



PERSONAL DATA  
PROTECTION COMMISSION  
SINGAPORE

# YOUR PERSONAL DATA, YOUR CHOICE

A quick guide to  
the Personal Data  
Protection Act  
for  
individuals



# PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION COMMISSION

The Commission administers and enforces the PDPA in Singapore, which aims to safeguard individuals' personal data against misuse and promote proper management of personal data in organisations.

More information on the Commission and the PDPA is available at: [www.pdpc.gov.sg](http://www.pdpc.gov.sg)

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[www.pdpc.gov.sg/feedback](http://www.pdpc.gov.sg/feedback)

# THE PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION ACT AND WHAT IT MEANS

## Introduction to the Act

With effect from 2 July 2014, the data protection obligations<sup>1</sup> under the **Personal Data Protection Act 2012** (PDPA) will allow you to protect your personal data that is collected, used and disclosed by private organisations<sup>2</sup>. Individuals engaging in data activities for their own personal or domestic purposes will not be within the scope of the PDPA.

A national **Do Not Call (DNC) Registry** has also been set up for you to register your Singapore telephone number if you do not wish to receive telemarketing messages from organisations.

## Benefits:

- Gives you more control over your personal data.
- Allows you to access and correct your personal data.
- Lets you reduce the number of unwanted telemarketing messages received.

<sup>1</sup> Data protection obligations here refer to parts III to VI of the PDPA.

<sup>2</sup> The data protection obligations do not apply to any public agency, or an organisation that is acting on behalf of a public agency, in relation to the collection, use or disclosure of the personal data.

# WHAT IS PERSONAL DATA?



Any data that identifies you is personal data.



These can range from names and contact numbers to other types of data that form part of your record.



Personal data under the PDPA may include the following:

- Full name
- NRIC or passport number
- Photograph or video image of an individual
- Mobile telephone number
- Personal email address
- Thumbprint
- Name and residential address



Do note that contact information that you provide for business purposes (also known as business contact information) is not covered under the data protection obligations. This can include your name, designation, business telephone number/address/email address/fax number and any other similar information about you.

## HOW THE PDPA APPLIES TO YOU

You give out your personal data to organisations all the time. It could be when you are at the shops applying for a service, when you claim membership rewards or when you take part in contests.

Sometimes, your personal data may be shared among organisations or used for other purposes.

With the introduction of the PDPA, you can decide which organisation can collect your data, how it is to be used and whether it can be disclosed. The PDPA covers all electronic and non-electronic personal data, regardless of whether the personal data is true or false.

You have a responsibility over your own personal data. By being careful in managing your personal data, you can reduce the risks of misuse by organisations.



# PROVIDING CONSENT

Organisations have to let you know why they are asking you for your personal data and obtain your consent before collecting, using or disclosing your personal data.

If you willingly provide your personal data for a particular purpose, you may also be allowing organisations to collect, use or disclose your personal data. This is known as "deemed consent".

**TIP:**



Think about who you are giving your personal data to and whether it is necessary to do so. Always ask if it is not clear why the information is needed. You may wish to check with the relevant organisation for clarifications or to give feedback on their data protection policies and practices.





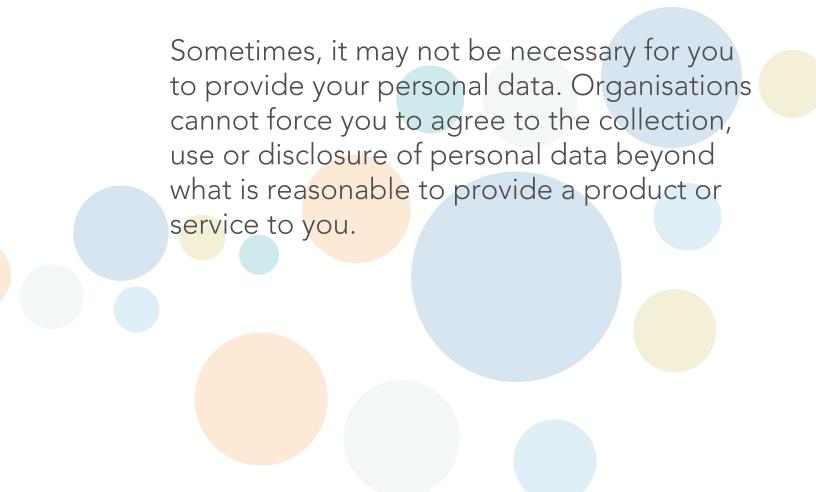
Always understand the purpose and how the collection of your personal data relates to that purpose. If you are unsure, ask why it is being collected.

TIP:

2



## KNOWING WHAT PERSONAL DATA TO GIVE



Sometimes, it may not be necessary for you to provide your personal data. Organisations cannot force you to agree to the collection, use or disclosure of personal data beyond what is reasonable to provide a product or service to you.



## WITHDRAWING CONSENT

You may tell an organisation to stop collecting, using or disclosing your personal data. However, the organisation is not required to delete or destroy your personal data and may retain it for as long as there are business or legal needs.

TIP:  
**3**

Check out the likely consequences (eg. penalties, forfeiting benefits) of withdrawing your consent before you do so.







# REQUESTING ACCESS

You may request to see the personal data that an organisation has about you. You can also check how your personal data has or may have been used or disclosed in the past year. Do note that organisations may levy an administrative fee for each access request or reject the request if it is considered frivolous.

Organisations cannot grant access if giving you the personal data could:

- Cause immediate/serious harm to your safety or physical/mental health;
- Threaten the safety or physical/mental health of someone else;
- Reveal someone else's personal data;
- Reveal the identity of the person who provided your personal data; or
- Be contrary to the national interest.



Find out the process and be clear about your purpose for access so that you do not incur unnecessary cost. Submit sufficient details in your request so that the organisation may process your request efficiently.

TIP:

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# REQUESTING CORRECTION

You may request to correct an error or omission in your personal data held by the organisation. Unless the organisation has a valid reason not to make the correction, it should correct the data and send it to organisations which have received it in the past year; or if you agree, only to specific organisations to which the personal data was disclosed.

TIP:  
**5**

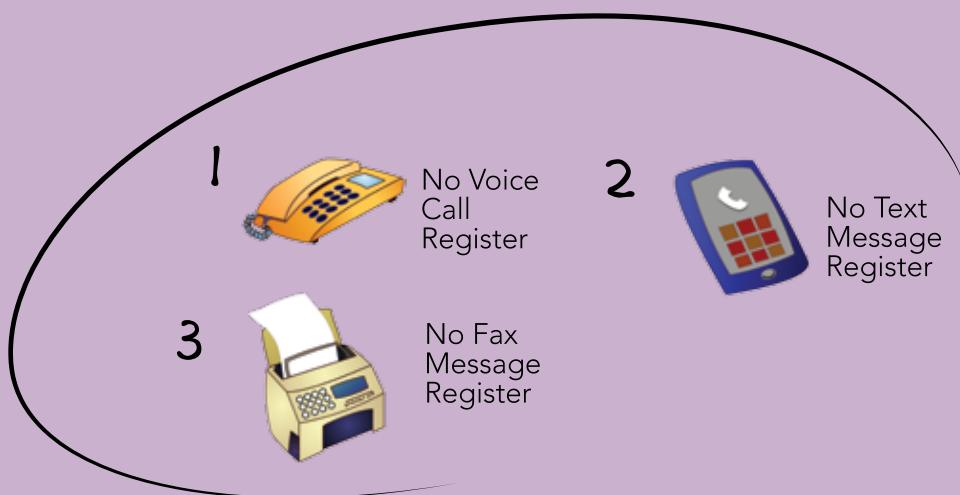
Update your personal data with the organisations, such as informing them when you change your mailing address or other contact details, to ensure that the organisations hold accurate information about you.



# HOW THE DO NOT CALL REGISTRY CAN HELP *you*

With effect from 2 January 2014, the national Do Not Call (DNC) Registry lets you opt out of telemarketing messages sent to your Singapore telephone number<sup>3</sup>, giving you more control over the messages you receive on your telephone, mobile phone and fax machine. Examples of telemarketing messages are those which promote or advertise goods or services, supply of land or interest in land, and business or investment opportunities.

There are three Registers in the DNC Registry:



<sup>3</sup>Only 8-digit numbers starting with 3, 6, 8 or 9 can be registered with the DNC Registry.

# How you can add your telephone number to the DNC Registers

Registration is free and simple.

There are three methods to register / deregister:



ONLINE @  
DNC WEBSITE

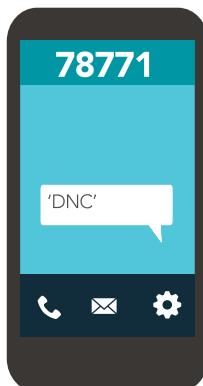


Note: Access to the device which you are registering the number of is required to complete the registration.



SMS

Send 'DNC' to Shortcode<sup>1</sup>: 78771

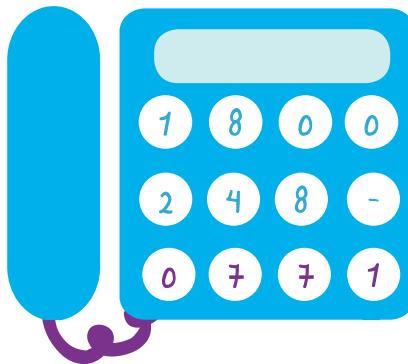


Note: You can only register the number that you SMS from. <sup>1</sup>Normal SMS charges apply.

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## TOLL FREE NUMBER

Dial 1800-248-0771



Note: You can only register the number that you call from. This number must not be subscribed to caller-ID blocking service.

Please visit the  
DNC website at  
[www.dnc.gov.sg](http://www.dnc.gov.sg)  
for more details.





## AFTER REGISTERING WITH THE DNC REGISTRY

Registration with the DNC Registry does not automatically block out all messages.

While your registration is immediate, you may continue to receive unsolicited telemarketing messages for up to 30 days. This is to allow organisations to use the list of telephone numbers that were checked, for the next 30 days.

**You may also receive telemarketing messages that are related to the subject of your ongoing relationship with the organisations.**

For example, a bank may send you messages about a credit card rewards programme if you are a holder of that credit card, or a telecommunications service provider may send you promotional offers in relation to a broadband service you are currently subscribed to.

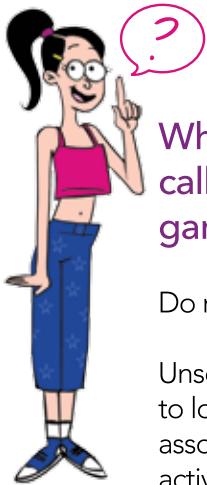
These messages must contain an opt-out facility that you may use to opt out from receiving the messages. If you choose to opt out, the organisation will need to stop sending you such messages within 30 days.



**Messages not considered telemarketing messages under the DNC Requirements include:**

- Market research or market survey;
- Promotion of non-commercial programmes carried out by public agencies;
- Information about employment opportunities;
- Warranty information, product recall information, and safety or security information relating to a product you have purchased;
- Delivery of goods or services, including relevant product updates and upgrades;
- Business-to-business (B2B) telemarketing; and
- Nuisance calls which are non-commercial in nature.





## What should I do if I receive an unsolicited SMS or call related to loans, financial assistance or online gambling from an unknown source?

Do not reply to such an SMS or call. Do not interact in any way.

Unsolicited SMSes or calls from unknown sources that are related to loans, financial assistance or online gambling are likely to be associated with unlicensed moneylending and illegal gambling activities. The PDPC investigates all complaints regarding unsolicited telemarketing SMSes or calls seriously. However, unlicensed moneylending and illegal gambling are serious criminal offences in Singapore where the Police is the relevant authority to investigate such offences. If you receive such SMSes or calls, please notify the Police directly through any of the following channels:

- E-Services at <http://www.police.gov.sg/e-services>;
- National Crime Prevention Council's 'X Ah Long' Hotline at 1800-924-5664 (1800-X-AH-LONG); or
- i-Witness at <http://www.police.gov.sg/iwitness>.

Complaints received by the PDPC relating to such activities will be referred to the Police.

## What should I do if I suspect my personal data has been misused, or I still continue to receive telemarketing messages after registration?

You should contact the organisation directly for clarifications.

For further assistance, you may contact the Personal Data Protection Commission at <http://www.pdpc.gov.sg>.

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This publication gives a general introduction to information about the personal data protection law in Singapore, tips for consumers and best practices. The contents herein are not intended to be an authoritative or complete statement of the law or a substitute for legal advice. In particular, whilst the above seeks to highlight the general rules under the PDPA, there could be applicable exceptions to these rules. To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Personal Data Protection Commission (PDPC), the Info-communications Development Authority of Singapore (IDA) and their respective members, officers and employees shall not be responsible for any inaccuracy, error or omission in this publication or liable for any damage or loss of any kind as a result of any use of or reliance on this publication.

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