

Privacy Policy

Introduction

The Northern Territory Government has established a privacy regime for the Northern Territory public sector under the *Information Act*. The Act establishes ten Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) that impose specific obligations on all NT Government agencies concerning the collection, use, storage and other handling of personal information.

Personal information includes personal details of an individual and any other information that directly or indirectly identifies a person who is alive or who has been alive within the last five years. All personal information collected in the provision of a health service is considered to be 'health information' or 'sensitive information' under the IPPs.

Policy Statement

1. The Department of Children Families (DCF) 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 IPPs.
2. DCF collects and handles a range of personal information about clients and staff for the purposes of providing services or carrying out its functions. DCF 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 it is authorised by law.
3. In accordance with its responsibilities, the services and functions DCF provides relate primarily to the areas of family and community support, and the protection of children.
4. DCF 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. DCF 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, DCF 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 DCF 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, modification or disclosure;
 - 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.