

Peter Foster
Individual and Relationship Counsellor

Privacy Policy Statement

This Statement is intended for any person who uses my counselling service ('Client') or wishes to know how I manage Clients' personal information in my counselling service.

Governing principles

I follow the Australian Privacy Principles guidelines contained in the *Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012* when collecting, using and holding Clients' personal information that I need in order to provide my service.

Kinds of personal Information

The kinds of personal information I may collect about Clients may include, but not be limited to, residential addresses, contact details, demographic information, information about related individuals, and life histories.

How personal information is collected

This information is normally collected from Clients in the course of counselling. Sometimes, with Clients' consent, personal information will be collected from third parties such as parents, other relatives, carers or other service providers. (See also *Unsolicited personal and sensitive information*)

How personal information is stored

Clients' personal information is stored in both paper and electronic records. All personal information is held under secure conditions with access restricted.

How personal information is used and disclosed

I use personal information solely for the purpose of providing my service. Clients may give consent to the disclosure of their personal information to other persons, such as other service providers.

Confidentiality

All Clients' personal information will remain confidential and secure, except when —

- It is subpoenaed by a court, or
- Failure to disclose the information would place a Client or another person at risk of harm, or
- The prior approval of the Client to disclose the personal information, the purpose for which it is to be disclosed, and manner in which it is to be disclosed, has been obtained, or
- Disclosure of the personal information is otherwise required by law

Quality, access and correction of personal information

I endeavor to ensure that every Client's personal information is accurate, relevant and not misleading. Clients may request access to their personal information and may request its correction. I reserve the right to take reasonable steps to verify the identity of any person who claims the right to request access to a Client's personal information. If I deny access to personal information, I will provide my reasons for doing so.

Jurisdiction

Where a Client gives consent to the disclosure of their personal information to a person in another country, I will make reasonable efforts to ensure that the recipient of that personal information has undertaken to comply with Australian Privacy Principles or similar laws.

Unsolicited personal and sensitive information

I may receive personal or sensitive information about a Client that I have not requested. Such information is handled and stored in the same manner as other personal information. If unsolicited information is not needed to provide my service, I will destroy or de-identify it.

Queries, advice and complaints

I welcome questions, expressions of concerns or complaints about the way I manage any Client's personal information. I will respond to any written complaint within 7 days and will aim to investigate and resolve all complaints within 30 days of receipt. If I am unable to resolve a complaint, I will refer the complainant to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, which is the independent national regulator for privacy and freedom of information (<https://www.oaic.gov.au/>).