

# Privacy Policy

The Melbourne Counsellor – Financial Trauma & Monetary Psychotherapy

Last updated: November 2025

## Purpose of this Policy

This policy explains:

- What information we collect and why.
- How we store, use, and protect your personal data.
- How you can access, correct, or request deletion of your information.
- The circumstances under which your information may be disclosed.

By engaging with The Melbourne Counsellor — whether through our website, booking system, or in-session — you consent to the practices described below.

## Information We Collect

We collect personal information necessary to provide effective counselling and psychotherapy services, including:

Personal Identifying Information:

- Name, date of birth, address, contact details (phone, email).
- Emergency contact or next of kin (for safety purposes).

Clinical and Health Information:

- Presenting concerns, mental health history, and relevant background.
- Notes taken during or after sessions.
- Completed intake, consent, or enquiry forms.

Financial and Transaction Information:

- Payment confirmations and billing records (no credit card details are stored by us directly).

Website and Booking System Data:

- Limited data such as cookies, device information, and booking preferences may be collected to enhance your user experience.

## How We Collect Information

Personal information is collected directly from you when you:

- Book or enquire about an appointment.
- Complete intake, consent, or enquiry forms.
- Engage in counselling sessions (in person or online).
- Communicate via email, SMS, or phone.

In some cases, and only with your consent, information may be gathered from third parties such as healthcare providers, support coordinators, or referring professionals.

### **Use of Information**

Your personal information is used solely to:

- Deliver counselling and psychotherapy services.
- Maintain accurate clinical records.
- Manage bookings, payments, and administrative operations.
- Comply with legal and ethical obligations.
- Communicate appointment reminders, updates, or resources relevant to your care.

Information is never sold, shared, or used for marketing purposes without explicit consent.

### **Storage and Security**

We are committed to safeguarding your personal information through secure storage and restricted access.

- Electronic records are stored in encrypted, password-protected systems.
- Paper files (if used) are kept in locked cabinets accessible only to authorised personnel.
- Session notes and client data are retained for 7 years (or until age 25 for minors).
- Files are securely destroyed when no longer required by law.

### **Confidentiality and Disclosure**

Your information will not be disclosed to any third party without your written consent, except in the following circumstances:

1. Risk of harm — where there is reason to believe you may cause serious harm to yourself or others.
2. Legal obligations — when disclosure is required by law, court order, or under child protection legislation.
3. Professional supervision — anonymised information may occasionally be discussed in supervision to ensure quality care.

All disclosures are handled with sensitivity and in accordance with ethical and legal standards.

### **Access and Correction**

You have the right to:

- Request access to your personal information.
- Ask for corrections to any inaccurate, outdated, or incomplete data.

Requests can be made in writing to [dan@themelbournecounsellor.com.au](mailto:dan@themelbournecounsellor.com.au).

For security, you may be asked to verify your identity before information is released.

## Online Privacy and Cookies

Our website may use cookies or similar technologies to enhance usability and track anonymous usage data such as session length and page views.

These tools:

- Do not collect personally identifiable information.
- Can be disabled through your browser settings at any time.

External website links are provided for convenience; The Melbourne Counsellor is not responsible for the privacy practices of external sites.

## Telehealth and Digital Communication

When using telehealth (Zoom) or digital platforms:

- Sessions are conducted through encrypted, secure platforms.
- No sessions are recorded without explicit written consent.
- You are responsible for ensuring privacy on your own device and environment during telehealth sessions.

## Retention and Disposal

All client files are retained for the minimum period required by law:

- 7 years after the last contact for adult clients.
- Until age 25 for clients under 18.

After this period, all data is securely destroyed using approved digital and physical methods.

## Complaints and Concerns

If you believe your privacy has been breached or mishandled:

1. Contact Dan Lobel directly to discuss and resolve the issue.
2. If unresolved, you may lodge a complaint with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC):

- Website: [www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au)
- Phone: 1300 363 992

All concerns will be handled promptly and respectfully.

## Updates to This Policy

This Privacy Policy may be reviewed and updated periodically.

Any changes will be published on The Melbourne Counsellor website.

By continuing to use our services after updates, you acknowledge acceptance of the revised policy.

## Contact Information

The Melbourne Counsellor

📍 Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

📞 0467 477 786

✉️ [dan@themelbournecounsellor.com.au](mailto:dan@themelbournecounsellor.com.au)

The Melbourne Counsellor acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work, and pays respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.