



REFUGEE WEEK

Seven Days Tips

May 2023

Day 1:

As a refugee or asylum seeker in the UK, you have the right to privacy protected by General Data Protection laws. This means that your personal information should be safeguarded, and you should have control over how organizations collect, store, and use your data.

Organizations must inform you about the purpose of data collection, its usage, and with whom it will be shared. They should also disclose what personal data is being collected and the reasons behind it. Data should only be collected and processed with a legitimate purpose and legal basis. Organizations must take appropriate measures to ensure the security and confidentiality of your personal data.

Day 2:

Do you know that an amendment to the Data Protection Act 2018 gave the Home Office the right to deny immigrants access to their data? However, this provision was ruled unlawful by the UK High Court in response to an appeal raised on May 26, 2021. The Home Office had been using this exemption in 60% of immigration-related data requests, which raised concerns about restricted access and lack of accountability. It is essential to be aware of these developments and assert your rights when necessary.

Day 3:

Refugees can request access to their data if it is processed by organizations. This means you can ask organizations to provide you with a copy of the personal data they hold on you. Your request should be made in writing, and organizations are generally

required to respond within a specific time frame, usually one month. If the organization has your data, they should provide a copy and information about its processing purposes, recipients, and retention periods. However, there may be limited exceptions if disclosing the data would adversely affect the rights and freedoms of others.

Day 4:

Exercise your right to request information as a refugee. If you want access to your personal data held by an organization, contact them and submit a written request. The organization should have a designated data protection officer or a point of contact to handle such requests. If they fail to respond or address your request adequately, you can escalate the matter to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the UK's independent authority for data protection. It is crucial to be aware of your rights and assert them when necessary to protect your personal information and privacy.

Day 5:

To request access to your data held by an organization as a refugee in the UK, follow these steps:

1. Identify the organization that may hold your personal data, such as government agencies, service providers, employers, educational institutions, healthcare providers, and emergency services.
2. Check if the organization has a designated data protection officer (DPO) or a point of contact for data protection matters. This information is usually found on their website, privacy policy, or data protection notices. If you need help, contact their customer support or contact centre.
3. Prepare a written request stating that you request access to your personal data. Include relevant details like your full name, contact information, and any specific information or time frame you want to access. You may also reference the applicable data protection laws, such as the Data Protection Act 2018 or the

GDPR.

4. Send your written request through an appropriate channel, such as email or postal mail, as specified by the organization. Keep a copy of the request for your records, including proof of sending or delivery.
5. If you are still waiting to receive a response within the specified time frame or if the response is unsatisfactory, consider following up with a reminder or escalating the request. Maintain a record of all communication related to your request.
6. If the organization fails to adequately respond or address your request, you can escalate the matter to the ICO for further guidance, investigation, and potential enforcement action. Visit their website for information on how to submit a complaint.

Day 6:

As a refugee or asylum seeker in the UK, you must protect yourself digitally to ensure the privacy, security, and safety of your personal information. Here are some steps you can take:

- Use strong and unique passwords for your online accounts. Include a combination of letters, numbers, and special characters. Avoid easily guessable information like your name or birthdate. Consider using a password manager to store and generate passwords securely.
- Keep your devices, such as smartphones, laptops, and tablets, secure using up-to-date operating systems, antivirus software, and firewalls. Regularly install security updates and patches to protect against known vulnerabilities.
- Exercise caution when using public Wi-Fi networks. Avoid accessing sensitive information or conducting financial transactions on unsecured networks. Use a virtual private network (VPN) to encrypt your internet connection and enhance your privacy.

- Be mindful of phishing attempts. Beware of emails, messages, or calls asking for your personal information or login credentials. Be vigilant of suspicious links, attachments, or requests for money. Avoid clicking on unfamiliar or suspicious links and verify the authenticity of communications before responding or providing any information.
- Review and adjust the privacy settings on your social media accounts. Control who can see your posts and personal information. Avoid sharing sensitive or personal details on public platforms. Consider removing the phone number associated with your accounts in the settings.

Day 7:

If you are a refugee woman settling in the UK, you can overcome the online challenges related to language, fitting in, and understanding life in the UK. The British Red Cross provides a guide available in nine different languages to help female refugees adapt more easily. You can access the guide through this link:

<https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/how-we-support-refugees/digital-empowerment-of-refugee-women>

This resource from the British Red Cross offers valuable information and support to assist you in navigating your new life in the UK.