

# **PAIA AND POPIA COMPLIANCE POLICY**

## **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Make Every Child Happy (MECH) Organization complies with the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) and the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA). This policy establishes MECH's approach to managing access to information, as well as the protection, collection, processing, and storage of personal information in accordance with South African law.

MECH is committed to respecting the right of access to information while safeguarding the personal information of its members, volunteers, beneficiaries, donors, and other stakeholders. This policy aims to balance transparency with privacy, supporting MECH's accountability and good governance practices.

The policy also helps align MECH's operations with the best practices prescribed by the Information Regulator and other regulatory frameworks applicable to non-profit organizations.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all personal information processed by MECH, including information about staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, donors, partners, contractors, and any other persons whose personal data MECH may collect or store in the course of its activities. It also applies to information requests made under PAIA.

All employees, volunteers, and contractors of MECH are required to comply with this policy, ensuring that personal information is managed lawfully and responsibly.

### 3. Guiding Principles

MECH will adhere to the following principles in handling personal information:

- ✓ **Accountability** – MECH accepts responsibility for ensuring compliance with POPIA.
- ✓ **Processing Limitation** – personal data will only be collected for a specific lawful purpose, and only the minimum data necessary will be processed.
- ✓ **Purpose Specification** – data will only be used for the purpose for which it was collected.
- ✓ **Further Processing Limitation** – data will not be processed beyond the stated purpose without consent or legal justification.
- ✓ **Information Quality** – MECH will take reasonable steps to ensure personal information is complete, accurate, and up-to-date.
- ✓ **Openness** – MECH will inform data subjects about what data is collected and why.
- ✓ **Security Safeguards** – MECH will protect personal data against loss, damage, or unauthorized access.
- ✓ **Data Subject Participation** – individuals have the right to access and correct their personal data.

### 4. Collection and Processing of Personal Information

MECH collects personal information for purposes including but not limited to:

- Membership and volunteer registration
- Managing donations and sponsorships
- Beneficiary program records
- Communication and reporting to stakeholders
- Legal and regulatory compliance

Personal information will be collected directly from the data subject where practical, and with their informed consent. MECH will keep data secure and ensure it is used only for the purpose it was collected.

### 5. Access to Information (PAIA)

MECH supports the public's right to access certain records under PAIA, provided that such requests do not infringe on the privacy rights protected by POPIA or other laws. Requests for information should be submitted in writing to MECH's Information Officer.

The Information Officer will respond to PAIA requests within the timeframe required by law and will provide assistance in clarifying requests if needed. Where legitimate

grounds to refuse access exist (for example, protection of confidential personal information), MECH will explain the refusal clearly and in writing.

## **6. Security Safeguards**

MECH will implement reasonable and appropriate technical and organizational measures to protect personal information from unauthorized access, alteration, loss, or destruction. This includes secure filing systems, password-protected electronic databases, staff training, and periodic audits.

Third parties who process personal information on MECH's behalf must also demonstrate compliance with these security standards.

## **7. Data Subject Rights**

In terms of POPIA, data subjects have the right to:

- Request access to their personal information
- Request correction, deletion, or update of personal data
- Object to the processing of their personal data
- Withdraw consent where processing is based on consent

MECH will make reasonable efforts to respond to such requests promptly and within legal timeframes.

## **8. Roles and Responsibilities**

The MECH Board shall appoint an **Information Officer** (and, if necessary, Deputy Information Officers) responsible for overseeing compliance with this policy, handling access-to-information requests, managing data subject rights, and liaising with the Information Regulator.

All employees, volunteers, and contractors share responsibility for safeguarding personal data and reporting any data breaches or concerns immediately to the Information Officer.

## **9. Data Breach Management**

Any suspected or confirmed data breach must be reported immediately to the Information Officer. The Information Officer will investigate, notify the Information Regulator if required, and take steps to mitigate any harm to data subjects. Data subjects affected by a breach will also be informed as required by POPIA.

## **10. Review and Updates**

This policy will be reviewed annually or when there are significant legislative or operational changes affecting MECH. Updates will be approved by the Board and communicated to all members and staff.

APPROVED BY:

***BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MAKE EVERY CHILD HAPPY ORG  
REG NO: 2025/464075/08***

***ADOPTED ON: 27 JUNE 2025***