

## Your Privacy and Confidentiality Factsheet

Relationships Australia Tasmania (RA Tas) respects your right to privacy and is committed to safeguarding the personal information you provide to us.

### What personal information is collected about me?

There are certain personal details that we collect and record to provide you with a quality service and for identity verification purposes. Some of these details are collected as part of a holistic assessment process and others need to be collected as part of an arrangement with our funding body. The details collected may include:

- Identifying information about you (your name, date of birth etc.)
- Demographic information (gender, indigenous status, income etc.)
- Your contact information (address, telephone number, email address etc.)
- People to contact in the event of an emergency
- Relevant details about your circumstances
- Information requested by our Funding body, as required

RA Tas will only collect the personal information that is reasonably necessary to provide a quality service and address you respectfully. This includes any information that you may voluntarily disclose relating to your sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics (VSC) and sexual orientation.

### How is my personal information used?

Your personal information is primarily used by our organisation for the purpose for which it was collected, to assist RA Tas in providing a service relevant to your circumstances.

Personal information provided by a client is used

- for the purpose for which it was collected
- to assist RA Tas in providing the service relevant to a client's circumstances.
- in practice discussions between a practitioner and their supervisor where it is seen to benefit the client
- where the organisation is required to allow representatives from a professional accreditation body to access personal information. When this may occur, any representatives from the accrediting body will sign a confidentiality agreement, not to disclose or share any personal information they may come across

### How is my personal information stored?

RA Tas stores personal information:

- electronically in a secure and protected client data management computer system or
- in paper documents that are stored in secure and locked storage areas

As services expand and the use of internet or cloud-based technology increases there will be other third-party services RA Tas may choose to access to assist in managing data and improving our services to clients.

If you wish to know more about the storage of your information, feel free to request a copy of the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

## How long is my information kept for?

In accordance with our funding and contractual requirements all information collected is kept on file for the entire contract period. Once your service has ended your digital information is saved and your paper files are archived. Your digital and paper records are kept for 7 years for adults and up to 25 years for children and young people. Your records may be kept for longer periods if a State or Commonwealth Notice is issued which places a disposal freeze on records.

## Who has access to my personal information?

In most cases, your RA Tas practitioners will be the only people accessing your information.

RA Tas's funding bodies may require us to demonstrate continuous quality improvement and safety activities in accordance with service delivery standards. At times, the external auditing parties will request to view files, to conduct an audit, to ensure that the correct processes are being followed and correct documents are being used. The auditors do not read file notes or personal information. If you are not happy for your file to be used for this purpose you need to tell us. You are under no obligation to authorise your file to be used for this purpose.

## Do you disclose my personal information to any other services or agencies?

RA Tas are required to provide non-identifying data to our funding body. We will seek your written consent before providing non-identifying information.

## Limitations of Confidentiality

Confidentiality is strictly maintained. However, RA Tas has a duty of care to protect their clients and those close to them. RA Tas are therefore mandated by law to report risk of harm to self or others as well as instances of current child abuse or neglect or risk of child abuse or neglect.

If appropriate to your circumstances, you will be informed by your Practitioner about confidentiality and inadmissibility of communications set out in the Family Law Act. Section 10D of the Family Law Act sets out the circumstances in which information made during family counselling must or may be disclosed. Family counsellors must not disclose information unless the disclosure is required or authorised under the Family Law Act.

For Family Dispute Resolution (Mediation), Intake Officers and FDR Students are not covered by the same admissibility protections as registered FDR Practitioners. If you are concerned about the admissibility of your personal information, you can ask the Intake Officer or FDR Student to gather basic information then ask to discuss detailed information with a registered FDR Practitioner.

## Your consent

We will generally obtain your consent to share your personal information with a third party before we share your personal information. We will obtain your consent by asking you to complete a “Consent to Share Information” form. This form will include the person/agency/service with whom your information will be shared. There are some exceptional circumstances in which your personal information may be shared without your consent. These circumstances are outlined in the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

## How can I access and make any corrections to my personal information?

If you would like access to any of your personal information you will be requested to complete a ‘Request for Release of Information Form’. Only information directly related to you can be accessed, any information recorded about other people will not be released. If your access to any personal information is denied, you will be provided with written notice of the reasons for denying access.

If your personal information changes or if you believe that RA Tas’s records are not up-to-date or accurate then we will endeavour to correct personal information. You can request corrections to your personal information anytime during the course of service.

## Contacting RA Tas

For further information about how RA Tas manages your personal information, please request a copy of our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*. The most up to date version of the *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* reflecting any amendments that may have been made is available on the RA Tas website.

## How can I give feedback or make a complaint?

If you have any questions, comments or if you wish to give feedback or make a complaint about how we handle your personal information, please contact the organisation’s Privacy Officer (RA Tas’s Chief Operating Officer) on 1300 364 277 or email [admin@realtas.com.au](mailto:admin@realtas.com.au) All complaints will be dealt with fairly and as quickly as possible. If you are not satisfied with RA Tas’ response, you can make a complaint to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

Email: [enquiries@oaic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@oaic.gov.au)

Post: GPO Box 5218, Sydney NSW, 2001

Phone: 1300 363 992 Fax: 02 9284 9666 Web: <http://www.oaic.gov.au>

It may also be appropriate to direct your complaint to:

The Tasmanian Ombudsman under the Personal Information Protection Act. Email:  
[ombudsman@ombudsman.tas.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.tas.gov.au)

