Child Protection and your personal information

Information for parents

What laws protect my personal information?

The Children, Youth and Families Act 2005, the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, the Family Violence Protection Act 2008, the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014, and the Health Records Act 2001 govern the sharing of information held by Child Protection and privacy obligations.

What information is collected and how is it used?

Child Protection investigates reports about children who may be in need of protection and helps families to care for their children. While investigating a report about your child and working with your family, we will collect information about you and your child including:

- · names, addresses, dates of birth and contact details
- family circumstances and relationship details
- medical, psychological and psychiatric reports
- · criminal history.

We use this information to assess whether your child is in need of protection, determine their best interests and decide how best to help you and your child.

Who can Child Protection share my personal information with?

We may share information about you and your child to other people and organisations that help children and families. We will usually tell you who your information is given to. Sometimes the law allows us to collect and share your information without your knowledge or consent. This includes carrying out legal responsibilities, to promote the wellbeing and safety of children or when someone's safety or welfare is at risk.

Information about you and your child may be given to:

- Victoria Police, who also have a role in protecting children
- · community service organisations including Child FIRST and The Orange Door
- schools, health services and doctors
- specialist services, such as alcohol and drug services, to help you receive a service
- other people important to helping to keep your child safe and well looked after
- child protection departments in States and Territories of Australia outside of Victoria, to enable them to
 undertake their own child protection activities this is necessary because children, parents and carers may
 live, travel and move outside of Victoria but their information may still be relevant for helping children and
 their families.



Sometimes we are required to share your information under law.

If we make a protection application to the Children's Court, we will write a report. It will explain why we are involved with your child and why we think we need to continue working with you and your child. It will contain a lot of personal information. You (and any other parent) and your lawyer will get a copy.

If you think that information in the report could be harmful to the health or safety of you or your child, you should tell your child protection worker. The court can restrict access to the report, or parts of the report, if necessary.

How can I get access to my personal information?

If you want to see the information we have collected about you, talk to the child protection worker. They may be able to show you or talk to you about it unless this is prevented by the law. You can also apply, under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, to access your information and to have it changed if it is incorrect. You should speak to the child protection worker for assistance on how to apply or ring the department's Freedom of Information unit on (03) 9096 8449.

Further information

If you want more information or have a complaint about the collection and use of your personal information by Child Protection you can talk to the child protection worker or their supervisor. If you still have a complaint you can contact:

Department of Health and Human Services complaints reception phone: 1300 884 706

Victorian Privacy Commissioner
 phone: 8619 8719 or free call: 1300 666 444

Health Services Commissioner phone: 8601 5222 or free call: 1800 136 066

To receive this publication in an accessible format email cpmanual@dhhs.vic.gov.au

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

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Available at www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au

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