

Key Handling Policy

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Handing your keys to somebody is the biggest thing we ask of you. This is exactly what happens to them.

1. Scope

This policy covers physical keys, key safe codes, alarm codes, gate and garage codes, and any other means of getting into a property. We call all of it **access details**.

2. Receiving a key

2.1 A key is handed over in person, or left in a key safe you control. We do not collect keys from unattended places.

2.2 We record the date, who received it, how many keys and what they open. You get that record.

2.3 We test every key before the first visit where we can, so a key that does not turn is found out in advance and not at seven in the morning in the rain.

3. Labelling

3.1 A key is labelled with a **code only**.

3.2 A key is **never** labelled with your name, your address, your postcode or anything else that identifies the property.

3.3 The record connecting the code to the property is held in our system, not with the key. A lost key therefore does not tell the finder which door it opens.

4. Storing keys

4.1 Keys we hold between visits are kept in a locked cabinet at a secure address, not at a carer's home.

4.2 A carer takes a key out for the visit and returns it afterwards. We record who has which key.

4.3 Keys are not copied. Ever. If more keys are needed, we ask you.

5. Codes

5.1 Key safe codes and alarm codes are stored **encrypted** in our database, with an encryption key held separately from the data.

5.2 A code is shown to the assigned carer **only while that carer's visit is in progress**. Before the visit starts, and after it ends, the fields are simply not shown.

5.3 Every time a code is revealed we record which carer saw it, which visit it was for and when. You can ask us for that record.

5.4 Codes are never sent by email or text message.

5.5 Carers are told never to write a code down and never to share it with anyone, including another carer.

6. During a visit

6.1 A carer enters only the parts of the property needed to do the work booked.

6.2 A carer never admits anyone else, unless you have told us in writing to expect them.

6.3 On leaving, the carer locks up, sets the alarm if you have asked for that, and photographs the front door as evidence the property was secured.

7. Returning keys

7.1 Ask us and we will return your keys. We arrange handover with you and record it.

7.2 When a booking ends and you hold no future booking, we ask what you would like us to do with the key.

7.3 Access codes are deleted 3 months after your last visit, unless you ask us to delete them sooner — which you can, at any time.

8. If a key is lost

8.1 The carer tells us immediately. We tell you the same day.

8.2 We retrace the route and search.

8.3 Because the key carries no address, the risk to you is low, but we will not rely on that alone: if you want the lock changed, we will pay the reasonable cost of replacing the lock and the keys for it.

8.4 We record the loss, look at how it happened and change what we do if we need to.

9. If a code is compromised

9.1 Tell us and we will remove it from your record at once.

9.2 Change the code on the key safe or alarm, and give us the new one when you are ready.

9.3 If we believe a code has been exposed, we tell you without delay and treat it under our data breach procedure.

10. Who can see what

Who	Sees
The assigned carer, during the visit	The access details for that property
The assigned carer, at any other time	Nothing — the fields are not shown
Any other carer	Nothing
Our office staff	Access details where a booking or an incident requires it, recorded each time
Anyone else	Nothing

11. Your part

11.1 Please do not give us your only key.

11.2 Please tell us straight away if you change a lock, a code or an alarm.

11.3 Please make sure your key safe is fitted properly and is not visible from the street.

This document was last reviewed by [SOLICITOR NAME] on [DATE].