



Privacy Policy for Inner Wisdom Counselling and Wellbeing

Introduction

Inner Wisdom Counselling and Wellbeing is committed to protecting and safeguarding your privacy. This *Privacy Policy* outlines how we collect, store, use, and disclose your Personal Information in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs).

By accessing our services or website, including booking facilities, you agree to the handling of your Personal Information as described in this policy. If you do not agree, we respectfully ask that you refrain from providing your Personal Information and note that Inner Wisdom Counselling and Wellbeing may not be in a position to provide counselling services to you.

What is Personal Information?

"Personal Information" refers to any information or opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable, regardless of whether the information is true or recorded in material form. Examples include:

- Full name, date of birth, gender
- Contact details (address, phone number, email)
- Medical or psychological history
- Emergency contacts
- Payment or health insurance details
- Session notes and correspondence.

Collection of Personal Information

We collect Personal Information:

- When you book or attend a session
- Through intake forms and correspondence (email, phone, web forms)
- When you visit or interact with our website
- From third parties, with your consent (e.g. GP, allied health professionals).

In some cases, Sensitive Information (such as mental health details) may be collected, stored, and used with your express consent and as necessary for the provision of counselling services.



Purpose of Collecting Personal Information

Your Personal Information is collected to:

- Deliver counselling and wellbeing services
- Communicate with you about appointments or care
- Comply with legal and regulatory requirements
- Provide invoices, receipts, and payment processing
- Monitor, evaluate, and improve our services
- Ensure client safety and quality care.

Use and Disclosure of Personal Information

Your information will only be used for the purposes for which it was collected or as required by law. Disclosure may occur:

- With your written consent
- To other professionals involved in your care (with permission)
- To supervisors (with identifying details removed)
- If there is a serious risk to you or others
- If required under a court subpoena or applicable law
- We do not sell your Personal Information under any circumstances.

Storage and Security of Information

Your Personal Information is stored securely in electronic and/or physical formats, with safeguards in place to prevent unauthorised access, alteration, or loss. Electronic Personal Information is stored in our customer management software, Zanda; for more information on electronic storage and security arrangements please visit Zanda Healthcare Data Security: <https://zandahealth.com/security/>.

As a private practice, we comply with the *Health Records Act 2001* (Cth) and subsequent state and territory Acts, namely the *Public Records Act 2002* (Qld) in retaining client records. Records are retained for a minimum period of 7 years for adults over the age of 18 years and for a young person under the age of 18 years until the client turns 25 years of age. These periods also align with industry guidelines, including ACA and PACFA.

There are exceptions to the minimum retention period, including:

- When a client discloses being a victim of crime, we are required to keep records until the statutory limitation period is reached.
- When a client has a current claim for damages or is under a guardianship or court/tribunal order, the records are to be kept indefinitely.



Access to Client Notes

Clients may request access to their counselling records. These notes are clinical in nature and intended for therapeutic purposes. As such, they may contain emotionally sensitive or confronting content. Clients are encouraged to review their notes in collaboration with their counsellor to ensure appropriate support and context.

Once client notes are released, Inner Wisdom Counselling and Wellbeing is no longer responsible for their storage, interpretation, or disclosure. Clients acknowledge that by requesting and receiving these records, they accept full responsibility for maintaining confidentiality and managing any personal, emotional, or relational impacts associated with their contents.

By signing the *Consent to Disclose and Release Information* form, the client confirms understanding of the risks involved and agrees to treat all information contained in the records as private and confidential.

Disclosure of Client Records to Third Parties

Client records may be disclosed to external professionals, agencies, or support persons only with the client's explicit written consent. This includes, but is not limited to, the release of counselling notes, summaries, treatment plans, or communication with other service providers. A *Consent to Disclose and Release Information* form must be completed and signed before any information is shared.

Clients are advised to carefully consider the potential implications of sharing personal or clinical information with third parties. Once information has been released, Inner Wisdom Counselling and Wellbeing cannot control how it is used, interpreted, or stored by the recipient.

Requests for disclosure will be assessed to ensure they are clinically appropriate, legally compliant, and ethically sound. The counsellor reserves the right to refuse disclosure if it may cause harm or is inconsistent with professional responsibilities under the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and relevant ethical guidelines (ACA/PACFA Codes of Ethics).

Website Use and Cookies

Our website may collect non-identifying information (e.g. browser type, usage patterns) and use cookies to enhance user experience. Cookies do not personally identify users and may be disabled through browser settings.

Third-party links on our website are not governed by this Privacy Policy, and we are not responsible for their practices.



Accessing and Correcting Your Information

You have the right to:

- Access your Personal Information
- Request correction of inaccurate or outdated data

Requests can be made in writing. We may ask for identification before fulfilling your request and may charge a reasonable administration fee.

Overseas Hosting and Data Transfer

If any part of our website or data services is hosted outside Australia, we may transfer Personal Information overseas. By using our services, you consent to this transfer. For details on our website hosting, please visit Go Daddy Privacy Policy: <https://www.godaddy.com/en-au/legal/agreements/privacy-policy>.

Withdrawing Consent

You may withdraw your consent to our use of your Personal Information. However, doing so may affect our ability to provide counselling services.

Complaints

If you believe your privacy rights have been breached, please contact us. We will respond promptly and, if unresolved, you may contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC).

Questions

Our business firmly believes that a good client and business relationship is based upon mutual understanding and respect. If you have any questions, concerns, or requests, in relation to our *Privacy Policy* or your Personal Information, you may contact us on:

- **Phone:** 0481 397 505
- **Email:** melissa@innerwisdomcounsellingandwellbeing.com.au

Agreement

Acknowledgement that you have read, understood, and consent to this *Privacy Policy* is given on signature of your *Client Consent and Confidentiality Agreement*.