

Consumer Privacy Policy

UnitingCare Harrison acts ethically at all times and is committed to ensuring the privacy of individuals is protected. The agency has procedures in accordance with the relevant Federal and State Government privacy principles regarding the collection, management and disclosure of your personal information.

Privacy Legislation:

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012
Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic)
Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)

Consent

Consent is required for the agency to collect and share your personal information while providing you with a service. Consent is gained using a Consent Form or may be verbal consent. You may retract consent as you deem appropriate.

To ensure you have an understanding of privacy and consent you are welcome to use interpreters and advocates as required.

Children and adolescents under 18 years are entitled to make their own decisions about their personal information, provided you have an understanding of what you are consenting to. An individual aged under 15 is presumed not to have capacity to consent (OAIC - APP guidelines 2014).

This document outlines how we collect, manage and use your information.

1. The kind of personal and sensitive information collected

We only collect personal and sensitive information that is relevant to providing you with a service and with your consent. The type of personal and sensitive information, as defined under the Act, that we may collect includes:

- Name, Address and contact details
- Date of birth
- Occupation
- Racial or ethnic origin
- Relevant health information

When it is lawful and feasible you will be given the option of not identifying yourself when receiving a service. We will inform you when there may be times that the agency's funding bodies require particular information from you to provide you with a service.

2. How we collect, hold and archive information

Generally, we collect your personal information directly from you. This may be through face-to-face interviews, over the telephone, on forms that you complete. Information is also collected with your consent from other services, agencies or government departments.

The agency takes reasonable steps to protect the information it holds from misuse, loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. As part of our funding and service agreements we may be required to hold your information on external databases.

Your personal information will be archived according to the agency's program or service agreement requirements and then lawfully destroyed when no longer required.

3. The purposes for which we collect, hold, use and disclose information.

The Agency collects your information to be able to provide you with a service and only uses and discloses the information for the purpose it was collected. Your information may be used to provide or coordinate such services as: referrals, advocacy, case management, tenancy.

Use and Disclosure **without** Consent

There are requirements under Federal and State law where your information may be used and disclosed without your consent.

Examples include:

- Situations where use or disclosure will lessen or prevent a serious and imminent threat to life, health, safety or welfare of an individual or the public
- Where it is required, authorised or permitted by law (*In instances where the requirements of other laws are inconsistent with privacy legislation, the obligations under other laws take precedence. Eg. mandatory reporting under the Children, Youth & Families Act 2005*)

4. How to access your information and/or to correct the information

You may request access to the personal information we hold. Requests are to be made in writing and forwarded to the appropriate General Manager.

A decision will be made within ten working days of receiving your request and you will be notified of the outcome in writing. In some situations it may be necessary for us to deny access. For example:

- It poses a serious threat to the life or health of any person
- It unreasonably affects the privacy of other individuals

Where access is denied we will write to you explaining the reasons why and the process for lodging any complaint.

There is no cost associated with accessing your information.

The Agency takes reasonable steps to ensure your information is accurate, complete and up-to-date. Where your circumstances change we update your information in our file and/or database.

If you do not believe our information is up to date or accurate you may make a request in writing to have your information amended. If there is disagreement about the accuracy of information held by us, we may add a note to the file information stating that we disagree with the amendment.

Where correction is denied, you will be provided with the reasons why in writing and the process for lodging any complaint.

5. Whether information may be disclosed overseas

The agency only forwards information to an agency or individual outside of Victoria or Australia with the individuals consent or as required under matters of law.

Contacting Us

UnitingCare Harrison
P.O Box 4503 Knox City 3152
Ph: 9871 8700
feedback@harrison.org.au
www.unitingcareharrison.org.au

If you have any questions about this Privacy Policy or any concerns please speak with your worker/ agency contact or a Manager.

If you wish to make a complaint, complaints can be made in writing or by speaking with the relevant Manager.

Or see the agency's Complaints brochure

For Information

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
Website: www.oaic.gov.au

For Information

Victorian Privacy Commissioner
Website: www.privacy.vic.gov.au

Acknowledgment: Norton Rose Fulbright Australia