

## Managing Client Contact

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[Bogus Calls](#)

Bogus callers are callers who try to get information about our clients under false pretences. Guidance on identifying potential bogus callers and the steps you should follow if you think you have received a bogus call is available using the link below:

[http://intraLink/1/commission/finance-commercial/finance-commercial-governance/risk-security-continuity/security/dwp\\_t446004.asp#TopOfPage](http://intraLink/1/commission/finance-commercial/finance-commercial-governance/risk-security-continuity/security/dwp_t446004.asp#TopOfPage)

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[Call Recording](#)

It is not necessary to warn incoming callers that their call will be recorded, as this information is included in the automated message.

For outbound calls, whilst there is no legal obligation on us to advise clients that the call may be recorded, doing so provides better client service through full transparency. You should advise the client you are calling of this fact – “I should tell you that this call may be recorded for quality and / or training purposes”.

If a client expresses concern about the call being recorded, they should be reassured about the confidentiality of our service. If they still do not wish to communicate with us by recorded call, they should be given the option of communicating in writing or by call back from a non-monitored telephone.

The Data Protection Act 1998 gives individuals a legal right to see / receive a copy of personal data held about them. This includes recorded telephone calls. Untagged telephone calls are usually deleted after three weeks.

Where it is suspected that a client may be recording a phone conversation, ask the client directly if the call is being recorded. Clients will often admit they are recording the call when asked.

If the client states they want or intend to record a phone interview by using a tape recorder, or if a user suspects a phone interview is being recorded, the client still has the right to be interviewed either in an office or by phone. A client can record a telephone conversation or an interview and is not obliged to tell us they intend to do so.

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### [Complaints](#)

The Child Maintenance Group has specified policies and procedures in place for handling complaints from our clients and other third parties. Additional information can be located here:

<http://intralink.link2.gpn.gov.uk/1/csa/operational-resources/communicating-with-clients/complaint-handling/index.asp>

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### [Confidentiality Statements](#)

When first contact is made with a client, they must be advised of the confidentiality statement under the Data Protection Act. The statement is as follows:

## How we collect and use information:

The Child Maintenance Group collects information for the purpose of dealing with child maintenance. The information we collect about you depends on the reason for your business with us. We may check information about you with other information we have. We may get information about you from other people and certain other organisations. We may give information to certain organisations, as the law allows, to:

- check the accuracy of information;
- prevent or detect crime;
- protect public funds in other ways; and
- use in research or statistics.

These other organisations include:

- HM Revenue and Customs, the Department for Work and Pensions and other Government Departments;
- Local Authorities; and
- Private sector bodies, such as banks and certain other organisations.

We will not give information about you to anyone outside of the CMG unless the law allows us to. The CMG is the Data Controller for the purpose of the Data Protection Act.

If you want to know more about what information we have about you, or the way we use your information, please contact us.

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## Data Protection

The Data Protection Act:

- imposes legal requirements on us to protect client information; and
- provides clients with rights to see information we record and retain about them.

Further guidance about the Data Protection Act is available using the link below.

<http://intranet.link2.gpn.gov.uk/1/csa/operational-resources/Communicating-with-clients/protecting-client-information/index.asp>

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### [Face to Face Visits](#)

We can arrange face to face visits with clients in certain limited circumstances. Further information about the situations where this may be appropriate and the guidance you should follow to make a referral is available using the link below.

<http://intranet.link2.gpn.gov.uk/1/csa/operational-resources/Communicating-with-clients/clientinterviewingservice/index.asp>

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### [Facilitating Parental Contact](#)

This section explains the appropriate action to take if a parent with care or non-resident parent asks the CMG to help establish / re-establish contact with the other parent.

This process will not be pro-actively marketed or advertised by the CMG. It should only be offered when a client makes a specific request for their details to be forwarded to the other parent in an attempt to re-establish contact.

This guidance solely applies to requests from parents and should not be followed in relation to requests from children.

When a request to pass on contact details is received, we should check to ensure that this action has not been taken previously. If it has, it will not be appropriate for the details to be sent again, unless there has been a change in the relevant information.

The party making the request should complete an authorisation form confirming that they want their details to be pass on to the other parent. They should also be required to submit their contact details on an approved form.

We should check the approved form to ensure that only the requesting party's contact details have been included. No other communications should be forwarded and it should be made clear to the requesting party that whether to make contact is the decision of the other parent.

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## [False Information Warnings](#)

On first contact with a client, the criminal offence of failing to provide information statement must be given word for word. This is the exact statement that must be read out to the client:

"We are asking for information under Child Support Law. Under Child Support Law it is a criminal offence if anyone required to provide information:

- Without reasonable excuse, fails to provide such information when requested to do so; or
- Provides information, or knowingly causes or allows information to be provided which they know to be false.

If a court finds them guilty of the criminal offence outlined above, they can be fined up to £1000"

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## [Freedom of Information](#)

The Freedom of Information Act provides individuals with the right to request information from any public authority. Requests for information made under the Freedom of Information Act must be responded to within twenty working days, and it is therefore important that any requests are referred to the appropriate team promptly.

Further information about the Freedom of Information Act and the process you should follow if you receive a Freedom of Information request is available using the link below.

[http://intranlink.link2.gpn.gov.uk/1/commission/governance-and-management/information-governance/dwp\\_m127166.asp#TopOfPage](http://intranlink.link2.gpn.gov.uk/1/commission/governance-and-management/information-governance/dwp_m127166.asp#TopOfPage)

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## [Interpreters and Translation Services](#)

The CMG has a range of procedures in place for communicating with clients who are unable to use our usual methods of communication. This includes clients who are unable to speak English, or who have hearing difficulties. Further guidance about the range of services the CMG can offer in these circumstances is available using the links below.

<http://intranet/1/csa/operational-resources/Communicating-with-clients/interpreting.asp>

<http://np-cmg-sharepoint.link2.gpn.gov.uk/sites/procedures/Pages/Client-Contact/Interpretation.aspx>

<http://np-cmg-sharepoint.link2.gpn.gov.uk/sites/procedures/Pages/Client-Contact/Translation.aspx>

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### [Personal Interest / Sensitive Cases](#)

Sensitive cases are cases where access to the client records is restricted to a limited range of people. This is normally because someone working for the CMG knows one or both of the clients concerned.

You can access additional information about sensitive cases using the link below:

[Sensitive Case - Handle](#)

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### [Representatives](#)

Our clients are entitled to arrange for a representative (rep) to deal with their case. It is important when you are dealing with potential representatives that you understand what authorisation is necessary from the client and what information can / cannot be disclosed.

Departmental guidance on Working with Representatives is available using the link below.

[http://intranet.link2.gpn.gov.uk/1/corp/sites/infodir/kimd/dataprotection/disclosure-matching-sharing/disclosure/DWP\\_T408643.asp](http://intranet.link2.gpn.gov.uk/1/corp/sites/infodir/kimd/dataprotection/disclosure-matching-sharing/disclosure/DWP_T408643.asp)

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### [Special Payments](#)

The CMG operates a Special Payments scheme, which allows us to make payments to clients in cases where there has been some type of maladministration.

Additional information about the Special Payments scheme and the process you should follow if you want to submit a referral is available in the link below.

[http://intranet.link2.gpn.gov.uk/1/csa/operational-resources/refunds/dwp\\_t580892.asp](http://intranet.link2.gpn.gov.uk/1/csa/operational-resources/refunds/dwp_t580892.asp)

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### [Suicide Threats](#)

If a suicide threat is received, it must be referred to the nominated officer. This will be the HEO of the team that owns the case.

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### [Unacceptable Client Behaviour and Potentially Violent Persons](#)

The CMG has specified policies and procedures in place for cases where a client has acted in a way that is considered unacceptable. This includes situations where a member of staff has been threatened, harassed or abused by a client in writing, in person, or verbally.

<http://intranet/1/corp/sites/hr/nonpolicy/ohsd/managingincidents/index.asp>

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PLDMG @ 09.03.2017