

Privacy and Confidentiality Statement

SLH respects the privacy rights of all individuals associated with the provision of its services, and is bound directly through funding from State and Federal Government to the principles contained within the following privacy legislation:

- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW) (HRIP Act)
- Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998 (NSW PPIP Act)

In association with these laws, we are also bound by the National Privacy Principles (Cth) (NPP) of the Privacy Act 1988 as well as the Health Privacy Principles (HPP) of the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW) (HRIP Act) and the Information Privacy Principles (IPP) under the Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998 (NSW) (PPIP Act).

In accordance with this legislation the personal, sensitive and health information of those who use our services, staff/prospective staff, contractors, volunteers and students is considered by SLH to be private and will only be used for the purposes for which the information was collected.

SLH also follows the guidelines for private sector organisations providing services on behalf of the Australian and NSW government as issued by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner and the NSW Privacy Commissioner.

Definitions:

Personal Information: refers to information or an opinion, whether true or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent or could be reasonably ascertained from that information or opinion.

Sensitive Personal Information: includes ethnic or racial origin; political opinions; membership of a political association; religious or philosophical beliefs or affiliations; membership of a professional or trade association; health; sexual preferences, practices or activities; and criminal record.

The type of personal information that we collect:

- Client names, address and contact details
- Intake, assessment and re-assessment documentation
- Client case management plans and revision plans
- Referrals to other agencies
- Consent to collect and exchange information
- Feedback and complaints from clients
- Reports from other agencies
- Case closure and service exit documentation

Why we collect this information:

Information and data collection is a requirement of many of our government funding contracts. We may also use this data for research and quality improvement of the services that we provide.

The following principles guide data collection practice:

- SLH will only collect information that is necessary for the performance and primary function of the organisation.
- SLH will explain to clients the purpose of collection and how the information is used.
- SLH will advise clients that any data collected is accessible to the individual.
- SLH collects personal information from the clients themselves whenever possible.
- If the information was collected from a third party, SLH will notify the clients and advise them of the purpose of the collection.
- SLH will ensure that the client has provided consent to the collection of sensitive information.

How we collect, store and use this information:

We only collect information if it passes the following two tests:

1. Is it for a lawful purpose directly relating to the services we provide, and
2. Is it reasonably necessary for us to have this information.

We always ask for consent to collect information about you.

We will inform you:

1. that information is being collected,
2. whether this information is required by law,
3. who will have access to this information,
4. the reason we are collecting this information.

All information collected is stored securely to prevent loss and unauthorised access, use or modification.

How can you access your personal information:

Please provide the Executive Officer or the Residential Team Leader at SLH with a written request for access to your personal information and any further details stating why you would like access and if you think that your personal information may not be accurate.

SLH will make every effort to provide access to your personal information without unreasonable expense or delay.

However, there are some instances in which your personal information may not be accessible, such as:

- This would pose a serious and imminent threat to the life, health or safety of any individual.
- This would unreasonably affect the privacy of other individuals.
- The information is related to existing or anticipated legal proceedings between the organisation and yourself and this information could not be obtained by the legal process of discovery in those proceedings.
- It would be unlawful to provide access.
- Denying access is required or authorised by law.
- Providing access would be likely to prejudice an investigation into possible unlawful activity.

If we deny access to personal information, reasons will be provided in writing.

What can you do if you think that your personal details have been misrepresented or you have a complaint about information held:

SLH will allow you to apply to update, correct or amend your personal information, to ensure its accuracy.

If SLH is not prepared to amend the information, you will be informed of the reasons for the refusal. At your request, SLH will take reasonable steps to attach a statement by you to the original information to detail the amendment sought or state that you believe the information held is inaccurate, incomplete, not up-to-date and/or misleading.