

What is data protection?

A set of rules. Data protection is a set of rules that defines what organisations may and may not do with the information they hold about an individual. Importantly, it applies equally whether you are dealing with government administration or with a private business.

Personal data. The technical term for the information regulated by data protection rules is ‘personal data’, and it covers any type of information that can be used to identify you. This may be your employee file, the history of your posts to your favourite social network, or a record of your bank transactions.

Data controller. This is the technical term for the business, public authority or organisation that uses your personal data and is responsible for what happens with it. For your bank transactions this will be your bank, for your employee file it will be your employer.

Processing of personal data. Data protection law covers every imaginable use of personal data, starting from its collection to its storage to its use in day to day business, and even its destruction. The technical term used for all these different uses is the “processing” of personal data.

Privacy. The goal of data protection law is to protect the privacy of the individuals concerned while striking a fair balance with the legitimate interests of those entities that need to use the personal data. You’re happy for your doctor to use your health information to treat you, but you probably wouldn’t be too happy to find an article penned by your doctor telling everyone about your medical condition in the local newspaper.

Data protection law is closely related to the fundamental right to privacy, which is enshrined in the right to private and family life of the Cayman Islands’ Bill of Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities (BoRFR), and in Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The right to privacy includes the right of individuals to determine who holds information about them and how that information is used, which leads us back to the goals of data protection.

Why do we need data protection?

Data protection protects the privacy of everyone on Cayman and it encourages organisations to treat our personal information responsibly.