

# Privacy statement

Maintaining the privacy of our clients is an important principle of our charter.

Privacy is important because the people we deal with at North Coast Community Housing (NCCH) expect us to handle their personal information properly. We have a legal obligation to protect the privacy of personal information, and we also have funding arrangements which require us to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the information we collect. NCCH recognise that even a simple breach of privacy could potentially have serious consequences.

NCCH must comply with the Federal Privacy Act 1988, as well as NSW privacy laws (the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 and the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002). Both the Federal and NSW Privacy Commissioners may investigate our conduct, even if no privacy complaint has been made.

The following information explains how NCCH protects the privacy of its clients and other stakeholders, in compliance with the Australian Privacy Principles.

<p><b>Collecting information</b></p>	<p>We only collect personal information that is relevant or necessary for NCCH to conduct its business and activities. Our business and activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asset management</li> <li>• Property management</li> <li>• Tenancy management</li> <li>• Allocation of housing</li> <li>• Community development</li> </ul> <p>We collect information in a way that respects your privacy.</p> <p>At the time of collection, we explain specifically why we are collecting your information and how it will be used, and what choices you may have about how we use or disclose it.</p> <p>Sensitive personal information is only collected with your express consent, or where required by law.</p> <p>We may collect information from the Police when preparing a case before the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) for any serious breach of an agreement by our tenant</p>
<p><b>Security of Information</b></p>	<p>Personal information is stored in secure and protected premises.</p> <p>Personal information is not visible in public areas.</p> <p>Information is destroyed securely.</p> <p>All paid and voluntary staff sign a confidentiality agreement at the commencement of their employment</p>

<p><b>Using information</b></p>	<p>We only use the information we collect for its intended purpose or a directly related purpose, unless an exception applies</p> <p>Personal information is only shared within the organisation on a 'need to know' basis</p> <p>If we don't need it, unsolicited information is either destroyed or de-identified</p>
<p><b>Disclosing information to third parties</b></p>	<p>Information about you is not disclosed to family members or others claiming to be your authorised representative without first checking with our Privacy Officer. In most instances, this will require your consent to provide the person with the information.</p> <p>Generally, we will only disclose your information to a third party either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the purpose for which it was collected (for example, to hire a plumber to conduct repairs on a property), or</li> <li>• With your consent, or</li> <li>• Under other legal authority (see some examples below).</li> </ul> <p>Where personal information is being provided to third parties, care is taken to ensure that they treat the information with the same level of protection and security that NCCH is required to provide. Written undertakings from the third party may be necessary.</p> <p>Where practicable, your information is first de-identified (for example, before reporting to a funding body).</p> <p>There are additional restrictions on disclosing health information outside NSW, or any personal information outside Australia.</p>
<p><b>Access to your information</b></p>	<p>You have a general right to see the information about you that we hold and use. However, there are rules and procedures on what you can access, when we can refuse to give you access, and your right to appeal.</p> <p>You have a general right to request that we amend data that is not accurate, up to date, incomplete, or misleading. Where we refuse to comply with your request, you have a number of rights including a right to appeal.</p>
<p><b>Ensuring information quality</b></p>	<p>We must ensure that the personal information we collect, hold and use is relevant, accurate, current, complete, and not misleading.</p>

## Our Privacy Officer

To request access to your information, request correction or your information, make a privacy complaint or make an enquiry about NCCH and your privacy, please contact our Privacy Officer:

Quality and Compliance Manager

North Coast Community Housing Company Ltd

PO Box 145 LISMORE NSW 2480

Telephone: (02) 6627 5313

## More information about our use and disclosure of your personal information

Relevant information collected about you or your household when you apply for social housing may be used or disclosed if necessary to improve our tenancy services. For example, if you have disclosed a mental health condition, we may seek to assist you by referring you to relevant local services.

If you have a history of behaviour that is intimidating or aggressive, or any other behaviour that is a potential safety concern, we may take additional measures and disclose certain information to protect the safety of our employees and contractors when managing your tenancy.

If your tenancy with NCCH is terminated due to an unsatisfactory tenancy, information about your tenancy history may be accessible to other social housing providers in NSW. This could affect your ability to be offered social housing in NSW in the future.

We may disclose information to **Police** where:

- it is reasonably believed there is a serious and imminent threat to the life, health or safety of an individual; or
- the information is reasonably necessary for law enforcement purposes, or
- so as not to hinder a police investigation into a serious indictable offence.
- We may also contact the Mental Health Line about concerns we may hold about client, but will only ever do so in an emergency, where we have a belief that our client is in danger or may pose an immediate risk to others. Wherever possible in these situations, we will always advise clients of our intention to make such a report.

We may disclose information to **Centrelink** when required from NCCH in relation to certain matters, including social security payments and the issue of concession cards.

We may be required by law to disclose information to other Commonwealth or State/Territory agencies, courts, tribunals or statutory authorities. Where a law is specified in a formal, written notice, NCCH needs to provide the information requested.

## Child protection

NCCH is a "mandatory reporter" and a "prescribed body" in relation to the NSW State Government's Keep Them Safe plan and under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act (1998).

Where we observe that children are at risk or are being abused, our staff are required by law to report the matter to the NSW State Government. We can also be required to provide any relevant information about a NCCH tenant or social housing applicant to other prescribed bodies who are working toward protecting children at risk.

## Domestic violence

Part 13A of the Crimes (Family and Domestic Violence) Act 2007 provides an exemption for NCCH to provide information about its clients to other agencies if:

- the client is assessed as being at a serious threat.
- the particular dealing is necessary to prevent or lessen a domestic violence threat to the person or any other person, and
- the person has refused to give consent or it is unreasonable or impractical to obtain the person's consent.

Document information	
Title	Privacy Statement
Section	Operations
National Regulatory Code Evidence Guideline	Performance Outcome 1: Tenant and Housing Services
National Community Housing Standard	Standard 3.5 Privacy and Confidentiality
Last review	08/08/2017
Next review	08/08/2019
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