal data if it meets one or more of the lawful bases under the UK GDPR. These include:

- The person has given informed consent
- It is necessary to fulfil a service agreement (contract)
- There is a legal obligation
- It is required to protect someone from serious harm
- It is in the legitimate interests of the organisation, and does not override the individual's rights

5. Exceptions to Confidentiality

There may be very limited circumstances where information is shared without an individual's consent, such as:

- If there is a safeguarding concern
- If there is a risk of serious harm to the individual or others
- If there is a legal requirement to do so (e.g. court order, criminal investigation)

Supportmatch will always explain the reason and scope of any such disclosure, where possible and appropriate.

6. Responsibilities of Staff, Homesharers, and Householders

All Supportmatch team members, Householders, and Homesharers are given information and training about their duty of confidentiality. They are expected to:

- Understand what information is confidential
- Know when it can be shared—and with whom
- Follow proper data handling and storage procedures
- Report any concerns or breaches immediately

Any breach of confidentiality will be treated seriously.

- For employees, it may result in disciplinary action.
- For Homesharers or Householders, it may lead to a review of their participation in the Homeshare programme and potential removal.

7. Sharing This Policy

Supportmatch is happy to provide a copy of this policy to service users, their families, and professionals we work with. This ensures transparency and clarity around when personal information can or cannot be shared.

8. Contact for Further Information

Email: info@supportmatch.co.uk | **Phone:** 0203 633 6066 | **Website:** www.supportmatch.co.uk

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