

DVAC Privacy Statement

You are providing private information to Domestic Violence Advocacy Centre (DVAC) ABN 91 593 855 217

DVAC takes confidentiality and privacy of information seriously, including the right to remain anonymous if a client choose. We recognise our duty of care to safeguard information which could jeopardise the security and safety of adults, children or young people accessing DVAC services.

Personal information is information or an opinion about an individual whose identity is reasonably identifiable. Examples of personal information include a person's name, address, date of birth and details about their health or disabilities.

DVAC is guided by the standards of the Australian Privacy Principles, regarding the collection, storage, disclosure and use of personal information about individuals. The Privacy Act authorises our collection of personal information where this is required to provide services and other legal obligations.

Why do we collect your personal information?

The following points outline how and why your information shared at DVAC. Usually, information is shared due to safety, legal, and/or support planning purposes:

1. The main reason we collect information is to provide our service to you.
 - There may be times we share this information with your consent to other services such as medical/ health providers with your expressed consent either by signing the consent form, or in some cases providing verbal consent.
 - You may ask DVAC to share information on your behalf with another person, stakeholder, organisation, or service.
2. Duty of Care
 - Duty of care simply means that we have an obligation to ensure the safety and wellbeing of you and the community. If there is a situation where it is assessed that you or another individual is at imminent risk of harm, we have a duty of care to speak to any relevant person and/or service provider to ensure your safety and wellbeing. DVAC may be legally required to provide relevant information under Child Protection Legislation, if requested.
 - If you are a complainant, we will need to collect some personal information to respond to your complaint.
3. Information requests from another agency or legal subpoenas, such as:
 - DVAC may be given a legal subpoena and is required to provide any information we have recorded. There are times when DVAC may be able to challenge subpoenas and provide a summary letter or report instead. However, if we are not successful then legally, we are required to provide this information.
 - Under the DFV protection Act 2016, DVAC staff are required to provide relevant information from case files in relation to high risk.
4. Reporting requirements
 - DVAC may provide deidentified data to the funding body as a requirement of our service contract to meet our funding, professional or other legal obligations in providing you with our services.

Every effort will be made to preserve the confidentiality of the client, especially where known safety concerns exist. Information you choose to share with our service may be sensitive, and therefore we seek to be respectful with this information. We are committed to involve you in all decision making where possible and safe, including when any information is required to be shared.

We will only disclose your personal information as set out in this notice and our privacy policy or to third parties authorised or required by law or court/tribunal order. In all other circumstances, we will disclose your personal information only with your prior consent.

Who do we collect your personal information from?

We generally collect your personal information directly from you. However, in some cases, we may receive your personal information from a third party (for example from your guardian/carer and/or authorised representative, medical and other health providers, government agencies and other non-government service providers). In these cases, we will take reasonable steps to ensure you are aware that we have collected personal information about you and the circumstances of the collection.

Where is your information recorded?

If you would like to work with us, it is important that we record information for your file on our secure Data system (e.g. relevant case notes, documents, support and safety plans). The purpose of collecting this information is to provide services such as through contacting identified support people or services. You have a right to request this information.

Consent for Children and Young People

Young Person (14-17 years old):

It is best if we can get your parent/caregiver to sign a permission form for you to see a DVAC counsellor. However, we know that sometimes it is not possible or you may have valid reasons for not telling your parents/caregivers that you want to see a counsellor. If you are aged 14- 17 years you can request to provide consent without a parent or guardian. Your DVAC counsellor will ask you some questions to make sure that it is appropriate and ensure you are able to make an informed decision to engage in counselling.

Parental Consent for referring a child (0-17 years old) for counselling/or group:

As a Child Safe Organisation we will also seek the consent of all children to participate in an age appropriate manner.

It is also important to have the consent of your parent or legal guardian for a child to engage with counselling. We will first consider if there are safety concerns preventing safe access to counselling at DVAC, or Family Law Court Orders which prevent you from accessing the counselling program or its activities without the informed written consent of both parents.