

Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing

Factsheet



The McGowan Government is drafting new Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing (PRIS) legislation to reform personal privacy protections and the accountability of information sharing within government.

The landmark legislation will provide Western Australians with more control over their personal privacy, improve the delivery of government services and create local research and development opportunities.

Legislation to protect the privacy of Western Australians and promote responsible sharing of information will introduce seven areas of reform.

1. The introduction of Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) – rules that guide the collection, use, disclosure and handling of personal information. The IPPs will apply to the WA public sector and, where required, contracted service providers.
2. The appointment of a Privacy Commissioner – an independent statutory officer that reports directly to Parliament and is primarily responsible for privacy matters in WA, that will, amongst other things:
 - » monitor agency compliance with the IPPs; and
 - » receive complaints about alleged breaches of privacy.
3. A mandatory data breach notification scheme requiring agencies to notify the Privacy Commissioner and any affected individuals of serious data breaches involving personal information.
4. A statutory mechanism for WA public sector agencies to share information only when adhering to new stringent standards for risk assessment, decision making, governance and transparency.
5. The introduction of Responsible Sharing Principles (RSPs) to provide a consistent framework for the assessment of risks and benefits associated with a data sharing arrangement.
6. Establishing a Chief Data Officer function in government, to promote and support a culture of responsible information sharing and use in the public.
7. Introducing a mechanism that supports Aboriginal data sovereignty and governance in WA, by requiring that Aboriginal people and communities are involved or consulted when data about them is shared.

The Australian Government's Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) will continue to apply to Australian Government agencies and a wide range of private sector organisations. The introduction of Western Australia's privacy and information sharing legislation will extend Information Privacy Principles to WA public sector entities.

Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing in practice

Individuals

The proposed legislation will require public sector agencies to consider privacy in everything they do when collecting or using personal information.

For the first time in WA, an independent body will be established to which members of the community can bring complaints about potential breaches of privacy and have those complaints resolved.

Information sharing will also support easier, more convenient interactions with government for individuals, communities and businesses. Through ServiceWA you'll be able to securely log in using your trusted digital identity. The app will allow you to access services from agencies in one secure place.

For businesses, this means spending less time transacting with different government agencies and more time with your customers. With your consent, participating WA Government agencies will share information, so that you don't have to tell us the same thing again and again.

Researchers

Many problems facing the community are complex and do not have a simple solution, for example, improving the health and wellbeing of children, or reducing illicit drug use. Under the proposed framework, universities, and health research organisations will be able to enter Sharing Arrangements with public sector agencies for public benefit. By sharing information and integrating data sets, researchers and policy makers can gain new insights and develop solutions that are tailored and forward-looking.

