Information sheet for clients about the Data Exchange

April 2020

This document is for clients. It discusses the Data Exchange and how client’s personal information will be stored and used.

All organisations who intend to store personal information in the Data Exchange must adhere to the notification and consent requirements identified in the [Data Exchange Protocols](https://dex.dss.gov.au/document/81) (see Section 4.2).

This means you must ensure clients are aware of key information about the Data Exchange and its privacy principles.

To do this, you must do one of the following:

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| * Include the DSS standard notification on privacy on your registration/intake forms (see Section 4.2.1 of the [Data Exchange Protocols](https://dex.dss.gov.au/document/81)) |
| OR |
| * Design and use your own notification statement that addresses key information (see Section 4.2.2. of the [Data Exchange Protocols](https://dex.dss.gov.au/document/81)) |
| OR |
| * Attach this information sheet to your registration/intake forms and ensure clients are aware of this information. This document includes all key information as stipulated by the Australian Privacy Principles 5.2. |

We encourage you to obtain consent in a manner that is most appropriate for your clients. Some clients may be overwhelmed by or struggle to understand the information in the DSS standard notification or this form. You should talk through this information with your client to ensure they understand what they are consenting to.

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| **Important note**  This document only outlines the consent and privacy principles relevant to using the Data Exchange.  Service providers must seek consent for their own collection, storage and use of client information. This is separate to the consent sought for using the Data Exchange. Service providers must ensure their practices are compliant with the [Human Services Agreement – Standard Terms](https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/download?file=725014). |

**What is the Data Exchange and how will my information be used?**

We are using an IT system called the ‘Data Exchange’ to store your information. This system is hosted by the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS).

The information stored in the Data Exchange includes:

* demographic information (e.g. your name, date of birth, gender)
* information about the issues you face
* if our service has helped you and if you are satisfied with the service you received

The privacy of this information is protected by law, including the *Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988.*

DSS de-identifies your data. They remove information that identifies you or that could be used to re-identify you (e.g. your name).

**We need your consent to store your personal information in the Data Exchange.** Your personal information is your first and last name, and street-level address (e.g. 1 Main Street).

* Your consent is voluntary. If you do not give consent, your personal information will not be stored in the Data Exchange.
* This will not affect the services you receive or your relationship with us or other services.
* If you do consent, you can change your mind at any time and we will remove your personal information from the Data Exchange.
* If you do not want to use your real name, you can use a false name.
* You can provide an estimated date of birth.

The consent you provide only applies to your personal information (e.g. your name and street-level address). If you do not provide consent, we can still store other information about you (e.g. gender, cultural background) in the Data Exchange. But it will be de-identified. This means we will not store any personally identifiable information, like your name. You will be anonymous. Only our service will know that this information is yours.

**How will this information be used?**

Only we, [insert name of service provider], can access information that identifies who you are (i.e. your name and street-level address). We use this information to manage your case.

**NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)**

DCJ can only access de-identified data in the Data Exchange. They use this data to help improve how NSW government responds to client and community needs. DCJ are interested in trends across the NSW state, not individual people.

**Commonwealth Department of Social Services (DSS)**

DSS combine your data with other clients’ data in the Data Exchange to identify trends at the program level. This information is used to develop policy, administer grants programs, and conduct research and evaluations.

DSS may use this data to produce reports. These reports may be shared with other organisations. The data in these reports is de-identified.

**Further information**

You can find more information in the DSS privacy policy on their website: [dss.gov.au/privacy-policy](https://www.dss.gov.au/privacy-policy). This policy explains:

* how you can access your personal information stored in the Data Exchange.
* how you can ask for this information to be changed.
* the circumstances in which DSS may disclose personal information to overseas recipients.
* how to complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles by DSS, and how DSS will deal with your complaint.