

A Guide to Privacy

What is privacy?

All public and many private organisations are required to comply with the Information Privacy Principles (IPP) set out in the Privacy Act (Victoria) 2000 and the Health Records Act 2001. The principles provide guidelines for the collection, use, storage, security and disclosure of personal information and any other information that may be sensitive. Individuals have the right to know what information organisations collect about them and to be able to see that information.

Housing Choices Australia is bound by both of the above Acts and the National Privacy Principles of the Federal Privacy Act 1988. Furthermore, we respect the privacy of all individuals. Housing Choices is committed to ensuring all directors and staff comply at all times with their obligations under these Acts.

What is personal information?

Personal information is any information that can describe a person. Even if your name is not visible, if someone can tell who you are by the information provided then it is personal. Some examples of personal information include:

- Physical description
- Date of birth
- Address
- Place of work
- Business and business activities
- Occupation
- Relationship to another person
- Recreational interests
- Sexuality
- Political, religious or other beliefs
- Personal history
- Centrelink or bank account number.

What information do we collect?

The following information may be collected about you:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Personal income details
- Where you are currently living
- Place of birth
- Ethnic origin
- Preferred language
- Marital status
- Disability type (if any)
- Children's names
- History at the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)
- Previous housing history.

Why do we collect certain information?

There are many reasons why Housing Choices are required to hold this information. Some of these reasons include:

- Assessing eligibility to our services
- Assessing rent payable
- Special accommodation needs.

What information does Housing Choices Australia disclose?

When information is requested from you it will be used for its intended purpose. Information provided will be used for another purpose only if you agree, or if it is requested by law.

We ensure that all information given to us is treated with the utmost privacy. All past client files are securely stored and disposed of every seven years, as per government regulations.

Can I access my personal information?

Yes, you can access personal information that we have collected, and you are able to amend it when inaccurate. There may be complications accessing your information only when it compromises the privacy of others.

If you wish to access your information, please make an appointment to see your Housing Officer or place your request in writing to:

Housing Services Manager
Housing Choices Australia
Level 3, 350 Queen Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Upon receipt of your request, we will respond within 14 days.

How do I make a complaint?

Housing Choices will make every possible attempt to make sure that your privacy is not breached. However, if you think your privacy has been breached you may lodge a complaint to us and we will do everything we can to resolve the issue. If you feel that the issue has not been resolved properly, you may refer the matter to:

Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner
P: 1300 666 444
E: privacy@cpdp.vic.gov.au

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
P: 1300 363 992
E: enquiries@oaic.gov.au

Contact Us

Housing Choices Australia
P: 1300 312 447
E: info@hcau.org.au
W: www.housingchoices.org.au

For office locations refer to our website.

**Our Privacy Policy is currently under review*