

Westbourne Park Psychology Privacy Policy

At Westbourne Park Psychology, we acknowledge that privacy and confidentiality is very important and I can give you the following information about how we handle your data and confidential documents. We aim to be transparent about the collection and use of your personal information and the way your medical record and files are stored. Your confidentiality is protected.

Psychologists at Westbourne Park Psychology practice according to the “Code of Ethics” of the Australian Psychological Society. Any digital and/or physical copies of your personal information are protected following the framework outlined in the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) under the Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act). These principles govern the standards required for the collection and use of your personal information, and the transparency surrounding these processes.

Your psychologist collects and records personal information about you that is relevant to your personal and medical situation. The information will be a necessary part of the psychological assessment and intervention that is conducted. Your file is stored in a locked filing cabinet, which is only accessible by the psychologist; or stored as digital notes on our encrypted online system. The physical copies of your file are usually scanned for digital storage and then shredded.

Your contact details are visible to the administration team for purposes of appointment management.

Westbourne Park Psychology retains their files as per the current recommendations from the Australia Psychological Society (APS). An adult’s file is retained by the practice for 7 years following the last client contact, and a child’s file is retained until the child reaches 25 years of age. A record is kept which reflects the current status of your file. You may view the material recorded in your file upon request, subject to the exceptions in National Privacy Principle 6, and Sections A.5. and A.6. of the “Code of Ethics” of the Australian Psychological Society.

Upon request of your client file, you will be required to sign an Authority to Exchange Information form, and the Practice Manager will discuss with your psychologist to arrange the release of your files. To pick up your files, you will be required to bring a form of identification. If another individual will be picking up your file, an authorisation form will need to be signed.

How does a client provide consent?

Upon creation of your client file, you provide consent for your personal information (name, date of birth, phone number) to be accessed by our administrative team for purposes of appointment management and business record keeping. All members of the administration team have signed a confidentiality agreement and your information will only be viewed by staff members who are relevant to your file management. Your receptionist may request a brief referral reason upon creation of your client file in order to match your request with the most appropriate psychologist for your needs. All other session information will go directly to

your treating psychologist and no other staff member will have access to these notes. Your agreement to company policies and procedures is obtained at your first session.

Modes of data collection

At Westbourne Park Psychology, your data is collected and regularly updated. Your contact details, demographic information and a referral reason will be requested upon creation of your client file. At each session, your psychologist will update their notes which are relevant to your psychological treatment and will store them confidentially under encrypted online systems or in a locked cabinet. Data may also be collected from other health care professionals who are involved in the client's psychological treatment (such as a Mental Health Care Plan from your General Practitioner. Please note, we will not disclose any of your personal information with third-party bodies without a signed request and consent from the client. Finally, your data may be collected/shared with your other healthcare providers such as Medicare or your private health fund to facilitate claiming and treatment progression.

Exceptions to confidentiality

Information obtained from you during sessions or from referral documentation remains confidential and cannot be disclosed without your consent. However we do have to give your date and medical notes if:

- Information is subpoenaed by a court; or
- Failure to disclose information would place you or another person at risk; psychologists are mandated to report child abuse.

or

- Your prior, written approval has been obtained to:
 - Provide a written report to another professional or agency (e.g. Medical practitioner, lawyer, WorkCover agent, etc.); or
 - Discuss the material with another person (e.g. a parent, employer, or other third party billing source). Agencies such as WorkCover will automatically know when you have appointments if they are paying your bills.

Your psychologist will consult with you if there is a need to discuss information about you with another person, and a consent form for release of information will be signed.

Client communication outside of sessions

You will receive communication via email, phone call or SMS to confirm your appointments and inform you of invoices and appointment-relevant information. All promotional content is optional, and you will be provided with the opportunity to opt-in to this service upon your first appointment. If you want to sign up for this service, please get in contact with our administration team.

Can I discuss privacy?

Yes, contact our receptionist who will ask the practice manager to contact you.

Policy review statement

Westbourne Park Psychology reviews their privacy policy annually to ensure client data is protected in accordance with legislative changes or changes in practice policy and procedure.