

Privacy Policy

Psychology services are bound by the legal requirements of the Australian Privacy Principles set out in the *Privacy Act (1988)*, and by the Psychology Board of Australia's *Code of Ethics (2007)*. This page describes Attune Psychology Services privacy policy for the management of clients' personal information in accordance with these requirements*.

CLIENT INFORMATION: Client records are stored in a secure cloud-based practice management system (electronic files) which are accessible only to authorised employees. The type of information we may hold on your file includes your contact details, Medicare number, referral letters, session notes, assessment results, reports, correspondence and other personal information collected as part of providing the psychology service. No credit card information is stored within the practice. Once the information is entered into the secure site initially, the card information will be redacted. Attune Psychology Services does not have access to the full card information to ensure privacy and security. Your psychologist is responsible for maintaining the privacy of their session notes.

HOW PERSONAL INFORMATION IS COLLECTED: Your personal information is collected in a number of ways before, during and after consultations including when you, 1) provide information to book your appointments; 2) complete our secure intake questionnaire; 3) interact with or provide information directly to your psychologist either verbally or in writing, including emails and forms; and, 4) when other professionals or stakeholders (e.g. GP, lawyer, school staff) provide your personal information to Attune Psychology Services via referrals, correspondence, and medical or other reports.

PURPOSE OF COLLECTING AND HOLDING PERSONAL INFORMATION: Your personal information is gathered and used for the purpose of providing and documenting the psychology service you have referred for. Your psychologist will only record personal information that they deem necessary or relevant to provide your psychology service and to inform any opinions they may be requested or obligated to provide about you (e.g. letter to your GP regarding your treatment progress). Attune Psychology Services may also use personal information collected from you to provide you with service information, practice updates and appointment reminders. You may change your contact details and unsubscribe or opt-out of any service at any time by emailing Ellana@attunepsychologyservices.com.au

DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION: Your personal information will not be disclosed except when:

1. It is subpoenaed by a court.
2. There is reason to believe that failure to disclose the information could place you or another person at imminent and serious risk.

3. The clinician becomes aware of child abuse and/or neglect. Mandatory reporting of child abuse is a legal obligation of all health professionals.
4. You have provided permission for the release or exchange of information with a third party such as your family/carer, your doctor or other health professionals.
5. Disclosure is otherwise required by law.

Your personal information will not be used, sold, rented or disclosed for any other purpose.

PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION: From time to time, your psychologist may consult with their professional supervisor or another registered health practitioner about your case for the purpose of supervision and guidance to enhance their service to you. In such instances, your information will be deidentified (i.e. using a pseudonym).

CONSEQUENCES OF NOT PROVIDING PERSONAL INFORMATION: If you do not wish to provide your personal information in a way anticipated by this Privacy Policy, that is okay. However, Attune Psychology Services may then be unable to provide the psychology service to you. You may request to be anonymous or to use a pseudonym, unless it is impracticable for Attune Psychology Services to work with you or if your psychologist is legally required to deal with identified individuals only.

If circumstances permit us to agree to you being anonymous or using a pseudonym, you must pay your service fee in full prior to your service.

REQUESTS FOR CORRECTION OR ACCESS TO CLIENT RECORDS: You may request to see the personal information in your client record by writing directly to your psychologist. Your psychologist will respond to your request in writing in 28 days and may or may not provide you access to this information, subject to the exceptions in the *Privacy Act*. Where access is granted, your psychologist will require you to attend an appointment to view your personal information at Attune Psychology Services. Standard service fees apply to these appointments. You may also request to correct personal information on your client record that is agreed to be inaccurate, out-of-date or incomplete. Requests to correct information should be made to your psychologist. Reasonable steps will be taken to correct your information as soon as practicable or your psychologist will at least respond to your request in writing within 28 days. In some instances, you may be required to attend an appointment for clarification purposes. Standard service rates may apply to these appointments depending on the nature of the requested corrections.

REQUESTS TO RELEASE CLIENT RECORDS: *This section describes our policy on responding to requests from clients, guardians, legal representatives or other relevant authorities, to release all or part of a client's record. This policy does not pertain to subpoenas.* Requests to release your information must be received in writing at least 28 days prior to the information being needed. Your psychologist must have regard for legal and ethical exceptions in considering the request and will

respond to the requesting party within 14 days. If there is no objection to the request, the requesting party will be invoiced for the anticipated cost of properly preparing and releasing your personal information. This process will be completed within 14 days of receiving full payment. In most instances, your psychologist will require you to attend an appointment to review the information due to be released and to obtain your *fully informed* written consent to the release (signing a generic consent form is generally insufficient). Standard service fees apply to these appointments. Alternatively, you may make a written request to your psychologist to provide a summary of your personal information, or a letter or report addressing the purpose that the personal information is being sought for, in accordance with our policy on the *disclosure of client information*. Costs and timeframes for these requests are at the discretion of your psychologist. Please note that we cannot be responsible for preserving the confidentiality of information that has left Attune Psychology Services control.

DISPOSAL OF CLIENT RECORDS: Psychologists are required to hold adult clients' files for 7 years and to hold child clients' files until the child has turned 25 years old. Unless impracticable, we store client records in our secure electronic practice management system. Any information unable to be stored electronically is archived in a secure filing cabinet. Once your record is due to be disposed of, your electronic file will be permanently deleted, and any archived paper file will be shredded onsite.

CONCERNS: We will notify you immediately on becoming aware of any breach to this policy or the security of your personal information. If you have a concern about the management of your personal information, you may inform your psychologist either verbally or in writing. You can access the *Australian Privacy Principles*, which describe your rights and how your personal information should be handled, via www.privacy.gov.au. If you ultimately wish to lodge a formal complaint about the use of, disclosure of, or access to, your personal information, you may do so with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) by phone (1300 363 992), by post (GPO Box 5218, Sydney NSW 2001) or online at <http://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/making-a-privacy-complaint>.

CHANGES TO PRIVACY POLICY: This policy is subject to change from time to time in response to new laws or technologies or changes to our practice operations. We will notify clients of any substantive changes to this policy as they occur.

AGREEMENT: By engaging the services of Attune Psychology Services, you agree to your personal information being managed in accordance with this privacy policy. If you have any questions about this policy, please speak with your psychologist at your first appointment or as soon as possible thereafter. Feedback and suggestions for improving our policies are also welcome anytime.