

CAPS Privacy Policy and Consent Form



Why we collect your personal information

The University of Melbourne Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) collects and processes your personal and health information to:

- provide individual and group psychological services, either in person or via telehealth (telephone or Zoom video conferencing);
- maintain accurate clinical records and support effective treatment planning;
- support clinical supervision, training, and quality assurance within the service;
- meet our legislative and professional obligations, including those under the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic), Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), and the Psychology Board of Australia's Code of Conduct; and
- contribute de-identified information for research, evaluation, and service improvement activities.

The "processing" of personal information refers to all activities relating to the management of your personal information, from its collection and use, through to its storage and disposal, and everything in between.

How we process your personal information

We will process your personal information as necessary for our legitimate interests, in accordance with applicable privacy laws, and only under the following circumstances:

- for the purpose for which it was collected; or
- a related purpose which you might reasonably expect (such as internal supervision or team-based case review); or
- where you have consented to the processing; or
- if we are otherwise required or permitted to do so by law.

We collect most information directly from you. However, where this is not practicable, we may also collect information from other health professionals involved in your care (e.g., your GP or treating specialist), with your consent.

If you do not provide the information requested, our ability to provide our services to you may be impaired. We reserve the right to withdraw or not provide our services if we believe they may be compromised by a lack of information, or we would be unable to meet our legal obligations.

Disclosure of your personal information

Your information may be shared with:

- CAPS employees and only as necessary to provide psychological services, clinical supervision, and service quality assurance.
- Other treating health professionals or nominated third parties, but only with your additional consent or where disclosure is required or authorised by law.
- Emergency or crisis services, if there is a serious and imminent risk to your safety or that of another person.

Clinical discussions and supervision

To ensure the quality and safety of your care, your case may be discussed in confidence with other qualified professionals for purposes such as supervision, consultation, peer discussion, training, or quality assurance. These discussions may occur within CAPS or, where appropriate, with external supervisors or consultants engaged by

the University. Information shared in these contexts is limited to what is necessary and handled in accordance with professional and legal obligations of confidentiality. Identifiable information is used only where essential and, when external supervisors are involved, your explicit consent will be sought when required.

In some instances, your personal information may be transferred outside of Victoria (for example, where providers or a cloud-based system with servers are located outside of Victoria). We take all reasonable steps to ensure that the interstate transfer of personal information is in accordance with our privacy obligations as outlined in the University's General Privacy Statement.

Confidentiality and limits to confidentiality

All personal information is treated confidentially except where disclosure is required or authorised by law or ethical obligation. These situations include:

- where you would reasonably expect your personal information to be disclosed to another professional or agency (e.g. your GP) and that disclosure is for a purpose directly related to the primary purpose for which your personal information was collected;
- serious and imminent risk to life, health, or safety;
- legal obligations such as a subpoena or court order; or
- situations where you have given informed consent for disclosure, for example:
 - a) providing written documentation to another professional or agency (e.g., a GP or a lawyer);
 - b) discussing the material with another person (e.g. a parent, employer or health provider).

You will be informed at the start of services about these limits to confidentiality and how your information may be used to support your care.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

We may from time to time utilise artificial intelligence (AI) tools to support the delivery of services to you; for example, for the real-time transcribing of a conversation with you. Any AI tool that we use will have been subject to a privacy impact assessment and we will notify you prior to activating the tool, to obtain your consent. We will also answer any questions you may have on how the tool will process and store your personal information.

Record retention and disposal

Your personal information is held securely and retained or destroyed in accordance with the University's [Retention and Disposal Authority](#).

Your clinical records are stored separately to any University academic or employment records.

Telehealth and group services

For telehealth appointments, CAPS asks that you:

- be in a private location;
- not record or share your session; and
- provide your location at the time of the appointment for safety reasons.

While CAPS takes all reasonable precautions to protect your information during telehealth sessions, there are inherent risks such as data or connectivity issues. A telephone backup may be used if required. CAPS may determine that telehealth is not appropriate in some situations and will discuss alternatives with you.

In group counselling, participants are asked not to share personal information about other participants outside the group.

Further privacy information

Refer to the University's [General Privacy Statement](#) for general information about how we process and protect personal information, including:

- our lawful basis for processing personal information;
- collection, use and disclosure of personal information;
- accuracy, security and storage of personal information;
- retention and disposal of personal information;
- your individual rights; and
- applicable privacy laws.

Your rights

You may request access to, or correction of, your personal information, unless doing so would unreasonably impact on another person's privacy or contravene other legislative obligations.

If the lawful collection of your information is based on your consent, you may withdraw that consent at any time. However, withdrawal may affect CAPS' ability to continue providing services.

Contact

For further information, contact: Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at +61 3 8344 6927 or email: caps-reception@unimelb.edu.au

CAPS website: <https://services.unimelb.edu.au/counsel>

For further information about how the University manages personal information, and for details of how to make an enquiry, lodge a complaint, or to contact the University's Privacy and Data Protection Officer, please refer to the [Privacy webpage](#), view the [University's Privacy Policy](#) or contact privacy-officer@unimelb.edu.au.

Consent notice

I have read and understood this privacy and consent notice. I consent to my personal information being collected and used as described. I understand this consent is ongoing and can be withdrawn at any time.

Full name (print)

Signature

Date

Last updated: December 2025