



Data Protection Act 1998

1998 CHAPTER 29

PART VI

MISCELLANEOUS AND GENERAL

[^{F1}Monetary penalties]

Textual Amendments

- F1** Ss. 55A - 55E and cross-heading inserted (1.10.2009 for certain purposes and 1.4.2010 to the extent that it is not already in force) by [Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 \(c. 4\), ss. 144\(1\), 153](#); S.I. 2009/2606, [art. 2\(n\)](#); S.I. 2010/712, [art. 4](#)

[^{F2}55A Power of Commissioner to impose monetary penalty

- (1) The Commissioner may serve a data controller with a monetary penalty notice if the Commissioner is satisfied that—
 - (a) there has been a serious contravention of section 4(4) by the data controller,
 - (b) the contravention was of a kind likely to cause substantial damage or substantial distress, and
 - (c) subsection (2) or (3) applies.
- (2) This subsection applies if the contravention was deliberate.
- (3) This subsection applies if the data controller—
 - (a) knew or ought to have known —
 - (i) that there was a risk that the contravention would occur, and
 - (ii) that such a contravention would be of a kind likely to cause substantial damage or substantial distress, but
 - (b) failed to take reasonable steps to prevent the contravention.

Status: Point in time view as at 01/12/2012.

Changes to legislation: Data Protection Act 1998, Cross Heading: Monetary penalties is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 05 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

- [The Commissioner may not be satisfied as mentioned in subsection (1) by virtue of ^{F3}(3A) any matter which comes to the Commissioner's attention as a result of anything done in pursuance of—
- (a) an assessment notice;
 - (b) an assessment under section 51(7).]
- (4) A monetary penalty notice is a notice requiring the data controller to pay to the Commissioner a monetary penalty of an amount determined by the Commissioner and specified in the notice.
 - (5) The amount determined by the Commissioner must not exceed the prescribed amount.
 - (6) The monetary penalty must be paid to the Commissioner within the period specified in the notice.
 - (7) The notice must contain such information as may be prescribed.
 - (8) Any sum received by the Commissioner by virtue of this section must be paid into the Consolidated Fund.
 - (9) In this section—
 - “data controller” does not include the Crown Estate Commissioners or a person who is a data controller by virtue of section 63(3);
 - “prescribed” means prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State.]

Textual Amendments

- F2** S. 55A inserted (1.10.2009 for certain purposes and 6.4.2010 to the extent that it is not already in force) by [Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 \(c. 4\)](#), [ss. 144\(1\), 153](#); [S.I. 2009/2606](#), [art. 2\(n\)](#); [S.I. 2010/712](#), [art. 4](#)
- F3** S. 55(3A) inserted (6.4.2010) by [Coroners and Justice Act 2009 \(c. 25\)](#), [ss. 175, 182](#), [Sch. 20 para. 13](#) (with [s. 180](#)); [S.I. 2010/816](#), [art. 2](#), [Sch. para. 19](#)

[^{F4}55B Monetary penalty notices: procedural rights

- (1) Before serving a monetary penalty notice, the Commissioner must serve the data controller with a notice of intent.
- (2) A notice of intent is a notice that the Commissioner proposes to serve a monetary penalty notice.
- (3) A notice of intent must—
 - (a) inform the data controller that he may make written representations in relation to the Commissioner's proposal within a period specified in the notice, and
 - (b) contain such other information as may be prescribed.
- (4) The Commissioner may not serve a monetary penalty notice until the time within which the data controller may make representations has expired.
- (5) A person on whom a monetary penalty notice is served may appeal to the Tribunal against—
 - (a) the issue of the monetary penalty notice;

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(b) the amount of the penalty specified in the notice.

(6) In this section, “prescribed” means prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State.]

Textual Amendments

F4 S. 55B inserted (1.10.2009 for certain purposes and 6.4.2010 to the extent that it is not already in force) by [Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 \(c. 4\)](#), [ss. 144\(1\)](#), 153; S.I. 2009/2606, [art. 2\(n\)](#); S.I. 2010/712, [art. 4](#)

[^{F5}55C Guidance about monetary penalty notices

- (1) The Commissioner must prepare and issue guidance on how he proposes to exercise his functions under sections 55A and 55B.
- (2) The guidance must, in particular, deal with—
 - (a) the circumstances in which he would consider it appropriate to issue a monetary penalty notice, and
 - (b) how he will determine the amount of the penalty.
- (3) The Commissioner may alter or replace the guidance.
- (4) If the guidance is altered or replaced, the Commissioner must issue the altered or replacement guidance.
- (5) The Commissioner may not issue guidance under this section without the approval of the Secretary of State.
- (6) The Commissioner must lay any guidance issued under this section before each House of Parliament.
- (7) The Commissioner must arrange for the publication of any guidance issued under this section in such form and manner as he considers appropriate.
- (8) In subsections (5) to (7), “guidance” includes altered or replacement guidance.]

Textual Amendments

F5 S. 55C inserted (1.10.2009) by [Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 \(c. 4\)](#), [ss. 144\(1\)](#), 153; S.I. 2009/2606, [art. 2\(n\)](#)

[^{F6}55D Monetary penalty notices: enforcement

- (1) This section applies in relation to any penalty payable to the Commissioner by virtue of section 55A.
- (2) In England and Wales, the penalty is recoverable—
 - (a) if a county court so orders, as if it were payable under an order of that court;
 - (b) if the High Court so orders, as if it were payable under an order of that court.

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- (3) In Scotland, the penalty may be enforced in the same manner as an extract registered decree arbitral bearing a warrant for execution issued by the sheriff court of any sheriffdom in Scotland.
- (4) In Northern Ireland, the penalty is recoverable—
- (a) if a county court so orders, as if it were payable under an order of that court;
 - (b) if the High Court so orders, as if it were payable under an order of that court.]

Textual Amendments

F6 S. 55D inserted (6.4.2010) by [Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 \(c. 4\), ss. 144\(1\), 153; S.I. 2010/712, art. 4](#)

[^{F7}55E Notices under sections 55A and 55B: supplemental

- (1) The Secretary of State may by order make further provision in connection with monetary penalty notices and notices of intent.
- (2) An order under this section may in particular—
- (a) provide that a monetary penalty notice may not be served on a data controller with respect to the processing of personal data for the special purposes except in circumstances specified in the order;
 - (b) make provision for the cancellation or variation of monetary penalty notices;
 - (c) confer rights of appeal to the Tribunal against decisions of the Commissioner in relation to the cancellation or variation of such notices;
 - (d) ^{F8}
 - (e) make provision for the determination of [^{F9}appeals made by virtue of paragraph (c)];
 - (f) ^{F10}
- (3) An order under this section may apply any provision of this Act with such modifications as may be specified in the order.
- (4) An order under this section may amend this Act.]

Textual Amendments

F7 S. 55E inserted (1.10.2009) by [Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 \(c. 4\), ss. 144\(1\), 153; S.I. 2009/2606, art. 2\(n\)](#)

F8 S. 55E(2)(d) omitted (18.1.2010) by virtue of [The Transfer of Tribunal Functions Order 2010 \(S.I. 2010/22\)](#), arts. 1(1), 5(1), [Sch. 2 para. 28\(a\)](#)

F9 Words in s. 55E(2)(e) substituted (18.1.2010) by [The Transfer of Tribunal Functions Order 2010 \(S.I. 2010/22\)](#), arts. 1(1), 5(1), [Sch. 2 para. 28\(b\)](#)

F10 S. 55E(2)(f) omitted (18.1.2010) by virtue of [The Transfer of Tribunal Functions Order 2010 \(S.I. 2010/22\)](#), arts. 1(1), 5(1), [Sch. 2 para. 28\(c\)](#)

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