

Clear Desk Policy

Ref: IC012, v2

September 2025



**An Bord Um
Chúnamh Dlíthiúil**
Legal Aid Board

Providing access to justice since 1979

Policy and Procedure Document Summary

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Document Author	Dr. Brian Moss
Document Approver (Person or Group)	Executive Management Team
Note: Formal review may occur sooner if new legislative/regulatory or emerging issues/research/technology/audit etc. dictates sooner.	

Version Control				
Version No.	Date Reviewed	Description of Change	Author	Approved by
1	22/05/2024	New Procedure	Brian Moss	Gareth Clifford
2	12/09/2025	Full Review	Dr. Ellen Ganly	Dr. Brian Moss



1. Purpose

This policy explains the Board's expectation on how individual work stations of Legal Aid Board staff should be maintained at all times.

2. Scope

This policy relates to treatment of all data types that the Board processes in the course of its work, personal and business-oriented, created, received, or sent out by different technologies that staff have available to support their work. This includes but is not limited to email, phone, post, hard-copy file, and video platform.

3. Target Audience

This policy is intended for Board staff, whether working in a full or part-time, permanent or temporary capacity. A copy of this policy is available on the internal knowledge repository iLAB.

4. Justification

As the Board processes a range of data often carrying private or commercially sensitive information, and staff possess a range of personal data of significance to themselves, it is vitally important that such data are kept secure at all times.

5. Responsibilities

All Business Unit Leads: have responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy across their teams.

Staff of the Legal Aid Board: all are individually responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with obligations of the GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, set out in this policy, and in all Board data policies in their daily work. All policies are available on www.legalaidboard.ie and iLAB. Staff are also individually responsible for engaging with data protection training provided by the Board.

Data Protection section: advises on and monitors compliance with data protection legislation, taking timely action and making recommendations to improve the Board's performance where needed. The section manages subject access requests, breaches, and conducts data protection impact assessments where needed. The section also acts as the main contact point for the Data Protection Commission, the Irish supervisory authority on data protection. The Data Protection Officer role is located in the section and leads on these matters utilising staff support, assistance, advice, and training to enhance organisation-wide compliance with data protection.



6. Clear Desk Policy

The Clear Desk Policy is intended to assist staff avoid any data protection issues for themselves and others. It applies to all workstations that are made use of in the Board including but not restricted to:

- a desk in a shared / open plan work area;
- a desk in a small / single occupancy office;
- a public counter;
- a desk at home; or
- working in an external building (e.g. courthouse)

Working on public transport (e.g. trains, buses, airlines) or at public events (e.g. conferences) presents risks of others being able to view or overhear conversations in which Board or personal data are disclosed. Conducting Board work in such scenarios should be avoided as much as possible.

The following apply to **all** workstations:

- put away any files not in use;
- if leaving your workstation for a sustained period, lock your pc and turn off your monitor, or log off and shut down your pc;
- put your mobile phone and laptop away when going out;
- put away any wallet, identity cards, or notes revealing personal or business data if not at your desk;
- clear your desk at breaks and at the end of a working day;
- dispose of any waste in confidentiality bins;
- avoid printing or duplicating documents where necessary;
- avoid bringing personal, client or business data with you out of your office unless necessary;
- do not remove files from a LAB building unless you have authorisation to do so;
- check you left nothing on the printer, in meeting rooms, or break areas after you've used them;
- avoid leaving any clients or contractors alone at your desk where work items may be present, accessible or visible; and
- when leaving Board employment, clear your desk and drawers of any work or personal items, ensuring all work items are properly noted by your line manager.

The following apply in different work arrangements:

- if leaving your workstation, place active files into your desk drawer or local storage units;
- shut and/ or lock your office door when going out or at the end of the day;
- consider closing windows if going out for a sustained period;
- keys to any drawers or filing cabinets should be secure and/ or out of sight; and
- do close any windows if you're last in the office and leaving for the day.

In short: Leaving it? Lock it!



7. Contact Details

The Board's Data Protection section and Data Protection Officer can be contacted at the details below. These are also published on the Board's website www.legalaidboard.ie

Data Protection Officer
Legal Aid Board
48/49 North Brunswick Street,
Smithfield,
Dublin 7,
D07 PE0C.

Telephone: 01 6469 764

Email: dataprotection@legalaidboard.ie

8. Monitoring, Enforcement, and Alteration

Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the Data Protection section and the local managers.

The Board reserves the right to take action it deems appropriate where individuals breach this policy. Board staff who breach this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

The Board will amend this policy regularly but may amend this policy at any time to take account of business, legislative, or organisational changes.

Any changes to the policy will be notified on the Board website.

