



Collection Notice: Emergency Relief and Support Services

What do we do?

The Department of Communities (Communities) is the support organisation responsible for providing and coordinating emergency relief and support services, under the Emergency Management Act 2005 and the Emergency Management Regulations 2006 (WA).

Emergency relief and support may be provided with respect to an emergency arising from any of the 29 hazards prescribed the legislation.

Support may include emergency accommodation, food, clothing and personal requisites, support services, registration and reunification, and financial assistance.

This Collection Notice covers the personal information collected in connection with emergency relief and support services, how this information is used, and who we may share it with.

What personal information do we collect and hold?

The personal information we may collect when you are **evacuated or displaced by a hazard/emergency**, including having suffered loss or damage to a primary residence as a result of an emergency, may include:

- name, date of birth, and contact details (for example, phone number, email address, and residential and temporary address)
- gender
- nationality and language spoken.

Personal information is further collected from individuals registering all members of a household, either directly by the Communities, or in partnership with the Australian Red Cross or other government agency or service provider supporting the hazard/emergency response.

For **financial assistance applications** we may collect:

- name, date of birth, language spoken, and contact details (for example, phone number, email address, and residential and temporary address) of applicant
- proof of identity documentation (for example, driver's licence, passport, birth certificate, Medicare card, bank/credit card, etc)
- proof of occupancy (for example, utility bill) and/or proof of ownership (for example, title, rates)

- details of occupants of the impacted home (name, date of birth, dependency, and relationship to applicant)
- financial details, including income, bank balance, and value of other liquid assets of each household member, complete with evidence of these details (for example, bank statements, payslips, etc)
- insurance details such as policy number, insurer, and claim evidence.

We collect personal information from applicants through an application form with subsequent information requested by phone, email, or in person.

We may collect tenant details from the property owner where you are the occupier of a property impacted by a hazard/emergency.

In certain circumstances, personal information may also be collected from third parties including other government agencies, service providers, or individuals involved in regulatory matters where authorised or required by law.

When can you remain anonymous?

Communities does not require individuals to identify themselves at evacuation centres or support hubs, however, this information will assist us in supporting the lead agency (such as Department of Fire and Emergency Services), who may require this information, to account for evacuated persons and register affected persons.

Individuals may choose to remain anonymous when making a general enquiry. However, if all requested information is not received it may limit our ability to provide services, assess support needs, or respond to requests.

All applications for financial assistance require applicants to provide complete and verified personal information to enable us to assess eligibility and administer financial support services. Due to the nature of these processes, you cannot remain anonymous or use a false name (pseudonym). If you do not provide this information, we will be unable to process your application.

How do we use your personal information?

Personal information may be used to:

- register you as a person affected and/or displaced by a hazard/emergency
- account for evacuated people
- reunite you with family and friends (with your consent)
- provide immediate emergency financial assistance
- assess your eligibility and application for financial assistance
- provide temporary accommodation

- refer you to relevant personal support services (including psychosocial support)
- recover costs from the Commonwealth under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

We may also use this information to:

- conduct analyses to monitor and improve service delivery
- prepare ministerial reports, briefings, or advice provided to Ministers for relevant portfolios as per our statutory functions and ministerial accountability obligations of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* (WA) and the *Financial Management Act 2006* (WA)
- support internal audit activities and external audit functions under the *Auditor General Act 2006* (WA)
- notify Ombudsman WA of investigations, complaints, or reviews of administrative action under the *Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971* (WA).

Who do we share information with?

We may share personal information with:

- Australian Red Cross for registration purposes and to let people know you are safe
- accommodation providers (when arranging temporary accommodation)
- various organisations to verify your eligibility for financial assistance, including:
 - employer (to verify income)
 - Centrelink, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and any superannuation fund of which you are a member (regarding pension and/or any benefits received)
 - local government authorities (for information concerning the property)
 - insurance companies and/or the Insurance Council of Australia
 - banks or other financial institutions (with which you have an account).
- Other Australian, State, and local government agencies as well as overseas governments, dependent on the nature of the hazard.

We may also share information:

- within the Department of Communities for the provision of related services
- to other Western Australian Government agencies, and oversight bodies or regulators where authorised or required by law
- with organisations engaged to deliver programs or services on our behalf
- to other organisations, where authorised by law, or where you have given us your consent.

How do you access or correct your information?

Under the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*, you have the right to access personal information held by government agencies. Sometimes we might have to keep certain things private if showing them to you could hurt someone else. You can also ask us to correct information you believe is inaccurate, incomplete, outdated, or misleading. Details on how to submit a request can be found on our [Freedom of Information](#) page.

Where can you find further information?

For further information about how we manage personal information, please refer to the Communities [Privacy Policy](#) or contact our Privacy Officer at privacy@communities.wa.gov.au.