

# Privacy Policy Guidelines

## POLICY STATEMENT

HBLN is committed to protecting and upholding the right to privacy of members, users, staff, volunteers, Committee members and representatives of agencies we deal with. In particular HBLN is committed to protecting and upholding the rights of our clients to privacy in the way we collect, store and use information about them, their needs and the services we provide to them.

HBLN requires staff, volunteers and Committee members to be consistent and careful in the way they manage what is written and said about individuals and how they decide who can see or hear this information.

The organisation will follow the guidelines of the *National Privacy Principles* in its information management practices.

HBLN will ensure that:

- it meets its legal and ethical obligations as an employer and service provider in relation to protecting the privacy of members, users and organisational personnel.
- Members/users are provided with information about their rights regarding privacy.
- Members/users and organisational personnel are provided with privacy when they are being interviewed or discussing matters of a personal or sensitive nature.
- all staff, Committee members and volunteers understand what is required in meeting these obligations.

This policy conforms to the *Federal Privacy Act (1988)* and *the National Privacy Principles* which govern the collection, use and storage of personal information.

This policy will apply to all records, whether hard copy or electronic, containing personal information about individuals, and to interviews or discussions of a sensitive personal nature.

## PROCEDURES

### Dealing with personal information

In dealing with personal information, HBLN staff, volunteers and Committee members will:

- ensure privacy for members/users, staff, volunteers or Committee members when they are being interviewed or discussing matters of a personal or sensitive nature
- only collect and store personal information that is necessary for the functioning of the organisation and its activities
- use fair and lawful ways to collect personal information
- collect personal information only by consent from an individual
- ensure that people know what sort of personal information is held, what purposes it is held it for and how it is collected, used, disclosed and who will have access to it
- ensure that personal information collected or disclosed is accurate, complete and up-to-date, and provide access to any individual to review information or correct wrong information about themselves
- take reasonable steps to protect all personal information from misuse and loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure

- destroy or permanently de-identify personal information no longer needed and/or after legal requirements for retaining documents have expired.

### **Responsibilities for managing privacy**

- All staff/volunteers/committee members are responsible for the management of personal information to which they have access, and in the conduct of research, consultation or advocacy work.
- The Coordinator is responsible for content in HBLN publications, communications and web site and must ensure the following:
  - appropriate consent is obtained for the inclusion of any personal information about any individual including HBLN personnel
  - information being provided by other agencies or external individuals conforms to privacy principles
  - that the website contains a Privacy statement that makes clear the conditions of any collection of personal information from the public through their visit to the website.
- The Coordinator is responsible for safeguarding personal information relating to HBLN staff, Committee members, volunteers, contractors and HBLN members.
- **The Privacy Contact Officer:** The Privacy Contact Officer will be the Coordinator. The Coordinator will be responsible for:
  - ensuring that all staff are familiar with the Privacy Policy and administrative procedures for handling personal information
  - ensuring that members and other relevant individuals are provided with information about their rights regarding privacy
  - handling any queries or complaint about a privacy issue

### **Privacy information for members/users**

At registration members/users will be told what information is being collected, how their privacy will be protected and their rights in relation to this information.

### **Privacy for interviews and personal discussions**

To ensure privacy for members/users/volunteers or staff when discussing sensitive or personal matters, the organisation will provide:

A private interview space will be arranged. Where the interview takes place over the telephone, the conversation will take place out of hearing of others.

### **Participants in research projects**

People being invited to participate in a research project must be:

- given a choice about participating or not
- given the right to withdraw at any time
- informed about the purpose of the research project, the information to be collected, and how information they provide will be used.
- given copies of any subsequent publications.

The collection of personal information will be limited to that which is required for the conduct of the project. Individual participants will not be identified.

Organisational participants in research projects will generally be identified in HBLN research, unless the nature of a particular project requires anonymity or an organisation specifically requests it.