

POLICY 1.7: CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Responsible Officer Manager/Management Committee	Policy Number: 1.7
Contact Officer: Manager	Policy Area : Governance and Management
Effective Date: 1.7.24	Review Date: 30.6.26

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure The Community Place complies with its legal and ethical obligation to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all stakeholders, including clients, staff, volunteers, students, members, customers and the organisation with respect to information collected by (TCP).

The Community Place is committed to protecting and upholding the right to privacy of clients, staff, volunteers, Management Committee and other representatives we have dealings with. In particular TCP is committed to protecting and upholding the rights of our clients to privacy in the way we collect, store and use information about them, their needs and the services we provide to them.

POLICY STATEMENT

TCP aims to uphold to the highest standard the rights of all stakeholders to confidentiality and privacy in accordance the principles embodied in the Commonwealth Privacy Act and the Australian Privacy Principles. TCP respects that information shared by stakeholders belongs to them. It is important that TCP is consistent and careful in the way it is decided who can see or hear this information and the rights of stakeholders to access and if necessary correct their own records. This policy will apply to all records, whether hard copy or electronic, containing personal and sensitive information about individuals and other stakeholders.

Definitions

Personal Information: Information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database), whether true or not, and whether recorded in a material form or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion.

Sensitive Information: ‘Sensitive information’ is defined in the Privacy Act to mean information or an opinion about an individual’s:

- racial or ethnic origin;
- political opinions;
- membership of a political association;
- religious beliefs or affiliations;
- philosophical beliefs;
- membership of a professional or trade association;
- membership of a trade union;
- sexual preferences or practices; or
- criminal record.

PROCEDURES

Procedures

TCP will only collect information for the purpose of providing services and for use in funding submissions and tender applications where all information has been de-identified. Permission to collect and maintain information will be sought from the stakeholder at all times. In seeking the permission TCP will:

- Only collect information that is relevant to the TCP'S primary functions;
- Inform stakeholders why information is being collected, for what purpose it will be used and who will be able to access that information
- Inform stakeholders that their information will only be shared with others with their consent, in the circumstance hereunder or otherwise as provided by law.
- Ensure that personal information is only collected by fair and lawful means.
- Ensure that the collection of information does not intrude to an unreasonable extent upon the personal affairs of the individual involved.
- Take reasonable steps to protect all staff, volunteer and client records from misuse, interference and loss, and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.
- Provide individuals with access to their own records.
- Ensure that personal information collected or disclosed is accurate, complete and up-to-date, and provide access to any individual to review information or correct wrong information about themselves.
- Advise that if they are unhappy with how TCP has managed their privacy they have the right to pursue these concerns via the complaints policy.

The TCP website must contain a Privacy statement that makes clear the conditions of any collection of personal information from the public through their visit to the website.

Clients' rights and responsibilities will be publicly displayed throughout the centre and in the respective handbook and/or manual signed by participants.

Records

All Management Committee members, staff, volunteers and students will read and sign a Code of Conduct on commencement with TCP. All newcomers to the organisation are trained in the induction process on the necessity of confidentiality in regards to ascertaining and maintaining information and location of service.

All staff are responsible for the management of personal information to which they have access and used in the conduct of their work.

All personal and sensitive information will be securely stored in locked cabinets and/or password protected databases with access restricted to those who require it to work with clients and to carry out the services of TCP.

The Manager is responsible for safeguarding personal information relating to TCP staff, Management Committee members, volunteers and members and will handle client complaints about privacy.

Written information should not be left on desks or on computer screens. All confidential material should be kept in a locked cabinet when unattended. Keys to cabinets holding information should not be kept in an obvious place such as a top drawer.

All personal and sensitive information will be destroyed after minimum legal requirements for retaining documents have expired. Hard copy records are destroyed using a secure bin which is

collected and shredded onsite. Digital records are securely wiped from our computer systems using recommended software.

Information Privacy Act 2009

The Community Place adheres to the legislation and rules set out in the Information Privacy Act 2009.

In relation to circumstances where information that is private is shared to external parties – the agency will only share information either with express consent from the client or where it is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to life, health, safety or welfare of any individual, or to public health, safety and welfare.

Responsibilities for managing privacy

- All staff are responsible for the management of personal information to which they have access, and in the conduct of research, consultation or advocacy work.
- The Manager is responsible for content in TCP publications, communications and web site and must ensure the following:
 - appropriate consent is obtained for the inclusion of any personal information about any individual including TCP personnel
 - information being provided by other agencies or external individuals conforms to privacy principles
 - that the website contains a Privacy statement that makes clear the conditions of any collection of personal information from the public through their visit to the website
- The Manager is responsible for safeguarding personal information relating to staff, Governing body/Management Committee members, volunteers, contractors and members.
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The Privacy Contact Officer:

The Privacy Contact Officer will be the the Manager. The Manager will be responsible for:

- ensuring that all staff are familiar with the Privacy Policy and administrative procedures for handling personal information
- ensuring that clients and other relevant individuals are provided with information about their rights regarding privacy
- handling any queries or complaint about a privacy issue

Workplace participant acknowledgement

I acknowledge:

- *receiving the TCP Policy;*
- *that I will comply with the Policy; and*
- *that there may be disciplinary consequences if I fail to comply, which may result in the termination of my employment.*

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Documents related to this policy

Related policies	1.8 Management of Information and Data Policy 2.1 Clients Rights and Responsibilities Policy 2.4 Client Record Keeping 2.6 Complaints Policy 3.1 Code of Conduct Policy
Forms or other organisational documents	Code of Conduct Volunteer Registration Form

Revision record

Version	Approval Date	Authorised by	Effective Date	Review Cycle	Next Review Date
1.0	30.6.19	Management Committee	1.7.19	Annual	30.6.26