

 Wingate Avenue Community Centre	Title: PRIVACY POLICY	
	Version: 3	Approved: Committee of Management March 2017
	Administered: Manager	Next Review: March 2020

Background

The Wingate Avenue Community Centre (WACC) is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information which we collect, hold and administers. Personal information is information which directly or indirectly identifies a person. It includes all written, verbal, photographic and digital forms of information.

At WACC, maintaining privacy of personal information is part of creating an environment where people feel safe and where their rights are protected. WACC understands the importance of developing information handling practices in which students, staff and volunteers can place their trust and openly exchange information which assists WACC to develop and deliver its programs and activities.

Relevant Legislation

[Privacy Act 1988](#) – Commonwealth legislation on responsible collection and use of personal and sensitive information.

[Health Records Act 2001](#) – Victorian legislation applies to all organisations that handle health information.

[Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014](#) – Victorian legislation applies to personal and sensitive information collected as part of DHHS and DET contracted services.

Principles

WACC recognises the right of individuals to have their information administered in ways which they would reasonably expect – protected on one hand, and made accessible to them on the other. These privacy values are reflected in and supported by our core values and philosophies.

In broad terms this means that we:

- Collect only information which the Centre requires for its primary function
- Ensure that stakeholders are informed as to why we collect the information and how we administer the information gathered
- Promote and protect individuals' rights to privacy
- Use and disclose personal information only for our primary functions or a directly related purpose, or for another purpose with the person's consent
- Store personal information securely, protecting it from unauthorised access
- Provide stakeholders with access to their own information, and the right to seek its correction.

Definitions

Health information means information or opinion about a person's physical, mental or psychological health or disability that is also personal information. This includes information or opinion about a person's health status and medical history.

Personal information means recorded information or opinion, whether true or not, about a person whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information. The information or opinion can be recorded in any form.

Sensitive information means information or opinion (that is also personal information) about a person's racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religion, philosophical beliefs, sexual preferences or practices, membership of a political association, professional/trade association or trade union, or an individual's criminal record.

Policy

WACC collects and administers a range of personal information for the purposes of adhering to legislation and funding body requirements. WACC is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information it collects, holds and administers.

Information about staff, volunteers, program participants and WACC users will remain confidential except where it involves:

- Serious illegal actions on the part of a person involved
- Any issue which could endanger the safety of other people
- A situation in which a staff member is mandated to make a report to the Department of Health and Human Services.

If this is the case, the person concerned will be informed directly that any information they give (ie on violent crimes, child abuse) may need to be reported to the relevant authority in accordance with Victorian or Federal laws.

Implementation

Collection

WACC will:

- Only collect information that is necessary for the performance and primary function of WACC
- Make available an Information Collection Statement on the website and at reception which notifies stakeholders about why we collect the information and how it is administered
- Notify stakeholders that this information is accessible to them
- Ensure conversations with participants or between workers about participants should not be conducted in places or situations where they can be overheard
- Ensure interviews where personal information is to be discussed take place in a private space
- Ensure personal information including enrolment forms, appointment books and message slips should not be left open in publicly accessible areas (particularly reception and in classrooms).

Use and Disclosure

WACC will:

- Only use or disclose information for the primary purpose for which it was collected or a directly related secondary purpose
- Allow discussion between staff concerning participants where there is a need for the benefit of the service to share information
- Obtain consent from the affected person for all other uses.

Data Quality

WACC will:

- Take reasonable steps to ensure the information we collect is accurate, complete, up-to-date, and relevant to the functions we perform.

Data Security and Retention

WACC will:

- Safeguard the information we collect and store against loss, unauthorised access, use, modification, disclosure or against any other use
- Maintain and destroy records in accordance with the **Records Management Policy**
- Ensure all information is handled in accordance with the person's reasonable expectations.

Openness

WACC will:

- Ensure stakeholders are aware of WACC's Privacy Policy and its purposes
- Make this information freely available in relevant publications and on our website.

Access and Correction

WACC will:

- Ensure individuals have a right to seek access to information held about them and to correct it if it is inaccurate, incomplete, misleading or not up-to-date. Where that individual is unknown to the staff member, a visible form of identification is required.
- Ensure all requests for information disclosure are referred to the Manager. In some cases, consistent with the Privacy Act, WACC may refuse to give participants access to personal information it holds about them. In such cases, reasons for refusal will be provided. Reasons for denying access include;
 - Where the request is frivolous or vexatious
 - Where providing access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of other individuals
 - Where providing access would post a serious threat to the life or health of any person
 - Where WACC is involved in the detection, investigation or remedying of serious improper conduct and providing access would prejudice that.

Anonymity

WACC will:

- Give stakeholders the option of not identifying themselves when completing evaluation forms or opinion surveys.

Making information available to other service providers

WACC:

- Can only release personal information about a person with that person's express permission. For personal information to be released, the person concerned must sign a release form.
- Can release information to third parties where it is authorised in writing by the person concerned.

Responsibility

Staff, Committee of Management members and volunteers will be informed of this Policy as part of their orientation to WACC and are required to read and sign the Privacy, Confidentiality and Security Agreement. The original copy of this Agreement will be kept in their personnel file.

The Committee of Management, staff, contractors and volunteers are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

The Manager is responsible for monitoring changes in Privacy legislation and for reviewing this policy as and when the need arises.

Related Documents

Records Management Policy
Privacy, Confidentiality and Security Agreement
Information Collection Statement

Adopted by Committee of Management on (date): 20th March 2017

Signed by Chairperson: Raoul Wainwright_

