



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY SERVICES



# DPS Privacy Policy

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**Contact:** Director, Legal Services

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## Date of effect

1. This policy was approved by the Secretary on 25 May 2017 and updated on 21 May 2024.
2. This policy replaces all previous DPS policies and any other related strategies, local guidance or directions on this subject, unless otherwise specified in this policy.

## Policy review mechanisms

3. This document will be reviewed every three years or earlier if required.

## Intent of policy

4. This policy is designed to set out DPS' approach to collecting, holding, using and disclosing personal information, which wherever possible aligns with the obligations set out in the [Privacy Act 1988 \(Privacy Act\)](#).
5. DPS may disclose data that contains personal information under the Data Availability and Transparency Act 2022 if the requirements of that Act are met, but will obtain consent from relevant individuals wherever possible. Please refer to [DPS' Data Sharing Policy](#) for further information.

## Application

6. This policy applies to all DPS employees, consultants, contracted service providers and employees of contracted service providers.
7. The arrangements for access to, and correction of, personal information held by DPS also apply to Parliamentarians and their staff, former employees, as well as members of the public who have provided personal information to DPS in connection with activities at Parliament House (for example, interest groups who provide contact details for events, protests, and consultative groups).

## Policy statement

8. Wherever possible, DPS determines how it collects, holds, uses and discloses personal information in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) contained in Schedule 1 of the Privacy Act.

## Types of personal information DPS collects and holds

9. 'Personal information' is defined in subsection 6(1) of the Privacy Act as:  
*Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:*

- (a) whether the information is true or not; and*
- (b) whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.*

10. Personal information DPS collects and holds includes information related to:
- (a) recruitment, employment, and management of DPS employees
  - (b) dependants, next-of-kin, and emergency contacts of DPS employees
  - (c) contractors, consultants, contracted service providers and their employees
  - (d) the provision of security passes for Parliament House, including escorted passes to visitors to the private areas of Parliament House
  - (e) events at Parliament House facilitated by DPS (for example, school tours, private tours, and private functions)
  - (f) the provision of feedback to DPS on its services
  - (g) the information and communications technology (ICT) functions, including website and email access and, in the case of Parliamentarians and their staff, managing ICT entitlements, and
  - (h) work health and safety incidents at Parliament House.

## Sensitive information

11. Personal information collected by DPS may also be sensitive information. Sensitive information is also defined in the Privacy Act and includes information about a person's health, political opinions, and other listed personal circumstances. DPS will only collect sensitive information (for example, medical information) about an individual if:
- (a) the individual has consented, and the information is reasonably necessary for one or more of DPS' functions or activities,
  - (b) the collection is required or authorised by or under law,
  - (c) it is unreasonable or impractical to obtain the consent of the individual about whom the information concerns, and the collection is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat to the life, health, or safety of any individual, or to public health and safety,
  - (d) the collection is reasonably necessary for the establishment, exercise, or defence of a legal or equitable claim, or
  - (e) DPS has reason to suspect that unlawful activity, or misconduct of a serious nature that relates to DPS' functions or activities has been, or is being, or may be engaged in, and DPS reasonably believes that the collection is necessary in order to take appropriate action.
12. DPS collects only personal information that is reasonably necessary for, or directly related to, its functions or activities. The nature and extent of personal information DPS collects and holds will vary depending on a person's particular relationship and interaction with DPS.

## How DPS collects and uses personal information

13. DPS endeavours to collect personal information about a person directly from that person where it is reasonably practicable to do so. DPS collects this information through various

means, including forms, information provided to managers and supervisors, and through DPS' people and organisational data management systems.

14. It is not always possible to collect personal information directly. DPS may collect personal information indirectly from other sources including access to:
  - (a) Parliament House
  - (b) the Parliamentary Computing Network
  - (c) other ICT networks and systems
  - (d) past and present employees and referees
  - (e) health practitioners
  - (f) publicly available sources, and
  - (g) other government agencies and organisations.
15. DPS may also generate personal information in the course of its functions or activities.
16. When collecting personal information, DPS will endeavour to act consistently with the requirements under the APPs to notify the purposes for which the information is being collected, whether the collection is required or authorised by law, and any person or body to whom DPS usually discloses the information. DPS will usually provide this notification by including privacy notices on paper-based forms and the online portal.
17. Some of the primary purposes for which DPS collects and holds personal information are outlined at paragraph 9 above. DPS may also use personal information for secondary purposes where this is consistent with the Privacy Act. This may include where:
  - (a) a person has consented to this use, or where the secondary purpose is related (or directly related if the information is sensitive information) to the primary purpose and it would be reasonable to expect DPS to use or disclose the information for the secondary purpose
  - (b) it is required or authorised by law, or
  - (c) a permitted general situation exists such as to prevent a serious threat to safety.
18. The secondary purposes for which DPS might use or disclose personal information will depend on the circumstances under which the information was collected but might include, but not necessarily limited to, secondary purposes related to quality assurance, auditing, reporting, research, evaluation, and analysis.

## **Use of consultants, contractors and outsourced service providers**

19. DPS uses consultants, contractors, and outsourced service providers (contracted service providers) to undertake certain business functions. Personal information may be collected by or provided to a contracted service provider when necessary. DPS takes contractual measures to ensure that contracted service providers who have access to personal information collected by DPS, or who collect or hold personal information on behalf of DPS, are subject to the same information security policy, training and auditing requirements as DPS personnel and are required to comply with the privacy requirements applicable to DPS employees.

## How DPS holds personal information

20. DPS stores personal information as hardcopy documents and electronic data (which may include secure approved cloud environments).
21. DPS takes all reasonable steps to protect the personal information held by DPS against loss, misuse, and unauthorised access, modification, or disclosure. Personal information is managed in accordance with the [DPS Information and Records Management Framework](#). Under this framework, DPS aims to comply with all relevant Australian Government legislation, security policies and standards and whole-of-Government requirements.
22. Documents containing personal information will be appropriately classified and may be accessed by individuals in accordance with the arrangements described at paragraphs 27 to 29 below.
23. Access to personal information is restricted to DPS employees on a need-to-know basis. Unauthorised access to, and the use or disclosure of, personal information is contrary to the Parliamentary Service Values and Code of Conduct. Access to any record in the DPS records management system can be monitored through audit trails.
24. DPS endeavours to ensure that personal information it collects, holds, uses, and discloses is accurate, up-to-date and complete.
25. When personal information collected by the Department is no longer required it is destroyed, in accordance with the [Archives Act 1983](#), or de-identified.

## Disclosure

26. DPS may disclose personal information to other entities, including:
  - (a) other parliamentary departments, government agencies and organisations that have a function in relation to, or affecting the administration of, DPS employees, such as the Australian Taxation Office, Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation and Comcare.
  - (b) in the case of security clearances, the Australian Government Security Vetting Agency, the Australian Federal Police and state and territory policing agencies.
  - (c) law enforcement agencies such as the Australian Federal Police and state and territory policing agencies,
  - (d) federal, state and territory courts and tribunals.
27. DPS does not disclose personal health information to any other person, including next of kin, unless the individual about whom the information relates has given express consent, or the disclosure is required or authorised by or under Australian Law, or would otherwise be consistent with the APPs.

## Access to and correction of personal information

28. Individuals have a right to request access to, or seek correction of, personal information DPS holds about them. DPS will endeavour to provide access to personal information within 30 days.

29. If a request I made to correct personal information, DPS will take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to correct the personal information, noting that DPS' ability to correct or amend personal information may be limited where the information is contained in a commonwealth record, as defined in the [Archives Act 1983](#).
30. Points of contact:
- (a) Employees – DPS Payroll in the first instance, via email to [DPSPayroll@aph.gov.au](mailto:DPSPayroll@aph.gov.au)
  - (b) Recruitment applicants – DPS Organisational Capability, via email to [DPS.Recruitment@aph.gov.au](mailto:DPS.Recruitment@aph.gov.au), or the contact officer for the recruitment
  - (c) Individuals who are not DPS employees – the DPS Privacy Officer, in the Legal Services team, via email to [DPS.privacy@aph.gov.au](mailto:DPS.privacy@aph.gov.au), who will access and coordinate access to the personal information requested
  - (d) Parliamentarians and their staff – DPS ParLICT, via email to [ParLICT@aph.gov.au](mailto:ParLICT@aph.gov.au)