

**Williamstown Rental Housing Co-operative Ltd
Policy Document**

Policy Number:	006
Policy Name:	Privacy
Version Number:	001
Date Approved by Board:	2nd June, 2008
Date reviewed by Board:	22nd September, 2014
Scheduled Review Date:	September, 2016

1. Introduction

WRHC adheres to the Privacy Act and will act in a professional and ethical way when dealing with personal and sensitive information.

The following ten Information Privacy Principles are the core of the Information Privacy Act and with some exceptions; all Victorian Agencies must comply with them. Whilst several of them have little relevance to WRHC, as they are Legislation they are incorporated into the WRHC privacy policy.

1. Collection of Information
2. Use and Disclosure of Information
3. Information Accuracy
4. Security of Information
5. Openness
6. Consumer Access and Correction
7. Unique Identifiers
8. Anonymity
9. Transfer of Information out of Victoria
10. Sensitive Information

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that WRHC adheres to the Privacy Act.

3. Relevant Co-op Objectives

N/A

4. Policy

Personal information is any information that identifies a particular person or household or retained in accordance with our responsibilities. WRHC will take all necessary precautions to ensure any information collected is protected from misuse or the possibility of access by unauthorized persons. When this information is no longer required WRHC will destroy all data in a manner that cannot identify who or what it relates to. WRHC will only collect information necessary to enable the delivery of quality tenancy services or to meet reporting requirements.

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Under normal circumstances, full access to information will only be given to relevant employees, however the Board of Directors is legally liable and it is recognized that access to information must be available to the Board of Directors when absolutely necessary.

5. Procedures

1. Collection of Information

WRHC collects personal information directly from individuals or households to provide its services. On occasions WRHC may need to source information from a third party such as an employer. If this occurs; consent from the individual involved will be sought prior to WRHC making contact.

2. Uses and Disclosure

WRHC will only use and disclose information for the purpose for which it was collected and intended to be used. We will ensure individuals are aware of why this information is collected and for the uses it is intended. WRHC may disclose information secondary to the purpose for which it was collected i.e. furnish trades people with tenants' telephone numbers so maintenance can be performed.

3. Information Accuracy

WRHC will ensure all information collected and stored is up to date and accurate.

4. Security of Information

Information is held in locked filing cabinets with the office being protected by security alarm system. Full access to information is limited to employees and Board Members as outlined above. Information is not left on whiteboards and information will not be left on computer screens if offices are unattended. Matters considered to be of a personal nature will not be discussed with the individual they pertain to, if there is any chance they will be overheard by a third party. Personal information is not provided to third parties other than those listed in Section 2, unless we obtain written permission from the person for whom the information is requested.

5. Openness

WRHC will provide a copy of its privacy policy to any person requesting to view it.

6. Consumer Access and Correction

Individuals have the right to access and view their personal information and to notify WRHC of any change or update to information. Any request to access information or any complaint should be directed to the Privacy Officer at WRHC. Under normal circumstances the Housing Worker will act as Privacy Officer

7. Unique Identifiers

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Unique identifiers are tax file numbers, Centrelink numbers, driver license numbers, Medicare numbers etc. which may be used to identify a particular person. WRHC will not unduly use these unique identifiers. Unique identifiers that WRHC collects will be treated in a highly confidential manner and stored securely.

8. Anonymity

It is unlawful and unfeasible for WRHC to give members the option of not identifying themselves when entering transactions. Where anonymity is requested every effort will be made to limit the supply of information involved. For example, listing tenants as having silent numbers on mailing lists, excluding tenant names from rent arrears reports etc.

9. Transfer of Information Out of State

Personal Information will only be transferred interstate with written permission of the individual in question.

10. Sensitive Information

WRHC is prohibited by law from collecting sensitive information such as political opinions, religious beliefs, sexual preference, criminal records and personal information regarding a person's race or ethnic origins.

WRHC will only participate in the collection of such information when it is necessary for:

- the compilation or analysis of statistics,
- relevant to government funded targeted services or
- as required by government compliance and relevant government legislation.

If there is a breach of the Privacy Policy, the aggrieved person can use the Disputes Policy.

6. Responsibilities

All Staff, Board and other Members are required to sign a "Code of Conduct" (Policy #002)

Staff to sign on commencement of employment

Board to sign on commencement of term in office

Members to sign on commencement of serving on sub-committees.

7. Related Documents:

Terms of Reference for Committees.

Related Legislation:

Nil

References:

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Nil

Housing Worker/Board.....

Date.....