

Waves of Hope Grief Counselling

ABN: 47 099 672 847

Privacy policy

This policy outlines the ways in which **Waves of Hope Grief Counselling** handles the personal information of our clients. We take privacy seriously and are committed to complying with the Australian Privacy Principles in the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

Personal information

Personal information is any information about an individual that can be used to identify them directly or indirectly, such as name, address, phone number, email address, and date of birth.

Sensitive information is a type of personal information which includes details, for example, about a person's racial or ethnic origins, political or religious beliefs, sexual orientation, health or genetic information, family court orders or criminal record. The breach of sensitive information is likely to leave people open to discrimination or embarrassment.

Why we collect personal information

The sharing of personal information by a client to Waves of Hope Grief Counselling assists us to assess and support the client in processing their identified concerns. Personal information is retained to enable us to provide a relevant and informed service. Counsellors are required to make brief 'case notes' about clients after each session. This generally includes reasons the client has requested counselling support, their progress and challenges, and interventions and strategies explored. Due to our duty of care, a client cannot be anonymous when using our service.

How we may collect personal information

We collect personal information through a variety of means, including:

- the information you verbally share with us
- written communication received from you via email, SMS or letter
- our online booking system
- our intake forms and consent forms (hard copy or online)
- social media
- the guardian of those under 18 years of age
- a referral from your GP or another treating practitioner or service
- through our website hosted by Wix

Visitors to our Waves of Hope Grief Counselling website (hosted by WIX), Facebook and Instagram pages, web browsers such as Google, the Psychology Today counselling directory (and other directories) need to be aware that such platforms often track and store browsing information. We will never use this information to spam, sell or rent your contact details.

Our storage of personal information

To protect personal information, we hold from misuse or loss we store it in several ways, all of which are secure and can only be accessed by approved individuals. The method of storage varies between types of information and includes both hard copies and digital versions (either on a secure server or offline). All client information is stored online in the Halaxy platform for health professions. Halaxy's data is backed up daily and protected by bank grade security and encryption. For Australian Users, data is stored on servers located in Australia. For more information visit <https://www.halaxy.com/>. Any information stored in hard copy will be stored in a lockable filing cabinet. MYOB Solo is used to invoice clients and stores information such as your name, address, phone, email and service received in order to invoice our clients and receive payment. For more information visit <https://www.myob.com/au/> Formsite is used for clients to complete intake and client consent forms and collects and stores information entered on the form. For more information <https://www.formsite.com/>

By law, most client information must be stored for 7 years from the final session. For clients under 18 years of age when they commence counselling, information must be stored until they are 25 years of age.

Waves of Hope Grief Counselling does not use AI (Artificial Intelligence) or electronic recording devices to record sessions or create session notes. Clients are also advised that they are not permitted to use these methods also as it would be a breach of the counsellor's privacy. If sessions are conducted by a video platform (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Google Meet), sessions are not to be recorded and screen shots or photographs of the client or counsellor are not permitted.

We do not collect or store credit card details. We also try not to retain unnecessary information, disposing of it securely from time to time depending on the type of information it is and our legal obligations.

If we become aware of a security breach we will promptly investigate and, where appropriate, take remedial action and notify the individual affected in accordance with the Privacy Act.

Disclosure of your personal information

We will not disclose personal information about you to third parties without your consent, except when the disclosure is required by law.

It is unlikely that we will disclose any information to a recipient outside of Australia.

Accessing your personal information

You may request access to personal information we hold about you. We may ask you to specify what information you require, for what purpose and may charge an administrative fee to cover any time to gather the information, printing required or postage.

We deal with all requests for access to personal information as required by the Privacy Act. We may refuse to provide access if the Privacy Act allows us to do so. In this case we may either refuse access entirely or redact some information.

Integrity of your personal information

We try to ensure that the personal information we collect is accurate and up to date. You may request an update or correction to personal information we hold about you and we will deal with all such requests as required by the Privacy Act.

Complaints

If you think your personal information has not been handled in line with the Privacy Act, please contact us in the first instance. We will investigate your complaint and try to promptly resolve your complaint directly with you.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, then you may make a complaint to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC). For information about how to make such a complaint, please refer to the OAIC website <http://www.oaic.gov.au/>

Changes to this privacy policy

Waves of Hope Grief Counselling reserves the right to make changes to this privacy policy from time to time and in such cases. The current Privacy Policy is always available on our website to view.

Location

Waves of Hope Grief Counselling is located Victoria, Australia.

Contact us

If you have any questions relating to privacy matters, please contact us by email at margaret@wavesofhope.com.au

Ph: 0437 333 242

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