



Australian Privacy Principles

The Privacy Act 1988

The Privacy Act 1988 protects the personal information of individuals collected by Australian businesses. This includes the collection, use, storage and disclosure of personal information.

The Privacy Act previously included the ten National Privacy Principles, which have been amended and are now known as the Australian Privacy Principles (APP). Under the changes, there are 13 APP, some which have been significantly changed.

What are the Australian Privacy Principles?

The Australian Privacy Principles (APP) are grouped into five chapters and apply equally to paper based and digital environments.

Part 1: Consideration of personal information privacy

1. Open and transparent management of personal information
2. Anonymity and pseudonymity

Part 2: Collection of personal information

3. Collection of solicited personal information
4. Dealing with unsolicited personal information
5. Notification of the collection of personal information

Part 3: Dealing with personal information

6. Use or disclosure of personal information
7. Direct marketing
8. Cross-border disclosure of personal information

9. Adoption, use or disclosure of government related identifiers

Part 4: Integrity of personal information

10. Quality of personal information
11. Security of personal information

Part 5: Access to, and correction of, personal information

12. Access to personal information
13. Correction of personal information

Health service providers

Health service providers have been required to comply with the Privacy Act when collecting personal information since 21 December 2001.

Personal information can include any information collected by a health service provider including a patient's name, address, Medicare number or medical records such as progress notes, pathology or specialist reports and any medical opinions.

Organisations considered to be providing a health service include:

- Traditional health service providers such as private hospitals, day surgeries, general practitioners and medical specialists;
- Pharmacists and other allied health professionals including complementary therapists; and
- In some cases, other services like gyms, fitness services and weight loss clinics, child care and schools (if they provide a health service and hold health information).

Whilst all care has been taken in preparing this document, this information is a guide only and subject to change without notice.

Practice Assist is an initiative of



WA Primary Health Alliance is supported by funding from the Australian Government under the PHN Program.

Rural Health West is funded by the Australian Government and the WA Country Health Service.

State or Northern Territory public hospitals and health services may not be covered by the Privacy Act, but may be covered by relevant state or territory legislation.

References and more information

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

Telephone: 1300 363 992

<https://www.oaic.gov.au/>

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

Standards for General Practice (4th edition)

<http://www.racgp.org.au/your-practice/standards/standards4thedition/>

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

Handbook for the management of health information in general practice.

<http://www.racgp.org.au/publications/ordering/tools/>