

Provision of information to funding bodies

Many Relationships Australia SA services are funded or subsidised by bodies including the Commonwealth Government, the South Australian Government or the Gamblers Rehabilitation Fund. The provision of services funded through these funding bodies is reliant on the reports and analysis of the effectiveness of our services. We therefore regularly provide data in relation to the service we provide to you, to the relevant funding body. Also, funding bodies may sometimes request or even require us to provide information about service use for statistical or research purposes, as a condition of their funding. Relationships Australia SA will provide information in accordance with contracts set out by funding bodies. Your practitioner can advise if information is provided to funding bodies and, if so, what information is provided.

Concerns about privacy

If you have a concern about the management of your personal information, please inform the relevant Director of Service. This person's name can be obtained from reception. Upon request you can obtain a copy of the Australian Privacy Principles, which describe your rights and how your information should be handled.

Ultimately, if you wish to lodge a formal complaint about the use of, or access to your personal information, you may do so with the *Office of the Australian Information Commissioner* by calling 1300 363 992, or send your complaint in writing to GPO Box 5218, Sydney, NSW 2001.

Relationships Australia SA locations

City (Adelaide)

161 Frome Street
Adelaide SA 5000
T: (08) 8223 4566
F: (08) 8232 2898

West (Hindmarsh)

49a Orsmond Street
Hindmarsh SA 5007
T: (08) 8245 8100
F: (08) 8346 7333

Outer West (Port Adelaide)

8 Butler Street
Adelaide SA 5015
T: (08) 8340 2022
F: (08) 8241 5236

South (Marion)

Suite 500a
Westfield Shopping Centre
297 Diagonal Road
Oaklands Park SA 5046
T: (08) 8377 5400
F: (08) 8377 5411

North (Salisbury)

Shop 8a
Salisbury Cinema Complex
Cnr James and Gawler Streets
Salisbury SA 5108
T: (08) 8250 6600
F: (08) 8285 4494

North (Elizabeth)

13 Elizabeth Way
Elizabeth SA 5112
T: 08 8255 3323
F: 08 8255 7753

North East (Ridgehaven)

Unit 2, 1273 North East Road
Ridgehaven SA 5097
T: (08) 8396 4237
F: (08) 8396 4238

Riverland (Berri)

9 Kay Avenue
Berri SA 5343
T: (08) 8582 4122
F: (08) 8582 4152

Some services are also available from outreach locations.

Relationships Australia SA provides a wide range of other services that assist individuals, families and communities.

www.rasa.org.au

Privacy and Confidentiality

Relationships Australia South Australia understands that privacy and confidentiality are of the utmost importance in providing effective and responsible services.

Confidentiality under the Family Law Act (1975)

Many Relationships Australia SA services are protected as confidential under the Family Law Act (1975), and subsequent amendments. This means that within the limits listed in the previous section, evidence of anything said in a session provided under this Act cannot be admitted as evidence in any family court matter.

Practitioners are also obliged to assist any Independent Children's Lawyer (ICL) appointed under S10H to represent children and promote their best interests in family law matters if requested. Your practitioner will advise you when sessions are protected in this way.

Please note: the Children's Contact Service may not be provided as a confidential service.

The safety and wellbeing of children and young people

Relationships Australia SA follows the South Australian Government Information Sharing Guidelines (ISG) to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and their families. This means we work closely with other organisations to provide integrated and coordinated support to you and your family. We may be requested or make a request to share information with another organisation.

We will only share information if doing so would protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. If this occurs, we would seek informed consent, unless it is unsafe to do so. If you do not give consent for information to be shared, the organisation may decide to share the information without your consent if not sharing would mean that a child, young person or a member of your family would be at risk of serious harm, abuse or neglect, or pose a risk to their own or public safety.

South Australian laws also require our staff to notify a prescribed child welfare authority if we have reasonable grounds for suspecting child abuse or neglect.

Collecting information about you

To provide an effective service to you, Relationships Australia SA collects and records personal information from you that is relevant to your current situation. We only collect information that is necessary to provide an effective and responsible service, in relation to the problems you face. We gather this information from you during intake, service delivery, education, counselling, mediation and program evaluation. Sometimes we also collect information or record details because the funding agency requires this information for their records of our service provision.

You do not have to give all of your personal information or you may want to remain anonymous. However, if you do want to withhold information, subsequently:

1. some services cannot be provided to you, or
2. a limited service may be provided (due to the lack of or missing information).

Your practitioner will advise which services cannot proceed without you identifying yourself.

Keeping information about you private

Information is kept on file so we can maintain an accurate record of what services we provide to you. All information we collect from you is stored in physically and/or electronically locked places. Relationships Australia SA takes these responsibilities seriously and adheres to Australian Privacy Principles. More details are available from our staff about the ways we secure your records.

Using personal information

Relationships Australia SA will only use personal information for the purpose for which it is gathered, and other lawful uses including service management, monitoring of service usage and clinical or educational audit. To contribute to the quality of the service, we sometimes use contractors or join in partnerships with universities to independently evaluate our services. We ensure they comply with our confidentiality and privacy policies.

We also participate in service development through analysis of anonymous service data and outcomes, in partnership with universities. In these projects Relationships Australia SA will protect privacy by using

anonymous personal information (identifying details are removed). Where this is not possible we will seek your informed consent before using identifiable information.

Access to information

Information about you can only be viewed by authorised persons and all Relationships Australia SA staff sign an oath of confidentiality. As a client, you may access information about you kept on file, unless it would be inappropriate to do so. Examples of inappropriate access may be where:

- Other parties in the information do not or cannot consent to access
- It would have an unreasonable impact upon the privacy of other individuals
- Access may result in a threat to life or harm to health
- The relevant legislation demands otherwise.

Fees may apply for access. Your practitioner can discuss with you appropriate access and associated fees or procedures.

Confidentiality and limits of confidentiality

Our practitioners are committed to providing you with a confidential service. All personal information gathered during the provision of the service will remain confidential except where there are legal obligations or safety concerns.

Specifically confidentiality is not maintained when:

1. Your service file is subpoenaed by a court, (see 'Confidentiality under the Family Law Act (1975)')
2. Failure to disclose the information would place you or another person at serious and imminent risk

Your prior approval has been obtained to:

- Provide a written report to another professional or agency. For example, a GP or a lawyer
- Discuss the material with another person. For example, a parent or employer
- If disclosure is otherwise required or authorised by law particularly in relation to the safety and wellbeing of children (see *The safety and wellbeing of children and young people*).