



Parkside Counselling & Mediation Centre Pty. Ltd

Confidentiality & Privacy Policy

Overview

The **Parkside Counselling & Mediation Centre (PC&MC)** is committed to complying with the Privacy Act 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles 2014 and the privacy provisions of all applicable legislation.

This confidentiality and privacy policy covers all personal information that PC&MC holds, that is, information, or an opinion about an individual, whose identity is apparent, or can be reasonably ascertained, from that information or opinion. This includes information PC&MC has collected from people through our office, over the phone and over the internet.

For the purposes of this policy, confidentiality is defined as the limitation of the access, communication, movement and storage of private and personal information.

Collecting information

When we collect personal information from an individual, PC&MC will ensure that it is done in a fair manner and that the individual knows where and how to contact the organisation. PC&MC will only collect information that is necessary for the functions or activities that PC&MC has engaged with the individual or organisation for. PC&MC will advise individuals of the purpose for which their personal information is collected.

If PC&MC collects sensitive information (as defined under the Act), it will be treated with the utmost security and confidentiality. PC&MC will ensure that it is not collected for any purposes, other than those for which the individual's consent has been obtained, unless the law requires otherwise, or other exceptional circumstances prevail as described under the Act.

Information must be collected in a manner that is fair, lawful and unobtrusive, takes into consideration cultural differences and is sensitive to the individual's circumstances. Information will be collected directly from the individual where ever possible.

Where an individual chooses not to provide requested information, PC&MC will advise that individual of the consequences this non-disclosure may have. For example, withholding certain information may limit PC&MC's ability to provide relevant offers or services to individuals.

Disclosing information

PC&MC will only disclose personal information in accordance with the Privacy Act.

This means that personal information may be disclosed:

- For the purposes PC&MC has advised that it is being collected for, and the related purposes that the individual would reasonably expect
- Where PC&MC has the explicit consent of the individual to do so
- As required by law
- Under other circumstances where permitted under the Act
- Where PC&MC and its agents are required to under the Child Protection Act SA
- Where there is concern for the safety of the individual or others
- Where there has been disclosure of a crime or commissioning of a crime



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Unauthorised disclosure or access

As PC&MC is committed to protecting the privacy of individuals, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to personal information will be deemed as a serious breach of this policy. Appropriate action will be taken in such cases.

Access to personal information

Individuals will be able to access their personal information upon request. However, the PC&MC may occasionally need to deny access to information in accordance with the exemptions contained in the Act, where privacy of a third party may be compromised.

All requests to access individual records should be made in writing to The Director. All records remain the property of PC&MC.

Individuals will be permitted to view records and to take notes of the content of those records but will not be permitted to remove those records. At the time of accessing records individuals may be accompanied by a person of their choosing.

Security

Our goal is to protect the personal information collected by the **Parkside Counselling and Mediation Centre** and its associations. Personal information will be managed confidentially and securely, and destroyed appropriately when; no longer required; within 6 months of case closure; and in accordance with legislation pertaining to record retention.

PC&MC will monitor and implement appropriate technical advances or management processes, to safeguard personal information.

Data Quality

PC&MC will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the data PC&MC collects, uses or discloses is accurate, complete and up to date, and has been obtained directly from individuals or other reputable sources.

Privacy Inquiries

Privacy related inquiries or concerns can be directed to The Director.

Availability and review of Policy

PC&MC will make its privacy policy available upon request and will provide a link to this policy from its website.

This policy will be reviewed from time to time and any amendments will be incorporated into the updated policy.



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Concerns

If clients have a concern about management of their personal information, they may first inform their practitioner. Clients can view the Australian Privacy Principles, (see fact sheet pcamc.com.au) which describe their rights and how their personal information should be handled. If clients wish to lodge a complaint about use, disclosure, or access to their personal information, they may do so with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner by phone 1300 363 992, online or by post to Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, GPO Box 5218, Sydney, NSW 2001, or through PC&MC Complaints procedure.

Related policies and documents

Complaints Policy and Procedures PC&MC

Director **Parkside Counselling & Mediation Centre**
Date: 11 February 2018

