

How we use your information

This privacy notice tells you what to expect when Alcoholics Anonymous collects personal information. It applies to information we collect about:

- Website visitors and the use of Cookies
- Use of Search Engines and business listings such as Google Search and Google Maps and Google My Business
- The File Store - We provide an online File storage facility for the service structure
- Search media such as Google Search and Google Maps
- The AA Online Response Service (ORS)
- The AA Chat Now Service (Instant chat on our website)
- Members and others who use 'aamail.org' email addresses

Visitors to our websites.

When you visit <https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/> (or any sub domain or micro site) we use a third-party service, Google Analytics, to collect standard internet log information and details of visitor location and behaviour patterns. We do this to find out things such as the number of visitors to the various parts of the site. This information is only processed in a way which does not identify anyone. We do not make, and do not allow Google to make, any attempt to find out the identities of those visiting our website. We will never collect personally identifiable information through analytics of our website. The use of the Google services is covered under the Google Privacy & terms shown here: <https://policies.google.com/privacy/update>. Google Analytics is Google's analytics tool that helps website and app owners to understand how their visitors engage with their properties.

Use of cookies

We will place cookies on your device when you visit our website to enable the site to work and to make the experience better for you. Exactly how this works can be seen at this Google Analytics cookie policy page <https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/6004245>

File Store

We provide an online File storage facility for the service structure. It is intended to be used for sharing information and no personal data should be included.

When you contact us via search engines (Google search or Maps)

The only Alcoholics Anonymous search media presence is a Google My Business listing on Google.co.uk and Google Maps which delivers some information about AA's UK General Service Office operating hours, address and contact details. We collect anonymous visitor information about the number of people who use this online listing.

When you use our Online Response Service email service (ORS)

AA offers an email help service called Online Response Service (ORS). The address is help@aamail.org. It is staffed by AA Member volunteers who respond to email queries.

Our email server uses TLS/SSL encryption (Transport layer Security) and the server also accepts

STARTTLS encrypted connections. This security encrypts data only between the servers used for sending the email data – they are no protection against computer viruses of any kind. It is also no protection against errors like addressing the email to the wrong person or other people being able to read the email if you send to an incorrect address.

We will monitor any emails sent to us, including file attachments, for viruses or malicious software. Please be aware that you have a responsibility to ensure that any email you send is within the bounds of the law. We encourage you to use good virus protection. The UK Government website <https://www.cyberaware.gov.uk/> has good information on computer protection data.

If you choose while emailing with the ORS service to give your name and any other personal details neither they nor any other part of your email will be given or shown to anyone else. We will use anonymous data in the form of the numbers of people who use the service only to monitor and report the number of users internally. This makes sure we are doing the best we can for people who ask for help and helps us to improve service

We will store the emails sent to us at the help@aamail.org email address and replies from that address for two months. Only specific members of the ORS Volunteer Team have access to this data and it is not shared with anyone else. The reason for keeping the contents of your email is for training purposes and to enable us to continue the service and carry the message of AA. All emails older than two months are deleted.

People who use our Chat Now service

We provide a Chat Now service, which is an Internet Chat to handle enquiries in real time, through the website staffed by AA Member volunteers.

If you chat with a Member Volunteer using the Chat Now service, we will collect your chosen screen name if you choose to provide one, the internet protocol (ip) address from which you contact us and the contents of your Chat Now session for no longer than the duration of the administrator shift. We never request any personal contact information but may ask for a town or local area to provide local meeting information or local helpline numbers. Any personal information will be deleted at the end of each administrator shift. In some cases, a transcript may be retained in anonymised form for training and quality control. In all such cases all personal data is removed.

Your Chat record will be available for you to download immediately after the chat session if you choose to do so. We do not keep chat records and they are deleted at the end of every administrator shift.

When you are assigned or request the use 'aamail.org' email addresses

AA provides an email hosting service to its members who do Service to the fellowship of AA and to Committee and Sub-Committee members, Trustees and Secretaries, Employees and others.

If you ask for an 'aamail.org' email address, or we assign one to you because of the service work you do, we validate your name by referencing it against the AA Confidential Directory. This ensures that only Members of AA who are performing service jobs can use the system.

We use the Open Source Roundcube client to provide an online experience for 'aamail.org' email addresses. Setting up a forwarding service is not supported.

We provide help documents, walk-throughs and practical help for the use of 'aamail.org' email accounts. If you choose to use an email client such as Microsoft Outlook or any other POP or IMAP email client where data from your 'aamail.org' email account is stored on a personal device, you are responsible for the email data on that device. We strongly encourage you to use the web based Roundcube option and to keep your emails free from personal information, keep passwords safe and not to put your password into any email clients or save them in browsers.

Access to personal information

Alcoholics Anonymous tries to be as open as it can be in terms of giving people access to their personal information while keeping in mind the Twelfth Tradition “Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities”. We only store the data we need to do our service and business

Links to other websites

Our website’s policy is no links to other websites except other National Alcoholics Anonymous Websites. Because of the structure of AA as set down in our Twelve Traditions, Tradition 4 “Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups, or A.A. as a whole” and the inclusion of Micro-Sites whose content is managed by their Group and Intergroup owners, some external links may be visible in some cases. We encourage you to read the privacy statements on all the other websites you visit to see how they handle your personal data. This privacy notice does not cover the links within this site that may have been placed, against policy and guidance, by AA groups, Intergroups or any others. We regularly search the site for these unauthorised links and when we find them, we ask for them to be removed or remove them ourselves.

This Privacy Notice:

We have written this notice in a way we hope is clear and easy to understand. It does not provide exhaustive detail of all aspects of Alcoholics Anonymous’ collection and use of personal information however, we are happy to help and to provide any additional information or explanation needed. If you agree, we will try to deal with your request informally, for example by providing you with the specific information you need over the telephone or, if you prefer by letter or email. We are happy to provide copies of the data in a format that is easily accessible and easy for you to use. Any requests for information or more details should be sent to the address PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York YO1 7NJ or by email to AAInformation@gsogb.org.uk

Changes to this privacy notice

We keep our privacy notice under regular review. This document was updated in February 2020.

The Information Commissioner is the regulator for Data in the UK – their main website can be found here: <https://ico.org.uk/>

You can see a searchable text of the full GDPR regulation here: <https://gdpr-info.eu/>