



Accessing your personal information: Subject Access Request



You have the right to get a copy of the information that is held by Cafcass about you. This is known as a Subject Access Request (SAR) and is a right under the UK Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA). Cafcass processes information due to its role within family court proceedings and is committed to full compliance with data protection legislation.

What information will I see?

The information you are entitled to see is your personal information. You have a right to:

- * know whether your information is processed
- * know why your information is processed and who it has been shared with
- * see a copy of your information in a permanent form, with any unintelligible terms explained.

However, not all personal information is covered within these rights, and there are 'exemptions' which Cafcass may need to apply to ensure compliance with all of our statutory functions.

Where information about you has been provided to Cafcass by someone else, they may have the right for this to be kept confidential.

You will not usually be able to see information referring to someone else (a 'third party'). This will usually be redacted as it is personal information relating to someone else. If you are seeking a document in full where the contents relate to another person, it may be better to apply to the court for its disclosure, as it will not be disclosed under a SAR.

If you are not a party to proceedings, in most circumstances, Cafcass cannot share any information relating to proceedings with you; this is in accordance with the Family Procedure Rules.

Other exemptions include:

- * Where a response would risk serious harm to staff or other individuals
- * Correspondence with lawyers (where legal professional privilege applies)

Can I access personal information about my child?

Information about children may be released to a person with Parental Responsibility. However, the best interests of the child will always be considered. Even if the child is very young, their information still only belongs to them, and it is the child who has the right to access the information.

When a child is considered by Cafcass to be mature enough to understand their right to see their personal information, a parent will not be able to request the information on their behalf. Cafcass will notify the parent that we will only respond to the request if the child makes it themselves. A 12 year old is generally considered to be able to make a request themselves.



How do I make a request?

Requests can be made verbally or in writing. Requests in writing should be sent by email or post to:

Customer Feedback - SAR

Cafcass Post
PO Box 5076
Slough
SL1 0RX

 customerfeedback@cafcass.gov.uk

Requests made verbally either via telephone or in person to Cafcass will be passed on to the Customer Service Team.

Cafcass may need some information in order to process your SAR, and the Customer Service Team may contact you to ask for:

- * additional information to locate your data (e.g. case number, previous names or court reference)
- * proof of ID: this needs a signature and photo (e.g. driver's license, passport)
- * proof of residence: this needs a name and address (e.g. a recent utility bill, or official letter).

However, if you have previously corresponded with Cafcass, and your contact details are unchanged and verified, then Cafcass may exercise discretion when requesting documentation to verify your identity.

If you are looking for a particular piece of information, please add this to your request, along with any relevant dates. This will be treated as a request for information and may be responded to more quickly.

How long will it take?

Cafcass aims to provide a response within one month, after receiving proof of ID and proof of residence (where required). If an extension is required, we will let you know as soon as possible. We will acknowledge receipt of your SAR within seven calendar days.

What if I am unhappy with the SAR response?

If you are not satisfied with your response, you can make an appeal in writing to the SAR team. It is helpful if you detail exactly what you are not satisfied with, and if there is some information in particular you had expected to receive. A member of the SAR team, who was not party to the original response will review the response previously sent to you and respond within 20 working days of receiving the request. If you remain unhappy following this please contact

DataProtectionOfficer@cafcass.gov.uk. You can also complain directly to the Information Commissioner's Office: www.ico.org.uk.

For further information on your rights related to your information or any other queries, please see our [Subject Access Request page](#) on our website or contact governance@cafcass.gov.uk.

