

Privacy Policy

Purpose of This Policy

This Privacy Policy explains how we collect, use, store, and protect your personal and health information in accordance with:

- The Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- The Australian Privacy Principles (APPs)
- The Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW) (HRIP Act)

We are committed to safeguarding your privacy and ensuring your information is handled with care and confidentiality.

What Information We Collect

We collect information necessary to provide psychological services, including:

Personal information:

- Name, date of birth, address, contact details
- Medicare details
- Emergency contact information

Sensitive and health information:

- Referral letters from your GP or healthcare team
- Clinical notes and assessment results
- Mental health history and relevant medical information
- Session summaries and treatment plans

How We Collect Information

We collect information through:

- Intake forms and consent forms
- Direct communication (in person, phone, email, telehealth)
- Referrals from GPs, psychiatrists, or other health professionals

We will always seek your consent before collecting information from others unless required by law or necessary to prevent serious harm.

Why We Collect Your Information

We collect your information to:

- Provide psychological assessment and treatment
- Communicate with you and coordinate care
- Process payments and Medicare claims
- Maintain accurate clinical records
- Meet legal and regulatory obligations

How We Store and Protect Your Information

Your information is stored securely in electronic and paper form. We use:

- Password-protected practice management systems (Halaxy)
- Encrypted telehealth platforms (Coviu)
- Secure physical storage for paper files

We take reasonable steps to protect your information from loss, misuse, unauthorised access, modification, or disclosure.

When We May Share Your Information

We will not share your information without your consent unless required or permitted by law.

We may share information when:

- You provide written consent
- Co-ordinating care with your GP or other health providers
- Required by Medicare, insurers, or legal bodies
- There is a serious risk of harm to you or others
- Required by a court order or subpoena

We will always aim to discuss this with you when possible.

Access to and Correction of Your Information

You may request access to your personal or health information at any time. We will respond within a reasonable timeframe.

You may also request corrections if you believe your information is inaccurate or incomplete.

Requests can be made to Holly Olive (Practice Manager) via email –

holly@forestpsychology.com.au.

Telehealth / Telephone Appointments

If you use telehealth, we take steps to ensure your privacy, including:

- Using secure, encrypted platforms
- Ensuring sessions are conducted in private settings

You are responsible for ensuring your own environment is private and secure during telehealth and telephone appointments.

Data Retention

Under NSW regulations, health records are retained for:

- At least 7 years from the last date of service, or
- Until a client turns 25, if they were under 18 at the time of treatment

After this period, records are securely destroyed.

Changes to This Policy

We may update this policy from time to time. The latest version will always be available on our website.

Contact Us

If you have questions or concerns about this policy or how we handle your information, please contact Holly Olive (Practice Manager) via email – holly@forestpsychology.com.au.