



## OFFICE OF THE DATA PROTECTION COMMISSIONER

### **PRESIDENT WILLIAM RUTO LAUNCHES DATA PROTECTION REGISTRATION SYSTEM AS KENYA COMMEMORATES DATA PRIVACY DAY 2023**

**27<sup>th</sup> January 2023, Nairobi.** Today, H.E. the President, Dr William Samoei Ruto officially launched the Data Protection registration system which went live in July 2022 when the Data Protection Regulations (Registration of Data Controllers and Data Processors) 2021 came into effect.

The Official launch was part of the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner's (ODPC) series of activities to commemorate the Data Privacy Day 2023, a key event to celebrate the strides Kenya has made in data protection, including the enactment of the data protection Act and regulations, and create awareness on the importance of respecting the right to privacy, safeguarding person data and enable trust in the digital era.

This day is celebrated under the theme ***"Promoting Data Protection in a Digital Transformed Economy"***

In his remarks, President Ruto said "Data Privacy is a global issue and I am glad to join the world to celebrate a day that remembers the coming to force of the first data protection convention 42 years ago. This day gives us an opportunity to reflect on opportunities and threats that define privacy in matters data in this era of 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution which has changed our lives"

The President reaffirmed the government's commitment to the implementation of the provisions of the Data Protection Act (2019), through the Office the Commissioner of Data Protection.

"We are committed to support this office and ensure that it acquires necessary facilities it requires to fulfill its mandate. I am confident ODPC will give us much needed value. The launch of the Data Protection Registration system is highly commendable and it signals that we are able to inaugurate the Data Protection regime in Kenya," he added.

It is a statutory requirement for entities handling personal data of individuals located in Kenya to register with the ODPC. This applies to all public and private entities, including individuals. It also includes the not for profit organizations and churches.

The President, in his remarks, directed the Cabinet Secretary of Information Communications, and the Digital Economy to ensure Kenyans are identified digitally.

He further directed all Ministries, Departments, Agencies and County Governments to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Data Protection Laws.

The Data Protection registration system has so far received applications from One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty-Six (1,966) Data Controllers and Data Processors. Out of this number, the ODPC has issued Registration certificates to One Thousand Four Hundred (1,417) entities and is in the process of verifying other applications.

In his remarks, Hon. Eliud Owalo, Cabinet Secretary of Information Communications, and the Digital Economy said, "This year's theme of "Promoting Data Privacy in a Digitally Transformed Economy" is aligned with the government's recently launched digital superhighway and creative economy. It emphasizes on the need for us to create an environment that allows safeguarding of data for every citizen, enterprise and organization which has digital access and the capability to participate and thrive in the digital economy. As a country, we must seize the significant socio-economic opportunities that digital technologies bring."

The Data Commissioner, Immaculate Kassait stated that, "Compliance to Data Protection laws and regulations is a process, not an event. It is as a journey with no motive towards stifling innovation. I encourage data handlers to register accordingly for compliance and reputational purposes."

The Data Commissioner added that her Office was committed to the promotion of awareness in matters data protection, through such events to ensure citizens are aware of their rights and modes of reporting data breaches and complaints. She challenged citizens to make inquiries when in doubt and consult accordingly to avoid pleading ignorance.

The ODPC is fast-tracking the rolling out of sector-specific guidance notes including for Fintechs, Private Security Agencies, Educational institutions, Telecoms, and Health Sectors. The Office also plans to establish offices across the counties in 2023 starting with Kisumu, Nakuru and Mombasa this year. This will help create access to our services at the regional level.

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