

# Privacy Statement



## Public interest disclosures and the Commonwealth Ombudsman

The Ombudsman collects, stores, uses and discloses personal information in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles (the APPs).

The *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013* (the PID Act) allows us to collect your personal information from you when performing our functions under the PID Act, such as receiving, allocating and investigating a public interest disclosure (PID), or providing advice and assistance regarding the operation of the PID scheme. We may also collect your personal information when performing PID functions under the *Ombudsman Act 1976*, namely investigating a PID that has been allocated to the Ombudsman, or investigating your complaint about another agency's handling of a PID.

When deciding whether a disclosure is a PID, and how to allocate or investigate a PID, we may collect your personal information from other government agencies, private bodies or individuals. The purposes for which we may collect personal information and the various functions of the Ombudsman are described in more detail in our [Privacy Policy](#).

You may make a PID, or PID inquiry, to the Ombudsman anonymously, or by using a pseudonym. However, depending on the nature of the information you wish to disclose, this may mean that we will be limited in the amount of assistance we can give you, particularly if you have chosen not to provide a contact address. To allocate or investigate your PID we may also need you to supply other personal information e.g. information that shows that you are a public official. The personal information that we will need to collect in order to assist you, depends on the nature of your PID. The kinds of personal information that we collect are described in more detail in our [Privacy Policy](#).

To perform our functions under the PID Act we may need to provide your personal information to another agency, including the agency about which the PID has been made. However, if you have made a PID, disclosure of your personal information is subject to the confidentiality and secrecy provisions contained in the PID Act. This means that disclosure of personal information that identifies you to another agency or body, will only be made with your consent, or otherwise in accordance with the PID Act for the purposes of allocating or investigating the PID. It may also be disclosed for the purposes of another Commonwealth law, or certain other State or Territory laws.

We may use or disclose your personal information for purposes connected with our PID function under the Ombudsman Act, and to investigate complaints about another agency's handling of a PID under the Ombudsman Act. If we allocate a PID to the Ombudsman, the Ombudsman Act enables us to treat this as a complaint under that Act. In this case there may be some circumstances where we decide that there is a more appropriate body which can investigate the matter, and we may transfer your personal information relating to your PID to that body in accordance with the Ombudsman Act. For more information regarding Ombudsman complaint investigations and privacy see <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/pages/making-a-complaint/>

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If you have any concerns about the disclosure of your personal information, then you should speak to an authorised officer in our PID team.

Our [Privacy Policy](#) contains information about how you can seek access to, and correction of, your personal information that we have collected. The policy also explains how you may complain if you believe we have breached your privacy and how this complaint will be handled by us.

When you make a PID it is unlikely that the Ombudsman will disclose your personal information to any overseas recipients, however this depends on the nature of the information disclosed, and the agency about which the disclosure has been made.