

Privacy Policy

1. The Department of Health and Families (DHF) is committed to safeguarding the privacy of the personal information that it collects and handles, and has implemented measures to comply with its obligations under the Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) in the *Information Act*.
2. DHF collects and handles a range of personal information about clients and staff for the purposes of providing services or carrying out its functions. DHF also uses some of this information for planning, funding, monitoring, and evaluating its services and functions. Where practicable, when using information for these purposes, identifying details such as name and address are removed. Personal information is not included in reports or publications that are released to the public, except with the consent of the person concerned or where this is authorised by law.
3. In accordance with its responsibilities, the services and functions DHF provide relate primarily to the areas of health, community support, and the protection of public health and safety. The main services provided include aged and disability, alcohol and other drugs, child protection, environmental health, family and children's, mental health, primary and community health, public health and public hospital services.
4. DHF recognises that the nature of these services means that much of the information handled is particularly sensitive and acknowledges the right of individuals to have their information handled in ways that they would reasonably expect and that respect their privacy.
5. DHF recognises that it provides services to a culturally diverse community and makes every effort to ensure that information is handled in culturally sensitive and appropriate ways.
6. Subject to the exceptions expressly stated in the IPPs, DHF will:
 - collect only that information which is needed for a particular purpose ('the primary purpose');
 - collect sensitive information (which includes health information) directly from the person concerned, wherever possible, and with their consent;
 - take reasonable steps to let the person concerned know why information about them was collected and how DHCS will handle it;
 - use and disclose sensitive information only for the primary purpose, or for another purpose ('a secondary purpose') which is directly related to the primary purpose and one which the person would reasonably expect;
 - otherwise use and disclose sensitive information with the person's consent (except where it is an emergency and the information is needed to lessen or prevent serious harm, or its use or disclosure is authorised by law);
 - take all reasonable steps to ensure the information it collects is stored securely, protecting it from unauthorised access;
 - take reasonable measures to ensure the information it collects is accurate, complete and up-to-date;
 - provide the person concerned with access to information held about them, and to seek its correction where the person considers the information is inaccurate, incomplete or out-of-date.