

## **PRIVACY POLICY**

This policy is designed to assure that information gathered by your psychologist over the course of assessment and treatment at Serendipity Psychology is used in an appropriate, secure manner, and to provide guidance for access to, and correction of such information.

### **Information gathered**

Over the course of treatment at Serendipity Psychology, information is gathered that allows the psychologist to make an informed professional decision as to the most appropriate assessment and treatment methods to be used. This information will include basic demographic data (e.g. name, date of birth, address, etc), as well as other information that is deemed relevant. This will usually include the following:

- The nature of the problem(s) for which you are presenting
- Areas of behaviour related to the presenting problem(s)
- A history of the presenting problem
- A family history of relevant information
- Other information deemed necessary to make an informed clinical judgement about the nature of the presenting complaint and other relevant factors
- Session notes detailing relevant information about treatment and treatment progress

### **Confidentiality of information**

Generally, all information gathered over the course of assessment and treatment at Serendipity Psychology remains confidential. There are several notable exceptions, however, to this confidentiality:

- Psychologists at Serendipity Psychology may discuss their case load with an experienced Clinical Psychologist in a supervisory relationship. Information on the nature of the case (de-identified) is shared with the psychologist's supervisor to gain support and feedback around treatment.
- If the psychologist forms the professional opinion that either the client, or another individual is a risk for significant harm, a moral and/or legal obligation may exist to act on this information with the aim of preventing such harm.
- If a client disclosed possession of illegal weapons or intent to commit a crime against another person, the psychologist must inform law enforcement.
- If a file is subpoenaed by a court of law.
- If a written consent is provided by the client.
- If the law outlines the psychologist's need to comply with sharing of information.

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### Use of information

Information gathered by Serendipity Psychology is used exclusively for two purposes:

- For the formation of a professional psychological opinion, which is used to guide assessment and treatment for the presenting complaint.
- For the evaluation of the service provided by Serendipity Psychology, through collation of detailed statistics about referral sources, nature of presenting problems, attendance durations, etc.

### Third-party services used to collect, manage and store information

All third-party service providers are bound by the same privacy laws as Serendipity Psychology.

Zanda is the practice management software used. Their privacy policy is available at <https://zandahealth.com/au/privacy-policy/>

Changes Psychology, trading as Paperless Admin, provide administrative support. Their privacy policy is available at <https://paperlessadmin.com.au/privacypolicy/>

All staff employed directly by Serendipity Psychology are bound by the Privacy Act & this privacy policy.

### Security of information

Information provided to Serendipity Psychology is held in a physical paper file (if you were a client prior to 2023) or digital file (2023 onward). Digital notes are taken on an ipad using an app called Goodnotes. This app is not connected to the cloud, and all files are backed up manually to a local computer. The ipad is stored securely when not in use. All physical files are held in locked filing cabinets in locked rooms. Physical files may also be scanned and uploaded to the local computer system for space-saving purposes. The physical file is then destroyed in accordance with confidential waste management practices. All files are kept for a minimum period of 7 years, or until the age a client reaches 25 years (whichever is longer) from the date of the last appointment, at which point all data is deleted. Computer systems are fitted with appropriate security and back-up measures. If files are physically transported, they are transported in a locked case in accordance with privacy laws. They are then resecured when transportation is complete. Release of information held in files is only done so in accordance with relevant laws.

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### Obtaining information

Requests for information may be made to Serendipity Psychology. Requests should be addressed to Serendipity Psychology and must be specific as to the exact information required. Requests must be accompanied by a Record Release Authority with the client's signature. Generic release forms without Serendipity Psychology named, or specific details of information requested will not be accepted. Once a request for information is received, Serendipity Psychology will respond to the request, and if applicable, collate the information for the requesting person. An administrative fee will be charged for this service.

### Procedure rectifying information

Official requests to change inaccurate or erroneous information should be made to Serendipity Psychology. In such cases Serendipity Psychology will conduct a review of the information held and make every effort to ensure that such information is accurate.

### Access to privacy policy

This document should be freely available, and accessible on request by all staff and clients of Serendipity Psychology. Its availability is outlined on all consent forms and discussed with each client during their first session.