



Privacy Guidelines

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Privacy Guideline is to clearly outline how our department collects, uses, store and discloses personal information in accordance with our privacy policy.

Introduction

We are committed to protecting the privacy of individuals and ensuring that all personal information is handled responsibly, securely, and transparently. In carrying out our functions and activities.

2. Scope

This guideline applies to all employees of the department, including contractors, volunteers, and third-party service providers.

3. Context

This document provides additional guidance to support our overarching Privacy Policy, offering practical direction on how personal information is managed to maintain and strengthen public confidence.

4. legislation

This guidance aligns with the following legislative and policy frameworks:

1. [Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024 \(WA\)](#),
2. [WA.gov.au Website Privacy Statement](#)
3. [DWER Privacy Policy](#)
4. [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#)

5. Outcome

Publishing this document alongside the DWER Privacy Policy on the department's website demonstrates our commitment to complying with the Information Privacy Principles. This work strengthens privacy protections and supports responsible information sharing in how our department manages personal information.

6. Guidance

6.1 Definition

6.1.1 Personal Information

Personal information means information or an opinion, whether true or not, and whether recorded in a material form or not, that relates to an individual, whether living or dead, whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion.

For example, personal information may include:

- an individual's name, signature, address, phone number or date of birth
- sensitive information
- credit information, financial information (bank details, credit or debit card number)
- employee record information
- a unique identifier, online identifier or pseudonym ((Medicare number, passport number, driver's licence)
- internet protocol (IP) addresses
- photographs, voice print and facial recognition biometrics (because it collect characteristics that make an individual's voice or face unique)
- location information from a mobile device (because it can reveal user activity patterns and habits).

6.1.2 Sensitive information

Sensitive information is personal information that includes information or an opinion about an individual's:

- racial or ethnic origin
- political opinions or associations
- religious or philosophical beliefs
- trade union membership or associations
- sexual orientation or practices
- criminal record
- health or genetic information
- some aspects of biometric information.

Generally, sensitive information has a higher level of privacy protection than other personal information.

6.2 Information privacy guidance

6.2.1. Collection of personal information

Openness and transparency: We promote open and transparent privacy practices to build trust by informing individuals how we collect, use, and disclose their personal information.

Collection:

We collect personal information when necessary to support our functions in managing and regulating Western Australia's environment and water resources. We may collect personal information only when it is reasonably necessary to carry out our work and must do so in a lawful and fair manner.

We play a key role in managing Western Australia's natural resources and environment. To deliver services such as water management, environmental protection, development approvals, and public engagement, we may collect personal information. This helps ensure effective service delivery, regulatory compliance, and meaningful community participation.

This may occur via forms, phone, email, face-to-face, online services, cookies, media, and publications. Collection notices will explain what personal information is collected from you and why we collect it.

Indirect collection and third parties: While we aim to collect personal information directly from you where fair and reasonable, we may also collect it indirectly from our website, publicly available sources or from third parties such as authorised representatives, medical professionals, employers, referees, or government agencies.

Anonymity: Where lawful and practicable, you may interact with us anonymously.

6.2.2 Use and Disclosure (sharing) of personal information

Use and disclosure: We use or disclose personal information only for the primary purpose it was collected (e.g., providing services, responding to enquiries, or managing employment).

Secondary use: We do not use personal information for other purposes unless permitted by law, with your consent, or where reasonably expected.

We may share your personal information with the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage; the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA); the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration; other WA public entities; Commonwealth and State agencies; health-related research bodies; contracted service providers; and other authorised bodies where required by law or for the performance of our functions.

Disclosure outside Australia: We do not disclose personal information outside Australia unless legally permitted or with your consent.

Automated decision-making: When we use automated systems to make significant decisions involving personal information, we inform individuals of the use of automation, we assess potential impacts, offer options for human review, and comply with all legal requirements.

We ensure Artificial intelligence systems in the department follow privacy-by-design principles and have strong security measures to protect personal data throughout the system's lifecycle.

6.2.3 Storage and security of personal information

Information security: We take reasonable steps to protect the personal information we hold from misuse, loss, and unauthorised access, modification, or disclosure.

Information quality: We ensure personal information is accurate, complete, and up to date.

Access and correction rights: Individuals may request access to or correction of their personal information, unless restricted by law.

Unique identifiers: We do not assign unique identifiers to individuals unless it is necessary to efficiently perform its functions or activities and do not use or share those issued by other agencies.

De-identified information: We take steps to protect de-identified information from misuse, re-identification, or unauthorised access.

Contact Us

If you have questions about our privacy policy, information handling practices, or wish to make a complaint, we welcome your enquiries, concerns, or feedback.

You can contact us via:

Email: pris@dwer.wa.gov.au

Privacy guideline updates

This guideline is effective as of 01.07.2026. Any updates will be published on this page.

Deputy Director General – Strategy and Performance