

Privacy Policy

The Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner (VLSB+C) respects the privacy of everyone's personal information and data.

We will ensure that:

- the collection and handling of personal information is responsible, transparent, and secure
- individuals are given information about their rights to access and (if necessary) to correct information that we hold about them.

We will keep personal information received or obtained by the VLSB+C confidential, except where it is necessary or appropriate to disclose the information in the performance of our statutory functions, or as otherwise authorised or required by law.

All personal and health information collected by the VLSB+C will be handled in accordance with this policy.

1. Purpose

This policy outlines how we manage personal information. When we refer to 'personal information', we also include in our meaning health information and data.

We are committed to protecting the community's information privacy through compliance with the:

- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (PDP Act)
- *Health Records Act 2001* (Health Records Act)
- *Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014* (Application Act), and the *Legal Profession Uniform Law* (Uniform Law).

2. Scope

The VLSB+C collects personal information on behalf of the Victorian Legal Services Board (Board) and the Victorian Legal Services Commissioner (Commissioner) for the purpose of carrying out their statutory functions and associated activities, including research and educational activities. This policy applies to all users of our services.

The handling of personal information relating to internal personnel (e.g., staff, contractors, Board members) is outside the scope of this policy. The VLSB+C maintains a separate privacy policy for our internal personnel.

3. Description

The VLSB+C regulates the legal profession in Victoria. While separate entities, the Board and the Commissioner function together as regulators.

We are allowed to share information to perform our functions. The Board and Commissioner are referred to together as "we" or "us" or "VLSB+C", even though certain functions discussed in this Policy may be specific functions of the Board or Commissioner only.

This policy has been written in accordance with Information Privacy Principle 6 (Openness) and sets out how we manage personal information in accordance with the privacy principles in the PDP Act, your rights in relation to your personal information, and how you can make a privacy enquiry or complaint.

You can find the definition of personal, health and sensitive information in Section 6 below.

4. Policy

4.1 Collection of personal information

We only collect personal information that is necessary:

- to fulfil our statutory responsibilities under the Application Act and the Uniform Law
- to undertake day-to-day functions and activities as an organisation, or
- as directed by other agencies (such as the Victorian Ombudsman).

4.1.1 How we collect

We collect personal information directly from you when you interact with us as a lawyer, consumer, member of the public, agency representative, supplier, prospective staff member, or any other role.

We may also collect information about you indirectly from other sources, for example from:

- police or regulators when assessing a lawyer's suitability to practice
- a client when they lodge a complaint about a lawyer
- referees when conducting a reference check for your job application
- a lawyer's colleagues or clients when conducting an investigation, and
- publicly available sources such as media reports, court filings, or social media.

Please refer to our Privacy Collection Notices webpage for more details about specific collection points.

4.1.2 What we collect

The kind of information collected depends on the function being fulfilled.

Generally, we collect the following kinds of personal information:

- name, address, contact information, date of birth
- bank account details
- personal bank records and information about dealings with lawyers for individuals making a claim on the Fidelity Fund or as required to resolve a complaint
- information relevant to a lawyer's fitness to hold a local practising certificate
- information about your qualifications and experience, as a prospective staff member
- information required to conduct enquiries or handle or investigate complaints about lawyers, including personal information relating to complainants, and
- any other information required to regulate the legal profession.

4.1.3 Collection of sensitive and health information

We only collect sensitive or health information about you when you have consented, the collection is authorised or required by law, or when it is necessary for us to undertake our functions and it is impracticable to obtain consent.

We collect sensitive and health information about you when:

- you provide it to us through making a complaint or enquiry
- this information is required for an investigation we conduct, or
- necessary to assess a lawyer's fitness to hold a practicing certificate

This information includes:

- reasonable adjustments information – which could include details of disability, a health issue, medications and treatments, etc
- physical, mental or psychological health status
- medical reports
- allegations made against a law practice employee which can include sensitive information such as criminal allegations, and
- an individual's membership of a professional or trade association (for example their professional accreditation).

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This information includes:

- reasonable adjustments information – which could include details of disability, a health issue, medications and treatments, etc
- physical, mental or psychological health status
- medical reports
- allegations made against a law practice employee which can include sensitive information such as criminal allegations, and
- an individual's membership of a professional or trade association (for example their professional accreditation).

We also collect information that is not defined as 'sensitive information' under the PDP Act but that would be considered delicate or highly sensitive for the individual concerned, for example information about a court case or a person's financial situation.

4.2 Use and disclosure

The Application Act and Uniform Law guide how we collect, use, and disclose information. Section 462(1) of the Uniform Law prohibits disclosure to any person, directly or indirectly, of information obtained in the implementation or administration of the Uniform Law or Legal Profession Uniform General Rules 2015 (Uniform Rules) – unless permitted to do so under section 462(2).

Where the Application Act and Uniform Law are silent about the collection, use, or disclosure of information, we collect, use, and disclose information in accordance with the PDP Act and its Information Privacy Principles (Schedule 1 of the PDP Act) (IPPs).

We may use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to assist us in our work. Where we do so we are guided by our AI Policy and [AI Transparency Statement](#). We do not enter personal information into publicly available Generative IA tools, but may use enterprise AI tools, operating within our own securely managed environment. Our AI Transparency Statement provides further information and is available on our website.

We use and disclose personal information only for the primary purposes for which it was collected, as described above. Our functions and activities under the Application Act and Uniform Law include:

- register new lawyers and manage practicing certificates
- provide assistance to law firms
- receive and manage complaints with lawyers registered to practice in Victoria; activities include:
 - liaising between the complainant and the lawyer to find a solution to their complaint
 - opening and managing a complaint, where applicable
 - resolving and closing the complaint
- oversee and audit trust accounts
- manage our grants and fundings programs, and
- manage and respond to complaints about our service or internal reviews.

If you make a complaint to us as a consumer, we will reach out to the lawyer you are complaining against to inform them of your complaint.

Personal information may be disclosed to various organisations, including Victorian courts and tribunals, the Law Institute of Victoria Ltd, Victorian Bar Inc., Victoria Police and corresponding interstate authorities in order to carry out our duties under the Application Act.

Depending on the specific collection context, we may disclose your personal information with other third parties. Please refer to our Privacy Collection Notices webpage for more details.

4.3 Data quality

We take reasonable steps to ensure the personal information we collect and use is accurate, complete, and up-to-date. Where possible, we check the accuracy of personal information before we use it.

We encourage Victorian lawyers to keep their details up-to-date via LSB Online.

4.4 Storage and information security

We take reasonable steps to protect all information we hold against misuse, loss, unauthorised access, modification, or disclosure.

The VLSB+C implements security controls and practices aligned with the Whole of Victorian Government (WoVG) Cyber Strategy, the NIST Cybersecurity Framework, the Australian Signals Directorate's Information Security Manual (ISM), and the Victorian Protective Data Security Framework (VPDSF) and its associated standards.

Our security approach is guided by these recognised standards and frameworks. It includes the use of role-based access controls and the principle of least privilege, strong authentication mechanisms such as multi-factor authentication, and regular risk assessments and vulnerability management.

Data is encrypted at rest and in transit where appropriate. We maintain secure physical and digital storage environments and apply continuous logging, monitoring, and alerting across systems that handle personal information. Our security controls are subject to regular review to ensure they remain effective and are updated in line with best practices and emerging threats.

We are bound by the *Public Records Act 1973* and standards established under this Act, which set out the minimum period records should be retained and how they may be destroyed. Subject to internal requirements, we take reasonable steps to destroy or deidentify personal information when no longer needed.

4.5 Access and correction

We rely on you to ensure that personal information you provide to us is accurate, current, complete, and relevant. We also rely on you to advise us of any changes to such personal information.

You can at any time request access to personal information held about you or corrections to such information. Requests should be addressed to:

✉ privacy@lsbc.vic.gov.au
or
✉ Privacy Officer
Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner
GPO Box 492
Melbourne VIC 3001

We may refuse to provide access to case-related personal information in certain circumstances, in accordance with the Application Act and Uniform Law and/or the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. If access is refused, reasons will be provided. One example where refusal may occur is where a third party's privacy is involved.

4.6 Unique identifiers

We adopt unique identifiers for law practices, lawyers and external examiners. It is necessary to assign unique identifiers for us to complete our legislative functions efficiently, such as issuing practising certificates.

We also use case numbers which are allocated to manage and respond to enquiries, complaints and other regulatory activities.

4.7 Anonymity

You can remain anonymous or use a pseudonym if you contact us for an enquiry without lodging a formal complaint, or if you report a specific lawyer is working without a practising certificate.

For all other matters, VLSB+C is required to know who you are to interact with you and to conduct our statutory functions.

4.8 Trans-border data flows

We may transfer information about an individual to a third party outside of Victoria if the person consents to that transfer or where we reasonably believe that the third party is bound by laws or a scheme similar to the PDP Act. We may transfer details of a complaint we receive about a legal practitioner whose home jurisdiction is outside of Victoria to a corresponding regulator in that jurisdiction.

The Application Act and Uniform Law also specify circumstances where we may provide information to corresponding authorities in relation to the regulation of the legal profession.

4.9 Our public register of legal practitioners

We must keep a register of Australian legal practitioners whose home jurisdiction is Victoria (Victorian Register) and make it available to the public. We are also required to provide the Legal Services Council with information for inclusion in the Australian Legal Profession Register (Australian Register).

Both the Victorian Register and the Australian Register must:

- include the information required under the Uniform Law
- specify whether each practitioner is or is not a barrister, and
- include any other information required by the Application Act.

Collection, use, and disclosure of information for these public registers is to:

- enable the effective regulation of the legal profession by maintaining an up-to-date record of local practitioners
- protect consumers by enabling members of the public to check whether lawyers they are dealing with hold current practising certificates, and
- give members of the public a way to check other helpful information, including who the principals of law practices are, which entity is the employer of an employee legal practitioner, what languages a lawyer speaks, or area of law they specialise in, and whether or not any particular practitioner is a barrister.

4.10 Our public register of disciplinary action

We are required by the Application Act to keep a register of disciplinary action.

This register is available on our [website](#). It may also be provided to the public in any other form approved by us.

5. Privacy enquiries and complaints

If you have a question regarding our privacy practices or would like to make a complaint about our handling of personal information under the PDP Act, please contact us.

Our Privacy Officer can be contacted at:

☎ 03 9679 8152

✉ privacy@lsbc.vic.gov.au

We treat complaints seriously and will try to resolve them fairly and quickly. We will work with you to resolve your complaint and keep you informed of its progress.

If you feel your privacy concerns have not been addressed, you can make a complaint by contacting the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner:

☎ 1300 006 842

✉ enquiries@ovic.vic.gov.au

✉ PO Box 24274 Melbourne VIC 3001

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Personal information	Information or an opinion about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained: • that is recorded in any form • whether or not the information or opinion is true.
Health information	Information or an opinion about an individual that is about: • their physical, mental or psychological health, or disability • a health service that is provided to them or expressed wishes about future provision of health services • information related to organ donation • their genetic information.
Sensitive information	Information or an opinion about an individual relating to their: • racial or ethnic origin • political opinions • membership of a political association • religious beliefs or affiliations • philosophical beliefs • membership of a profession or trade association • membership of a trade union • sexual preferences or practices • criminal record.

7. Approvals

Version 2.0	Effective: 29 April 2026	Renewal due: 28 February 2029
Owner	Executive Director, Shared Services & Digital Transformation	Approved: 29 April 2026
Author	Manager, Corporate Services and Privacy Officer	Approved by: Executive Leadership Team