Legal Alert

September 2026

PDPC steps up Enforcement activities and compliance inspections

The inspections are intended to assess compliance with the requirements of the Personal Data Protection Act ("the Act") and to enable the Commission to take appropriate enforcement actions where violations are identified.

The Personal Data Protection Commission (PDPC) has announced the commencement of on-site compliance inspections of organisations that collect and process personal data across Tanzania from 31 August 2026. The inspections follow preliminary assessments conducted by the Commission, which identified significant compliance gaps among data controllers and data processors.

According to the PDPC, the inspections are intended to assess compliance with the requirements of the Personal Data Protection Act ("the Act") and to enable the Commission to take appropriate enforcement actions where violations are identified.

The commencement of this exercise marks a significant development in the implementation and enforcement of Tanzania's data protection framework. As one of the first major compliance and enforcement initiatives undertaken since the enactment of the Personal Data Protection Act, it signals the Commission's view that organisations have had sufficient time to understand and implement the Act's compliance obligations. The exercise also underscores the Commission's growing focus on ensuring that compliance with data protection obligations extends beyond formal registration but is effectively embedded in organisations policies, processes and day to day operations.

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The inspections are expected to focus on both legal and operational aspects of data protection compliance.

Key compliance gaps identified by the PDPC

According to the PDPC, the preliminary assessments revealed several areas of concern, including:

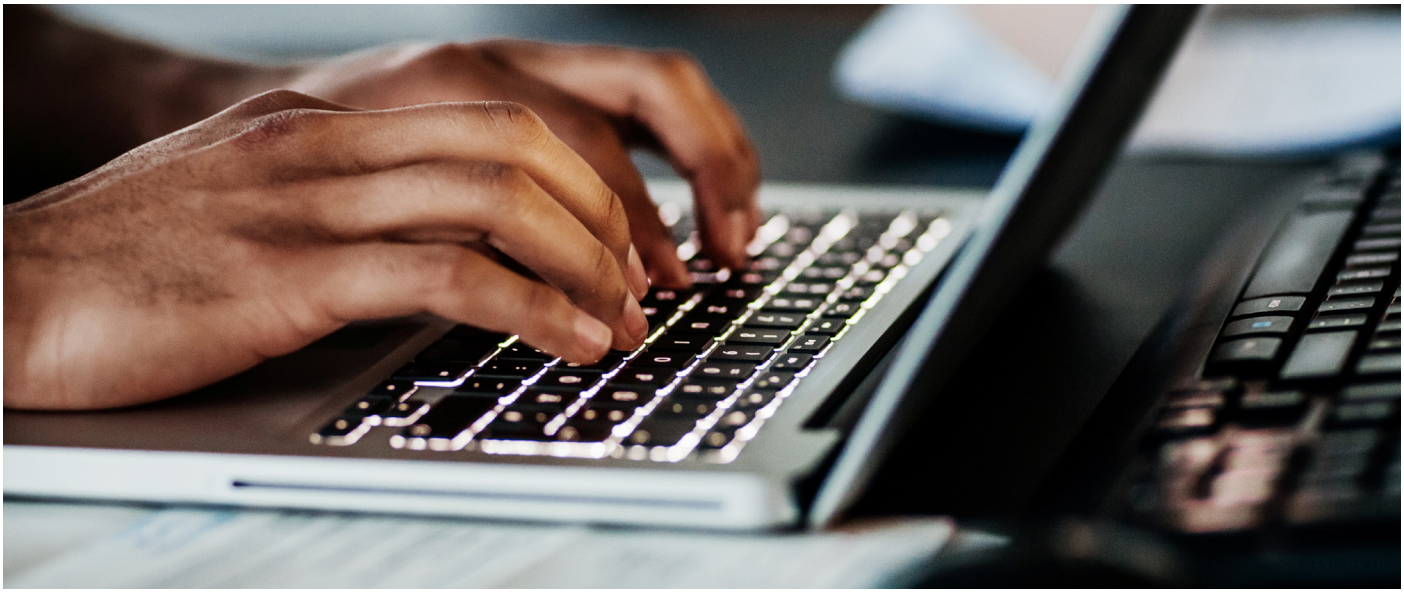
- Failure to comply with the registration requirements applicable to data controllers and data processors;
- Submission of inaccurate registration information;
- Limited understanding of obligations imposed under the Act;
- Challenges in implementing data subjects' rights; and
- Transfer of personal data outside Tanzania without complying with the prescribed requirements and procedures under the Act.

The PDPC has expressly stated that these findings formed the basis for advancing to the compliance / enforcement inspection phase, signalling its intention to move beyond compliance sensitisation towards more rigorous regulatory oversight role.

Scope of the compliance inspections

The inspections are expected to focus on both legal and operational aspects of data protection compliance. In particular, the PDPC is expected to assess the following key areas

- The registration status of data controllers and data processors;
- The appointment and performance of Data Protection Officers (DPOs);
- Procedures relating to the collection, processing and storage of personal data;
- Technical and organisational measures implemented to safeguard personal data against loss, damage and unauthorised access or use; and
- Compliance with legal requirements governing cross-border transfers of personal data.



The PDPC has confirmed that institutions found to be non-compliant may be subjected to regulatory measures depending on the nature and seriousness of the violation identified.

Why these matter?

The PDPC has confirmed that institutions found to be non-compliant may be subjected to regulatory measures depending on the nature and seriousness of the violation identified. These measures include:

- Regulatory sanctions, including warning notices, directives requiring corrective action, imposition of fines and other corrective measures in accordance with the applicable law; and
- Penalties for non-compliance with registration requirements, include:
  - A fine of between TZS 100,000 and TZS 5m;
  - Imprisonment for a term of up to five years; or
  - Both fine and imprisonment upon conviction.

While the Commission has emphasised that its objective is not to impede the development of Tanzania's digital economy, it has underscored the importance of ensuring that technological innovation takes place within a framework that adequately safeguards personal data and protects the rights of data subjects.

The announcement should therefore be viewed as a clear indication that the Commission is entering a more active enforcement phase and expects regulated entities to demonstrate measurable compliance with the requirements of the PDPA.

Key actions for organisations ahead of PDPC inspections

Given the PDPC's enforcement initiative, organisations should undertake an immediate compliance review to confirm that:

- Are duly registered as data controllers and/or data processors;
- Have submitted all required quarterly compliance reports correctly;
- Have implemented an appropriate data protection governance framework;
- Have adopted and implemented compliant personal data protection policies;
- Have conducted DPIAs for applicable high-risk processing activities;
- Have obtained the necessary approvals for cross-border data transfers;
- Have lawful personal grounds for processing personal data, including obtaining consent where required by law;
- Have updated registration details where changes have occurred;
- Have appointed and adequately empowered a DPO; and
- Can produce sufficient evidence of compliance during an inspection.

How can we help?

Our Legal Business Solutions (LBS) team at PwC, can assist organisations with:

- Registration and renewal of registration with the PDPC;
- Data protection compliance assessments and gap analysis;
- Preparation and review of personal data protection policies;
- Regulatory compliance routine e.g. Filing quarterly reports.
- Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs);
- Applications for cross-border data transfer permits;
- Review of data breach management procedures and information security controls;
- Review of third-party data processing agreements;
- Employee awareness and compliance training.

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