



# EIRCODE

**Code of Practice**

**July 2015**

**Version 1.1**



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## Foreword

### The Code of Practice

This Code of Practice outlines how the National Postcode System, known as “Eircode”, will be made available to the Irish public. It will outline how the System and its agents will do this in line with the law and identify your legal rights and entitlements in relation to Eircodes. This document also outlines how the Code was created. We hope it answers your questions and that you find it useful.

The National Postcode System was introduced in 2015 on behalf of the Minister for the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (the Minister). His Department (DCENR) has licensed an Eircode Contractor to manage Eircode Services. **The current Eircode Contractor is Capita Business Support Services, Ireland, Limited. (Capita).**

### Associated Policies

More information regarding privacy, how data is handled and the licences we issue can be found in the following documents:

- ◆ The Eircode Contractor’s Privacy Policy
- ◆ Data Retention Policy
- ◆ The Licence Agreement
- ◆ The Privacy Statement
- ◆ The Eircode Cookie Policy

### Contracts and Agents

The Contractor is authorised by the Minister to issue licences to other organisations to use the Eircode data. These organisations will either be **Direct End Users** (such as Banks, Public Bodies, etc.) who will use Eircodes alongside their existing data, or to **Eircode Providers (EPs)** who will either add additional information to the Eircode data or offer a service to their customers. The Contractor is also responsible for managing a public register of EPs, administration of its complaints process and monitoring compliance of EPs’ services.

The EPs and Direct End Users will be Data Controllers in their own right. That means that they will be responsible for the lawful processing of the Eircode data along with personal information which they may process on behalf of their end users.

The Eircode database managed by the Contractor does not hold personally identifiable information. The database contains the addresses of about 2.2 million properties throughout the country, alongside their associated Eircode.

However, the services being offered by EPs may involve the processing of personal data. This means that the Contractor will help to make sure that the services offered by the EPs comply with the data protection legislation.

### **Governance and Control of the Eircode Services**

Under the recently-published Communications Regulation (Postal Services) (Amendment) Act, 2015 (the Postal services Amendment Act), the Contractor will monitor and audit the activities of EPs. This will help to ensure Eircode-related services comply with the Postal Services Amendment Regulation and with the Irish Data Protection Acts.

This obligation will include seeking evidence from each licensed EP that their services and professional activities comply with the law. This will be achieved through regular audits of the books and records of each EP.

The Licence Agreement issued by the Contractor to each qualifying EP will make it clear that each EP must ensure that its data management activities and services comply with the law. If there is an issue with EPs' licences, the Contractor will have the authority to revoke, suspend or terminate these licences.

## 1 Introduction

Capita, the Eircode Contractor (the Contractor) was appointed by the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in 2013 to develop and manage the postcode (Eircode) system for Ireland.

To construct the Eircode database, the Contractor has used source data supplied by An Post GeoDirectory Limited, which gets information from:

- ◆ Ordnance Survey Ireland,
- ◆ The Placenames Branch (Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht), and
- ◆ The Universal Service Provider for postal services in Ireland, An Post.

Addresses used are the ‘postal addresses’ defined and maintained by An Post.<sup>1</sup>

Based on this source information, the Contractor has generated a unique 7-digit Eircode which will be assigned and sent to each of the 2.2 million corresponding postal addresses.

This document:

- ◆ Explains what an Eircode is and the benefits of using Eircodes
- ◆ Explains how Eircodes are generated, assigned and disseminated.
- ◆ Explains the Eircodes complaints policy and procedures
- ◆ Explains data protection and privacy policies
- ◆ Provides a list of useful contacts

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<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> The term “Postal Address” always refers to a delivery address as defined by Irish Standard - I.S. EN 14142-1:2011 (Postal services. Address databases), as operated by the Universal Service Provider, An Post.

## 2 Eircode Overview

### 2.1 Addresses in Ireland

In 2014, Ireland had 2.2 million postal addresses. They can be broken down into two categories as follows:

- ◆ Non-Unique Addresses (NUAs)
- ◆ Unique Addresses (UAs)

#### Non-Unique Addresses (NUAs)

Over a third (35%) of address points are NUAs by address alone, although they can be differentiated by their geographical coordinates. This makes it harder to identify an individual address within a group or cluster of NUA addresses. NUAs include:

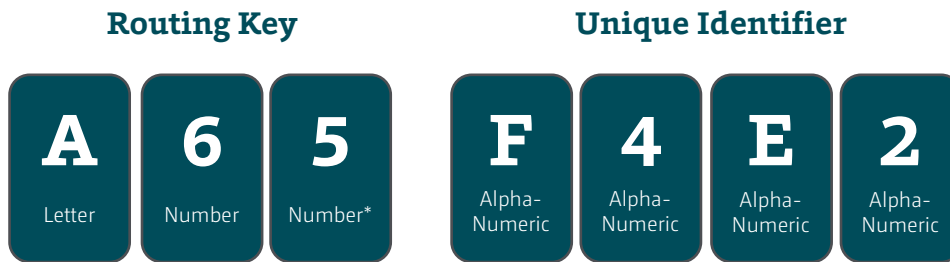
- ◆ A group of houses, usually in rural locations which share the same address
- ◆ An address point which is indistinct from a neighbouring address
- ◆ Usually contains only a town land and county as an address identifier

#### Unique Addresses (UAs)

Two thirds of addresses are unique (i.e. 1 Station Road, Maynooth, County Kildare), this is where an address is uniquely identifiable by a building name or a number.

## 2.2 The Structure of the Eircode

An Eircode is a seven-character postcode consisting of two elements:



\* "W" allowed for only in D6W

The two elements of an Eircode are:

1. **Routing Key** – three characters, consisting of a letter-number-number (with the one exception of postal town Dublin 6W), which identifies the principal postal town related to the building or property's postal address. The principal postal town is assigned using the Source Data, and there are 139 different postal town references currently in use.
2. **Unique Identifier** – four characters, consisting of a combination of letters and numbers. This identifier is unique to each property within a principal post town.

## 2.3 Assigning Eircodes

Eircodes are created and assigned in line with the National Postcode System (NPS) Report.

The Contractor assigns an Eircode to every postal address. This data contains:

- ♦ the Postal Address (including the house number where applicable),
- ♦ the geographical address, and
- ♦ map coordinates.

The Contractor will assign Eircodes to:

- ♦ each individual postal address, for example, a single residential house
- ♦ single, stand-alone commercial units
- ♦ buildings that have **more than one residence with postal addresses** – a unique Eircode will be assigned to each individual residence, for example, each apartment within an apartment block





- ♦ buildings that contain **multiple residences, but only one postal address** associated with the building, the building's postal address will be assigned a single Eircode. Each individual residence will not be assigned an Eircode, as their addresses are not recorded in the Source Data.
- ♦ to commercial buildings that contain more than one business, only businesses that are identifiable by having a sub-building address: for example, a Unit, Studio or Suite number, as part of their postal address will be allocated a unique Eircode, for example, a shopping centre with allocated, identifiable units.

The following are some examples of when a unique Eircode will or will not be assigned:

	A unique Eircode will be assigned:	A unique Eircode will not be assigned:
<b>Residential Address</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Each house on a street</li><li>♦ Each flat in an apartment block</li><li>♦ Each unit within a duplex unit</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Residential building with multiple Flats/Bedsits that are not indicated as separate addresses on the outside of the building</li><li>♦ Caravans and temporary dwellings</li></ul>
<b>Commercial addresses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Each address identifiable by unit; Level; Suite number; Studio number in an:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Office building</li><li>b. Shopping Centre</li><li>c. Business Park</li><li>d. Industrial Estate</li></ol>will be assigned a unique Eircode</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Buildings with one or more registered businesses where a business is not recorded in the Source Data provided by An Post</li><li>♦ An office building with multiple businesses but without uniquely identified sub-building addresses</li></ul>

An Eircode is associated with an address, rather than with the person(s) or businesses occupying a building or property. Therefore, the **Eircode is not transferable from one address to another**. For example, if a person or business moves to a new address, the Eircode from the old address remains with the old address and the person(s) or businesses will use the Eircode assigned to their new address.

## 2.4 Impact on existing postal addresses

Existing address information will not be effected by Eircodes. You should treat an Eircode like an additional item to your existing postal address.

## 2.5 The Eircode Finder

The Contractor provides the Eircode Finder, a web-based facility – a facility you can use to find the postal address associated with an individual code.

Non-unique addresses can also be found on the Eircode Finder facility, via the map facility. For example, if a person lives in a property in Ireland that has a non-unique postal address, the Eircode Finder facility provides a detailed, on-line map of their area. By locating their property on this map and ‘hovering’ over the map location, the Eircode Finder will display the Eircode assigned to that property.

The Contractor will provide An Post with the Eircodes. An Post will then ensure that the correct property receives the correct Eircode.

Neither the source data nor the Eircode itself contain personal information about an individual or business at that address.

## 2.6 You don’t have to use Eircodes

While the Eircode will be assigned to every property in Ireland the Eircode itself does not contain personal information in relation to any individual.

So, while you may decide not to use the Eircode in their postal address or correspondence, the occupant of the property cannot ‘opt out’ of the legitimate use of ‘their’ Eircode for that property by others.

It is likely that a large number of commercial and Government organisations will soon begin using Eircodes as they will help to:

- ◆ Clarify non-unique addresses
- ◆ Improve accuracy with mail delivery
- ◆ Reduce the risk of fraud and misunderstanding
- ◆ Improve success in response to ‘call-outs’ of the emergency services, and so on.

So, even if you choose not to use the Eircode, you are likely to see the Eircode appearing on your mail, correspondence and packages delivered to your address.

There is also a possibility that commercial organisations and State and semi-State bodies will begin using the Eircode as a ‘required field’ in application forms. This will help to improve the quality of the data. It will also reduce the risk of misunderstanding non-unique addresses.

Any organisation deciding to make the Eircode a required field must make sure that their reason for doing this is consistent with the lawful conditions<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> The Lawful Processing Conditions in the Irish Data Protection legislation.

These conditions include providing an Eircode where it is:

- ◆ defined in the terms and conditions of a contract or where it is a legal obligation
- ◆ necessary for preventing injury or damage to health and/or prevention of loss or damage to property
- ◆ necessary in the vital interests of the individual to whose property the Code relates
- ◆ necessary to administer Justice or a lawful function, for example, the activities of a State or semi-State body
- ◆ necessary in the legitimate interests of the organisation seeking the data

If an organisation cannot justify the use of a ‘required’ field for an Eircode under at least one of the conditions, it should re-consider making it a requirement.

Companies using the Eircode system must comply with relevant regulations<sup>3</sup> and with the Contractor’s Acceptable Use Policy (see Appendix A).

## 2.7 Public Sector Bodies

As part of the introduction of Eircodes, the Contractor has already processed the addresses held by some Public Sector Bodies and has assigned an Eircode to each unique address.

This means that you are likely to see correspondence from Public Sector Bodies with the Eircode for your property listed.

If you believe that the Eircode being used is wrong, contact the relevant Public Sector Body to let them know. If the Eircode is wrong, the Contractor will work with that Public Sector Body to correct it.

The Public Sector Bodies which have already added the Eircode to their address lists include:

Social Protection	Environment - Agresso
Agriculture	Environment - Electoral Register
Central Statistics Office	Environment – Local Authority Rates
Company Registration Office	Foreign Affairs - Holder Address
Education - Bank Branches	Health
Education – Financial Management Systems	National Treasury Management Authority
Education - General	Private Residence Tenancy Board
Education - HR data/Pensions	Revenue
Education – Post-Relational Data Base (PRDB)	Road Safety Authority
Education - Staff Payroll	Private Residence Tenancy Board
Education - UDMDB	Company Registration Office

<sup>3</sup> Irish Postal Services and Data Protection regulations.

### 3 Eircode Service

This section provides an overview of the Eircode Service

#### 3.1 How does it work?

Each home, business and government building will receive an Eircode. The diagram below explains how Eircode has been designed.

### How Eircode Works

**A65 F4E2**

An Eircode is a seven character alpha-numeric code made up of two parts.

#### Routing Key

**A 6 5**

The first part (a Routing Key) consists of three characters and defines a principal post town span of delivery.

#### Unique Identifier

**F 4 E 2**

The second part (a Unique Identifier) is unique to an address and distinguishes one address from another.

The Eircode is seven characters in length, divided into two parts – a three character Routing Key and a four character Unique Identifier.

Similar to postcodes in other countries, part of the Eircode design is to help the parcel and postal industry. As a Routing Key will be shared by many properties in an area, it will become as familiar to you as area codes for landline telephones. The first letter is not directly linked to counties, towns or other geographic features (either in English or in Irish) except for those addresses already in existing postal districts in Dublin which will use the Routing Key format (examples: D03, D12, D15, D22).

The second part of the Eircode has four characters drawn from a carefully selected set of letters and numbers that identify each address. The Unique Identifier for each house or business will not be in sequence, for example, the row of houses along one street will not have the codes ABC1, ABC2, ABC3, and so on. This will help to avoid a situation where a new building is built between two existing buildings with assigned Eircodes, and thus require all the Eircodes in the area to be changed.

Eircodes of adjacent (side by side) addresses will have different unique identifiers; this avoids possible miscommunication, particularly in rural areas where most addresses do not have an identifying number or name.

### 3.2 How to use the Eircode

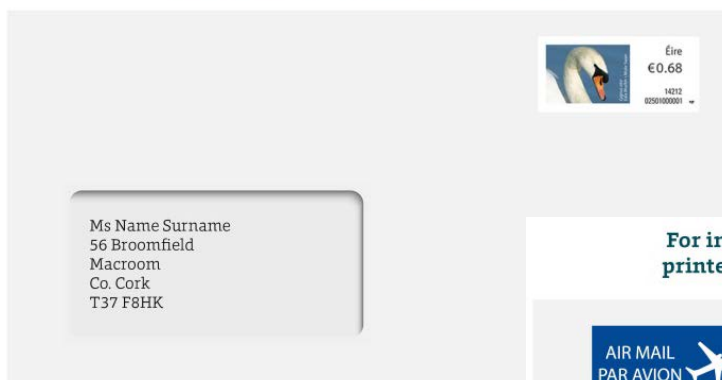
Examples of how to include an Eircode in an address can be seen in the table below. Please note that The Eircode system does not change or remove your choice to use your existing address.

Scenario	Action
Address Before Eircode	37 Whereabouts Drive Any Town Kinsale Co Cork
Eircode Address	37 Whereabouts Drive Any Town Kinsale Co Cork Eo6 7167

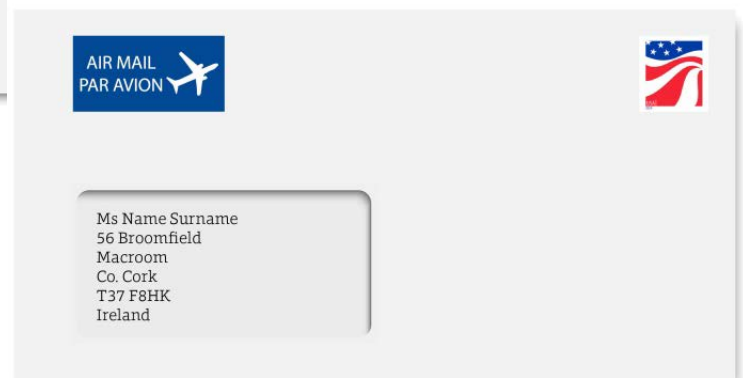
### 3.3 Positioning the Eircode on postal items

The Eircode should appear in capital letters on its own line on postal items. The Eircode should be printed using a three plus four format – that is the Routing Key, space, Unique Identifier (example: T37 F8HK).

**For domestic post the Eircode should be printed as the last line of the address:**

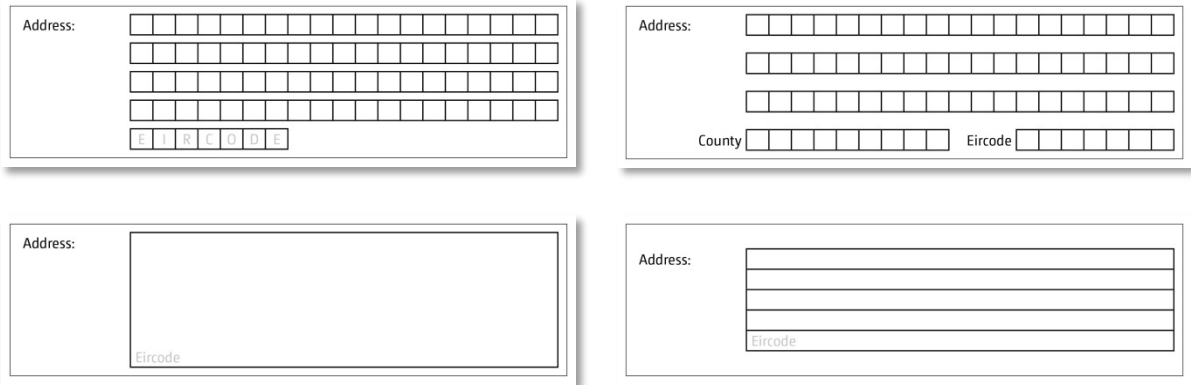


**For international post the Eircode should be printed above the country on a separate line:**



### 3.4 Using the Eircodes online or in a form

Using an Eircode online or in a form will vary depending on how a company presents their forms. Companies are advised to provide a specific field called ‘Eircode’ with spaces for seven characters. Existing forms and websites may not provide specific character fields. However, you should be able to enter your Eircode into currently-defined ‘postcode fields’.



### 3.5 How to find out your Eircode

There are two main ways to find out the Eircode for an address: Notification letters and Eircode Finder tool.

#### 3.5.1 Eircode Notification Letter:

The Contractor will send Eircode Notification letters to each corresponding postal address.

The Contractor will use information from An Post to update addresses **every** 3 months. In this way, the Contractor will be updated on new and changed addresses. It can then issue updated notification letters as required.

#### 3.5.2 Eircode Finder

The Eircode Finder is a free tool available on the Eircode website ([www.eircode.ie](http://www.eircode.ie)). You can use it to search by entering an address to confirm an Eircode, or an Eircode to confirm an address.

You can use a GPS-enabled smart phone or other devices that can provide location information to determine your location on an interactive map with the “Use My Location” facility. This service is provided for individual, personal use, so the Contractor will limit your access to this tool to 15 ‘look-ups’ per day.

The Contractor will use cookies to track the number of times the Eircode Finder is accessed from your device.

In line with the law<sup>4</sup>, visitors to the Eircode Finder web page will be told that these cookies are in place and other relevant information.

The Contractor will also use Google Analytics to collect information about visitor behaviour, - - pages visited, services accessed and so on – on the Eircode website. This analytics data does not identify the individual user. **However, in some circumstances, it can capture the IP address of the user, and this address along with other data that might be available, can be used to identify you.**

If the Contractor captures personal information about you, they must process, store and manage that information in line with the Irish Data Protection Legislation.

The Contractor will also publish a Privacy Policy on its website providing further details of their commitment to the law, and other relevant information. You can also find out more about Google’s position on privacy as regards its analytics service at <http://www.google.ie/policies/privacy/> Please refer to the terms and conditions, which are available on the Eircode website, for further information.

### **3.6 Assigning Eircodes**

Existing postal addresses in Ireland have been assigned an Eircode. In the future new postal addresses will be assigned an Eircode on a quarterly basis.

The Eircode Contractor’s only source of postal address data comes from the An Post Source Data. If a postal address is not recorded from this data, then it will not receive an Eircode.

The following section outlines how Eircodes will be assigned before they are launched, and how Eircodes will be assigned afterwards.

- ♦ **For existing postal addresses (Pre-Launch)** - As part of the Eircode Programme, all existing postal addresses were received from the Source Data. Unique Eircodes were assigned to all of the addresses provided. At launch, a Notification letter will be delivered to each postal address, informing the occupants of the Eircode assigned to that postal address.
- ♦ **For new addresses (Post-Launch)** – Post-launch, the Eircode Contractor will be responsible for managing updates to the Eircodes listing. This will include the creation, assignment and ‘retirement’ or withdrawal of Eircodes. The following scenarios describe situations where a new Eircode will be assigned:

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<sup>4</sup> SI 336 of 2011 (the ePrivacy Directive)



Example	Detail
<p><b>Single unit building</b>  <b>Example, a new build</b></p>	<p>When the Contractor receives an update of a new Postal Address, a new Eircode will be assigned to the address and a notification of the Eircode will be delivered to the postal address</p>
<p><b>Demolished or single-unit conversion to multi-unit building – existing site</b>  <b>Example:</b> built on site of previously demolished building</p>	<p>When the Eircode Contractor receives an update to an existing Postal Address such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A demolished building – the Eircode for this building is withdrawn</li> <li>• A single-unit building replaced with a multi-unit building –the existing Eircode will be ‘retired’ and each new Postal Addresses will be assigned new Eircodes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Multi-tenant building – unique address points</b>  <b>Example:</b> apartment block; business units within shopping centre</p>	<p>Eircodes will be assigned to all unique Postal Addresses contained in Multi-Tenant buildings on the basis that each sub-building address has a corresponding postal address</p> <p>Once a code is assigned by the Contractor, an Eircode notification letter will be delivered to each postal address. This applies to both commercial and residential buildings.</p>
<p><b>Multi-Tenant building – non-unique address points</b>  <b>Examples:</b></p> <p>A shopping centre containing kiosks</p> <p>A commercial building containing companies that do not have a unit reference in their postal address</p>	<p>Eircodes will be assigned to non-unique Postal Addresses contained in Multi-Tenant buildings on the basis that each address is identifiable by the following words in the sub-building address: <b>Unit #, Level #, Suite #, Studio #</b>, and so on.</p> <p>These types of Postal Addresses will be assigned an Eircode and an Eircode notification letter will be delivered to <b>each</b> corresponding postal address.</p> <p>This applies to both commercial and residential buildings.</p>



### **3.7 Receiving an Eircode**

As described in the Section ‘Assigning Eircodes’, only addresses received from An Post will be assigned Eircodes.

If an address has not been assigned an Eircode at launch, it is likely that the property will be assigned an Eircode when the Contractor receives updates of the Postal Address - every three months. The Contractor will then assign Eircodes by letter within one month of receiving a new address.

### **3.8 How Postal Addresses will be Managed**

The Contractor **must not** change address information supplied in the Source Data. The Contractor is authorised solely to assign the Eircode, and to conduct legitimate, Eircode-related services.

### **3.9 Managing Eircode Changes**

Once an address is assigned an Eircode, the Eircode will not change. However, if you believe there is mistake with an Eircode, you can complain (under the 2015 Communications Regulation (Postal Services) (Amendment) Act).

The Contractor will register and investigate valid complaints.

When making a complaint, you can use the webform or email address on <http://www.eircode.ie> or you can call the Contractor’s contact centre and an agent can explain to you how to make a complaint.

The following section tells you about the enforcement powers of the Contractor.

#### **3.9.1 Eircode Change Policy**

Routing Key information (the first three digits of the Eircode) is based on address data provided to the Contractor using the Source Data. The Contractor has no authority to change the postal address information or the Principal Post Town to which a property is currently assigned.

It is the Contractor’s policy not to change an Eircode based solely on personal preference.

In exceptional circumstances, the Contractor may agree to replace an existing Eircode, however, the Contractor will first assess if such a change is reasonable or not.

If a request is acceptable, then you will be told and you will receive a new Eircode.

If a change request is unreasonable, you will be told and your Eircode will remain as is.



The table below summarises when a change will and will not be considered:

A change will be considered when:	A change will <b>not</b> be considered when:
You can show that your Eircode could be interpreted as offensive.	The routing key is in the correct Principal Post Town even if this is different to the local interpretation of the area.
When a single-unit address has changed to a multi-unit address in the Source Data.	Where address information used by any other public or private agency (excluding An Post GeoDirectory) is used as the basis for a proposed change to an Eircode
If an Eircode is a duplicate of another Eircode.	Where properties are being marketed or promoted as being in a different geographical area to that defined by the Postal Address.
Where an assigned Eircode is consistently misinterpreted and you can prove this.	

Under Data Protection legislation, you can opt out or prevent your personal data from being used for certain purposes, such as marketing and sales campaigns. Since the Eircode will be an additional item of detail in each postal address, the option to 'opt out' from marketing and sales activities also applies to the Eircode.

However, you **cannot object** to the use of the Eircode in isolation. For example, you **cannot demand** that an organisation remove the Eircode from any correspondence it sends you.

### 3.9.2 Changes required by the Eircode Contractor

The Contractor does not expect that it will have to ask you to change an existing Eircode. However, if it is necessary to do this, the Contractor will:

1. **Before a change is made** the Eircode Contractor will Write to the occupants of all addresses affected by the change telling them about the date of the change and inviting their views (while the Contractor will consider the views received, they won't reply in writing to each household or person).
2. **Once a change is made** the Eircode Contractor will write to the occupants of affected addresses after the changes have been introduced, confirming details of their new Eircodes.
3. **Make sure** that mail with the old **or** the revised Eircode details receives the same quality of service for a reasonable amount of time after the change.

Where a change is planned but won't happen for another three months, the Contractor will tell occupants of the impacted property. This will give them time to implement the Eircode changes. This will also give them a chance to update forms, vehicle livery, signage, websites, and well as passing on their new details to relevant people and organisations.

### **3.9.3 The Eircode Contractor and Postal Address Changes**

The Contractor cannot assign or change a Postal Addresses. An Post are responsible for the allocation and management of Postal Addresses in Ireland.

### **3.9.4 Eircode Complaint Process**

A formal, transparent and fair complaints procedure is an integral part of any professional service. If you have a complaint, write to the Eircode Contractor. By law, unless a complaint is determined to be 'trivial, vexatious, frivolous or not made in good faith', the Contractor must investigate it.

The Section entitles 'Complaints' of this Code of Practice tells you how to register a complaint and outlines how complaints are managed. The Contractor will initiate formal steps outlined as part of the Complaints process in order to investigate any complaint and to arrive at a fair outcome. By complaining, you authorise an agent of the Contractor to contact you about your complaint.

The agents of the Contractor will process any personal data, gathered in the course of managing the complaints procedure. They will do this in line with the Irish Data Protection Acts 1988-2003, and will not disclose this information to third parties, unless they have your prior consent, or where required to do so by law.

The Contractor recognises that you have the right to:

- ◆ be treated with courtesy and respect
- ◆ have clear concise information made available to you
- ◆ understand the process of how a decision about to a complaint was made
- ◆ have Eircode services delivered to agreed standards
- ◆ be told about the Contractor's obligations
- ◆ have your confidentiality and privacy respected and protected, in line with the Irish Data Protection legislation
- ◆ be confident that your complaint will be dealt with in a timely and fair manner

## **4 Service Standards**

### **4.1 Service Standards**

The Contractor and the DCENR want to provide a first- rate, accurate and regularly updated National Postcode System. This will include issuing Eircodes to the public and also managing complaints. The Contractor aspires to working with organisations in both the public and private sectors to integrate the use of Eircodes into their day-to-day operations.

Under the terms of the Communications Regulation (Postal Services) (Amendment) Act, 2015, periodic reviews will be conducted of the Contractor's operations and services.

### **4.2 The Contractor's Commitment**

The Contractor constantly seeks to improve its services and business standards. From time to time, the Contractor will want to improve its existing service product and to introduce necessary and or desired services. It may be necessary to make changes to processes and or systems to facilitate these improvements.

The Contractor will implement these improvements with minimal disruption to its Eircode Providers (EPs) and to the public.

## 5 Data Protection Policy

### 5.1 Confidentiality and Privacy

The Eircode Contractor respects the confidentiality and privacy of its staff, its EPs, and the general public. The Contractor will protect any personal Information you provide if registering a complaint or making an enquiry. They will do this in line with the Contractor's Privacy Policy (see the Eircode website for this policy and the Irish Data Protection legislation).

Personal data is collected where a member of public contacts the Contractor directly about an issue or complaint. This helps the Contractor to contact you back once this issue/complaint has been investigated and resolved.

Please note that personal data, in the form of IP addresses, may be captured in the course of monitoring and tracking usage of the Contractor's website.

The Contractor will adhere to the Irish Data Protection legislation when processing personal data. The Contractor affirms that at no time will it disclose (share) personal information to any third party organisations or persons without consent of the party providing the information, or unless required to do so by law. The Contractor's staff receive training on the appropriate responses to data sharing requests.

Where a third party may have a legitimate reason to request the personal data held by the Contractor, these requests are sent to the **Contractor's Operations Director**. The Director will review the request and, if deemed appropriate, will direct staff on an appropriate response.

Where the Eircode Contractor does retain information it follows the eight rules of data protection. We:

- ◆ Only obtain and process the information fairly
- ◆ Only keep it only for one or more specified and lawful purposes
- ◆ Process it only in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was given to us initially
- ◆ Keep it safe and secure
- ◆ Keep it accurate and up-to-date
- ◆ Ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- ◆ Retain it no longer than is necessary for the specified purpose or purposes
- ◆ Give a copy of your personal data to you, on request.

## 5.2 Data Security

All data stored electronically on the Contractor's systems for Eircode business will be protected by state-of-the-industry encryption. Manual data held at the Eircode Contractor's offices will be securely stored in line with the law.

The Contractor tracks use of its online services. This means that they can detect and flag threats to the security or integrity of the Eircode database. In turn, this will help them to contain any attempted breach or theft of data.

If the integrity of its data security were to be breached, the Contractor will follow its Internal Data Security and Breach Notification procedures and responses.

The Contractor would adhere to its policies regarding Network Usage and Records Management. This includes procedures and protocols in terms of:

- ◆ the control of access to the data,
- ◆ acceptable use of the data,
- ◆ the criteria under which the Breach Notification and Disaster Recovery procedures will be used, and
- ◆ audit logs of what data has been accessed and who has accessed them.

The Contractor complies with the legal data management and security provisions. Any breaches of data security will be reported to the Contractor's Data Protection Officer in line with the Data Protection legislation, and as required under the Postal Services Amendment Act 2015.

A data breach occurs when:

- ◆ personal information is lost,
- ◆ there has been inappropriate access to personal information on the Contractor's systems, or
- ◆ when personal data was sent to the wrong individuals.

If a data breach is discovered, the Contractor will follow relevant policies. The Contractor will always inform DCENR and the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner of a breach. They will do so in a timely manner and will work with them to help to prevent further breaches.

Where the Contractor's data systems deteriorate, are disrupted or stop working due to events beyond the Contractor's control – such as extremes of weather or social unrest – the Contractor will follow its Business Continuity Service Plan. This may involve emergency contingency, re-location, changes to management structures and other appropriate procedures and responses.

### 5.3 Acquiring and Processing Data

In general, the Contractor's policy for its agents does not ask for personal details. If you have received something with your personal details on it you should contact the organisation that sent it to you to with a general query.

To resolve complaints or to process queries, a Contractor agent may ask you to provide your personal contact details. This information will only be used to contact you about your complaint or query. This information will only be recorded with your consent, and the EPs will store it in line with the Data Protection Acts 1988-2003.

The Contractor is **not allowed to disclose (share), sell, transfer or otherwise provide personal information** to any third parties. However, there are exceptions – these are defined in Section 8 of Data Protection Acts 1988-2003. For example, if the Contractor has your permission share, sell, transfer your information, or is legally obliged to do so.

The personal information referred to here is limited to any personal data that may be supplied by you so that the Contractor can process your query or complaint. This data will never be associated with or stored on the Eircode databases.

If you provide personal information to the Contractor, or to any Data Controller, have rights under the Irish Data Protection legislation.

These include:

- ◆ Right of Access
- ◆ Correction of incorrect data
- ◆ Support from the Office of Data Protection.

#### 5.3.1 Right of Access

In response to a written request, the Contractor must provide you with a copy of any personal data that it holds about you.

In your letter or email, you should include sufficient information to allow the Contractor to identify your personal data (name, date of birth, Eircode to enable identification, and so on). You may have to pay an administrative fee to access your personal data. The fee must **not be more than €6.35**.

Once the valid request has been received, the Contractor will respond as quickly as possible, but certainly, within 40 calendar days from receipt of the request.

### **5.3.2 Correction of incorrect data**

If personal data about you that is incorrect, you can ask that it be removed, updated or amended from the Eircode Contractor's data records. All personal data collected related to resolving complaints will be subject to the Contractor's Data Retention Policy (see below).

### **5.3.3 Support from the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner**

If you are concerned about the use of your Eircode, you should first tell the Contractor. The Contractor must investigate valid concerns, and try to resolve any issues in a satisfactory manner.

If you are still concerned, you can bring your complaint to the Office of the Irish Data Protection Commissioner (<mailto:info@dataprotection.ie>)

## **5.4 Legitimate Eircode Services**

The Eircode database does not contain personal data. The Eircode database can be bought as set out in the 'Business' section of the Eircode website, and as permitted in the course of legitimate, Eircode-related business.

The Postal Services Amendment Act 2015 identifies legitimate services in relation to the Eircode as follows:

- ◆ The association of geo-co-ordinates with the Eircode
- ◆ The issuing of Eircode data to its each corresponding postal addresses
- ◆ The matching of a postal address with an Eircode (as long as such matching does not include personal data or individual identifiers)
- ◆ The development of the Eircode database to include other information about the postal address
- ◆ The creation of a database containing Eircode data along with other, related information
- ◆ The licensing of appropriately-qualified service providers to act as Eircode Providers
- ◆ The supply of additional services in relation to the Eircode

The Eircode Contractor has published an Acceptable Use Policy for service users in consultation the DCENR, and the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner. This is to guide EPs in designing and delivering Eircode-related services using the data from the Contractor, but must ensure that such services comply with the Irish Data Protection legislation.

EPs and End Users often disclose the Eircode to other organisations, sometimes to organisations who are established outside of the European Economic Area. Such disclosure must be done



under the controls and provisions of a data management contract, and should set clear expectations about the acceptable and lawful use of the Eircode data.

The Eircode Contractor will publish on its website a Register of EPs, which are licensed by the Contractor to provide Eircode services. This is to provide transparency to the public of who has licensed use of the Eircode database.

The Contractor will regularly audit these Eircode services to ensure that the EPs meet their obligations. The Contractor is authorised to revoke, suspend or terminate a EP licence for substantial or persistent non-compliance.

These obligations are set out in the terms of the EP Licence Agreement. They will be communicated clearly to any organisation applying to receive a EP licence.

An audit of an EP or end-user could start due to :

- ◆ incompetence in managing and processing the Eircode data
- ◆ a high volume of complaints from users about data received from or processed
- ◆ late or inaccurate monthly reports on Eircode usage
- ◆ as part of a regular schedule of monitoring EPs

## **5.5 Privacy Notice on Websites**

Under the provisions of the Postal Services Amendment Act 2015, both the Eircode Contractor and the licensed EPs must publish a Privacy Notice on their respective websites. This Notice will include the following:

- ◆ An explanation of the background and context of the Eircode
- ◆ A description of the sources of the Eircode data
- ◆ An explanation of the sources of additional data they hold, especially where this includes personal data which identifies an individual (included in EPs reports)
- ◆ Information on the availability of a public register of licenced EPs (include this in the Contractor's report)
- ◆ Information for you about your right to have incorrect data about you corrected or removed
- ◆ Information about your right to register valid complaints about Eircode services with the Contractor

## 5.6 Retaining and Destroying Policies

Personal information received by the Contractor will only be used for that purpose, and will only be retained for as long as necessary to satisfy the Contractor's legal and regulatory obligations. Such data will be subject to the Eircode Contractor's Data Retention and Destruction policies.

It is not the Contractor's intention to collect and store data for any purpose other than the legitimate purposes stated above.

## 5.7 Privacy Policy

The Eircode Contractor will take every care to protect your privacy and other users of its services. The following principles form the key elements of the Contractor's Privacy Policy, which is available through the Contractor's web-site.

The Eircode Contractor is subject to legislation regarding privacy and confidentiality, including the Irish Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003. Any dispute or claims for breach of privacy are subject to the jurisdiction of the Irish courts.

- ◆ Any data file or record that contains personal data will be treated as confidential.
- ◆ In your written dealings with the Eircode Contractor, you may need to share personal information to the Eircode Contractor. The treatment of any personal information which the Eircode Contractor may collect during the normal course of business is subject to the provisions of the Irish Data Protection Acts
- ◆ The Eircode Contractor will not store personally identifiable data for any longer than is necessary
- ◆ The Eircode Contractor will not disclose (share) your personal information with any third party outside of Contractor's own organisation **without your prior consent, unless** they have to so by law
- ◆ Personal data you supply as part of an application, or as part of a request or enquiry you have made will be only passed to the relevant business unit within the Eircode Contractor's organisation
- ◆ You have a right to get a copy of personal data that the Contractor may hold about you
- ◆ All Contractor staff take part in mandatory, annual training on their Data Protection obligations and Information Security Awareness.
- ◆ If you have submitted personal information through the Eircode Contractor's website, but wish to prevent or stop the Contractor from using the information for the purposes submitted, contact the Contractor by email at: **hello@eircode.ie**. Your email should state why you are concerned and provide sufficient information to help the Contractor respond to your request.

## 6 Complaint Process

Complaints are sometimes unavoidable, but when they do occur the Contractor has an open, fair, and transparent process in place to manage and do their best to resolve them and, where possible, to your satisfaction.

If you are making a complaint, please provide sufficient information to enable the Contractor to properly investigate.

The following is a guide to the Contractor’s Complaints Management process. For reporting purposes, legitimate complaints, submitted in writing to the Eircode Contractor, will be categorised using the types listed below.

### 6.1 Types of Complaints

Complaint	Description
Call Centre Service	Complaints about the level of service being provided by the Contractor’s service centre
Current Eircode	All complaints about Eircodes services
Business Process	Complaints about existing Contractor business processes that are thought not to be working
Postal Address*	Complaints related to the Postal Address <b>cannot be addressed</b> by the Contractor and will be referred to An Post.

\* Please note that an address used in Eircode Notification Letter telling the occupant of an Eircode, or supplied using the Eircode Finder, is the Postal Address supplied to the Contractor from the Source Data (see the Section ‘Assignment of an Eircode’).

## 6.2 How to make a Complaint

You can complain by phone, email, online or by post. Please see the details below for each of these options below.

Complaint	Contact Details
Telephone	Telephone complaints can be made to the Contractor's Contact Centre using the details found on its website
Email	<p>Emailed complaints should be sent to the Contractor using the following details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email address: <b>hello@eircode.ie</b></li> <li>• Email Subject Line: <b>Complaints</b></li> </ul>
Website (Eircode.ie)	Complaints can be registered via the Eircode website
Post	<p>Postal complaints should be drafted and posted to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Complaints, Eircode, Unit C, Maynooth Business Park, Maynooth, Co Kildare, W23 F854</b></li> </ul>

## 6.3 How the Contractor will Manage and Respond to your complaints

The Eircode Contractor will review all complaints to determine if they are vexatious, trivial, frivolous or not made in good faith.

If the Contractor decides that your complaint is genuine, it will try to resolve it as quickly as possible. Responses to complaints will vary depending on the nature and complexity of a complaint.

## 6.4 Complaint Management Report

By law, the Contractor must report annually to DCENR to provide information on Complaints Management process is working. At a minimum, this report should contain details on:

- ◆ The volume of complaints received
- ◆ The range of complaints received (based on the categorisation above)
- ◆ The decisions reached after investigating complaints
- ◆ Information on any decisions where the Contractor decided not to investigate a complaint
- ◆ Any other information that Contractor considers appropriate.

## 6.5 Keeping Information about Complaints

The Contractor will keep records relating to complaints for three months following resolution of the complaint. To identify complaint trends, the Contractor will retain certain elements of the complaint data, but will remove reference to personal identifying data. Trend analysis may not be possible if the data is deleted immediately after a complaint has been resolved. This Policy will be reviewed annually.

## 6.6 Complaints about Direct Marketing

Adding an Eircode to an existing postal address should not change the current obligations on organisations in terms of direct marketing. The introduction of Eircodes should not increase the volume of 'junk mail' that a household receives. Organisations must continue to comply with the relevant sections of the Data Protection legislation when conducting marketing campaigns.

If you receive 'junk mail', you should contact the organisation who sent you the mail and tell them that you want to be removed from their marketing mailing list. It has 40 days to remove your address from their list.

If they **do not remove your name**, you can complain the organisation to the Office of the Irish Data Protection Commissioner ([info@DataProtection.ie](mailto:info@DataProtection.ie)),

Contractor's role

If the Contractor is aware that a licensed EP is facilitating the distribution of 'junk' or unsolicited marketing mail campaigns, it will make every effort to address this with the EP, and to make sure that the activity stops.

Any member of the public can contact the Direct Marketing Agency (DMA) and can add their postal address, complete with Eircode, to the IDMA's Mail Preference Service (MPS). This is a list of addresses which must be removed from any postal marketing campaign. Members of the IDMA undertake that that they will not send marketing literature to these addresses.

## 7 Useful Contacts

Organisation	Contact Details
An Post	<b>An Post</b> General Post Office O'Connell Street Lower Dublin 1 D01 F5P2
An Post GeoDirectory	<b>An Post GeoDirectory</b> General Post Office O'Connell Street Lower Dublin 1 D01 F5P2
Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg)	<b>Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg)</b> Abbey Court Irish Life Centre Lower Abbey Street Dublin 1 D01 W2H4
The Contractor / Eircode	<b>The Contractor / Eircode</b> Unit C Maynooth Business Park Maynooth Co Kildare W23 F854
The Irish Direct Marketing Association (DMA)	<b>IDMA</b> Fitzwilliam Street Upper Dublin D02 E033
Office of the Information Commissioner	<b>Office of the Information Commissioner</b> 18 Lower Leeson Street Dublin 2 D02 HE97
Office of the Data Protection Commissioner	<b>Office of the Irish Data Protection Commissioner</b> Station Road Portarlinton Co. Laois R32 AP23
The Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources	<b>The Department for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources</b> 29-31 Adelaide Road Dublin 2 D02 X285

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## **Appendix - Acceptable Use Policy**

### **A.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the acceptable use of the Eircode by licensed Eircode Providers (EPs) and End Users.

This policy is in place to protect the integrity and objectives of the Eircode as a unique postal code.

Inappropriate use may expose householders and individuals to unlawful or inappropriate use of their personal data, and/or may lead to intrusion into their personal lives and correspondence.

As the organisation with responsibility for managing the lawful use of the postal code, Capita Business Support Services Ireland Limited (the Eircode Contractor) will monitor the activities and usage of the code by the licenced EPs.

It is the policy of the Eircode Contractor that the Eircode and its associated products and services should be offered in a manner that is open, transparent and compliant with all relevant standards and regulations.

The Eircode Contractor will have the authority to regularly audit the Eircode-related activities of EPs and End Users, and to revoke, suspend or terminate VAR licences and related services in the event that a service is found to be in non-compliance with this Acceptable Use Policy.

### **A.2 Scope**

This policy applies to the use of the Eircode, a 7-digit postal code issued to each property in the Republic of Ireland.

The Eircode can be used by individual householders as a unique identifier for their domestic property as well as to identify business and commercial properties. Over 2.2 million Irish properties will have an assigned Eircode.

Commercial organisations will be licenced to offer data management services using this unique code, and this Policy will relate primarily to their use of the Eircode as they offer their value-added services.

Employees, contractors, consultants, temporary staff and other users of the Eircode are responsible for exercising good judgment regarding appropriate use of the code in accordance with the Eircode Contractor's policies and standards, and local laws and Regulations.

This includes the provisions of the Communications (Postal Services) (Amendment) Act, 2015, and the Irish Data Protection Legislation (1988 and 2003).



### **A.3 Acceptable Use Policy**

#### **General Use of the Eircode**

The Eircode Contractor retains proprietary responsibility for the use of the Eircode. Individuals and organisations may be authorised to use the postal codes, but must do so in a lawful manner.

Members of the public are encouraged to use the Eircode, in addition to their address, to aid postal, location and similar services to be delivered more effectively and efficiently. An Eircode Finder facility is provided by the Eircode Contractor as a free of charge facility for finding Eircodes relevant to a property – this will be limited to 15 searches of the Eircode Finder facility per day. An extensive set of Eircode-related Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) and their respective answers is provided on its web-site by the Eircode Contractor in order to explain the format, structure and variety of uses of the Eircode.

Eircode Providers (EPs) and End users are authorised to use the Eircode within the terms set out in the Licence Agreement, issued by the Eircode Contractor. A Code of Practice is provided by the Eircode Contractor in order to set reasonable expectations regarding the acceptable use of the Eircode.

Employees of the Eircode Contractor are responsible for exercising good judgment regarding the manner in which they administer and manage the use of the Eircode. Appropriate guidelines and training will be provided by the Contractor at induction, and on a regular, 'refresher' basis thereafter.

From a Data Protection perspective, EPs and End Users will be considered Data Controllers in their own right, and will be primarily responsible for the compliant, lawful use of the Eircode. The Licence, Code of Practice and FAQ's will serve to offer guidance on acceptable use.

#### **Acceptable Use**

Under the Postal Services Act, 2015, the following activities are considered to be Acceptable Use of the Eircode:

- ◆ The use of the Eircode as a unique identifier of a domestic, commercial or municipal property
- ◆ The matching of a postal address with an Eircode
- ◆ The enhancement of the Eircode database to include other information in relation to the postal address
- ◆ The creation or management of a database including Eircode data
- ◆ The licencing of appropriately-qualified service providers to act as Eircode Providers
- ◆ The supply of Value Added services by Eircode Providers in relation to the Eircode

Within the terms of the VAR Licence Agreement, the VAR will be authorised to offer the following services:

- ◆ Copy or transmit the Eircode and (where in machine readable form) any associated documentation on to its (the EP's or End User's) computer system;
- ◆ Access the Eircode data and to query, display and manipulate the data contained therein;
- ◆ Produce hard copy printed output of data from the Eircode data for reports and notes which are to be used only for reference purposes in connection with its own internal business, and which may not be published or supplied to any third party;
- ◆ Combine data from the Eircode database with other data legitimately held by the EPs or End Users;
- ◆ Design, develop and create EP products and services which incorporate the Eircode and supply such EP products to their clients and end-users on the terms of their End-User service agreement and, in the case of online EP services, the relevant terms in the appropriate agreement, provided that the End User shall have first executed the required Eircode Licence;
- ◆ Supply the Eircode services to End Users by itself (and not as a component of a EP service) provided the EP has entered into an appropriate agreement with the End User
- ◆ Provide Bureau Services.

Furthermore, the EP's and End-Users must ensure that their processing and use of the Eircode will comply with the provisions and rules of the Irish Data Protection legislation, namely:

- ◆ That the processing should be fair, lawful, open and transparent with regard to the personal data of living individuals
- ◆ That the processing should only be for one or more lawful and specified purposes
- ◆ That any use or service offered in relation to the Eircode should be compatible with these specified purposes
- ◆ That the Eircode, as well as any personal data with which the EP service is associated, should be kept safe and secure from unlawful or unauthorised access or modification
- ◆ That the Eircode data should be kept as accurate and up-to-date as possible
- ◆ That any processing or disclosure of the Eircode, and its associated personal data, should be limited to the extent that is adequate and relevant with regard to the Eircode service, but should not exceed that purpose
- ◆ That the Eircode and its associated personal data should not be held by the EP or the commercial end-user for longer than necessary for the purpose of providing the Eircode service



- ◆ That, on receipt of a valid, written request, the EP should provide the requestor with a copy of any personal data held by the EP which relates to the requestor, including Eircode data.

## Unacceptable Use

The following uses of the Eircode are, in general, prohibited.

- ◆ Any illegal or immoral use
- ◆ Any use which would contravene the provisions of the Irish Data Protection legislation (1988 and 2003)
- ◆ Any use which would be contrary to the terms of the Eircode Licence Agreement
- ◆ Any service which is not considered a legitimate postcode activity under the Postal Services Act (2015)
- ◆ Any use or service that would bring the Eircode brand into disrepute

In addition, the following actions will render the Eircode licence void:

- ◆ any use of the Eircode data or the associated documentation by the EP or End User other than in accordance with the terms of the Eircode Licence Agreement; or
- ◆ any use of the Eircode data or the associated documentation by the End User other than in accordance with the End User Supply Agreement entered-into with the EP
- ◆ the failure by the EP or End User to implement recommendations in respect of or solutions to faults previously advised by the Eircode Contractor
- ◆ the EP's failure to install and use (in substitution for the previous release) any new release of the Eircode data within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the same; or
- ◆ the use of the Eircode data for a purpose for which they were not designed;
- ◆ any alteration, modification, adjustment or enhancement made by the EP to the Eircode data and the associated documentation.

## Governance

The Eircode Contractor will conduct regular audits of these Eircode services to ensure that the EPs and End-Users meet these obligations.

The Contractor is authorised through the Postal Services Amendment Act to revoke, suspend or terminate a licence for substantial or persistent non-compliance.



## **A.4 Related Eircode-related Legislation, Policies and Processes**

- ◆ Eircode Privacy Policy
- ◆ Eircode Privacy Statement
- ◆ Licence Agreement
- ◆ Eircode Code of Practice
- ◆ Communications (Postal Services) (Amendment) Act 2015
- ◆ Irish Data Protection Acts (1988, as amended in 2003)

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** these presents have been entered into the day and year first herein written.

Signed by

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For and on behalf of  
**Capita Business Support Services Ireland Limited**

Date:

Signed by

---

For and on behalf of  
**(“the Licensee”)**

Date:

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