

You have the right to.....

- * Live free from fear and violence
- * be heard and acknowledged.
- * be treated with dignity and respect.
- * make your own choices and have them respected.
- * know the name and qualifications of your Counsellor Advocate or any professionals supporting you.
- * confidentiality and privacy.
- * have an interpreter and be given appropriate verbal and written information in the language of your choice, where possible.
- * decline student presence or services, and decline involvement in research or media work.
- * a fair and clear response to complaints about service provision.
- * Professional and experienced counselling, advocacy and support for victims of sexual assault and family violence

Barwon CASA believes that it is the right of victim/survivors to be fully informed of their choices on any issues that affects them.

Contacting us:

**Barwon CASA is open
Monday to Friday
9.00am to 5.00pm**

Business Hours

Barwon: (03) 5222 4318
Wimmera: (03) 5381 1211

Sexual Assault Crisis Line
(24 hour service)
1800 806 292

Email

admin@barwoncasa.org
wimmera@barwoncasa.org

Web

www.casa.org.au

Barwon: Level 1, 59-63 Spring Street
Geelong West VIC 3218

Wimmera: 25 Roberts Avenue
Horsham 3400

Postal Address: PO Box 245
Geelong VIC 3220



Barwon CASA
Counselling Services

The Privacy of Your Personal Information

Barwon CASA provides the following services:

- * Barwon CASA provides information, counselling and advocacy to people who have experienced sexual assault and to their non-offending family or carers.
- * Treatment services for Problematic Sexualised Behaviours
- * Reports written for specific purposes
- * Referral to other agencies as required

What information will Barwon CASA collect about me?

- * Name and contact details
- * Statistics about your age, place of birth, language spoken etc.
- * Type of assault (i.e. childhood or adult)
- * Your Counsellor will take notes describing the contact with you

If you wish to remain anonymous please speak with your Counsellor Advocate.

Who else will have access to my information?

Information from your file may be viewed by Barwon CASA staff members, on a need-to-know basis only. Your file can only be shared with professionals from other organisations if you give your consent. There are three exceptions to this:

- * If a Counsellor Advocate has reason to believe that a person aged 17 years or younger, is at risk of harm.
- * If a Counsellor Advocate has reason to believe that you may seriously hurt yourself or someone else.
- * If there are court proceedings, your file may be requested from us by a legal representative. If this happens we may oppose the request in order to protect the privacy of your file. However, in the event that we are unsuccessful we are legally required to submit your file. We will try to contact you and inform you of this prior to any action being taken.

Will my information be shared with the Police or Child Protection in the MDC?

Barwon CASA complies with the *Information Privacy Act 2000* in relation to your privacy and the *Children, Youth & Families Act 2005 (Vic)* in regard to Mandatory Reporting requirements. All information is securely stored and information can only be shared with other organisations with your knowledge and written consent unless there are serious concerns.

How will Barwon CASA use the information collected?

Name and contact details

We collect this information so we can contact you if you have said this is okay.

Statistics

This information helps us to understand more about the work we do at Barwon CASA and may also be used in non-identifying statistical reports.

Non-identifying statistics are also sent to the Department of Human Services for reporting and funding purposes and to assist them in understanding the needs of the community.

Counsellor Advocate notes

Notes kept by your Counsellor Advocate are a record of contact with you and other relevant people or professionals that you have given us permission to contact. Notes may also be referred to if you require a written report or support letter.

Is the information stored safely?

Hard copy files are kept on the premises in locked storage. If files are required at an outreach location, they are transported in a secure manner. Statistical information and some case notes are stored electronically with dual password access restrictions.

Can I see my file?

You have the right under the *Freedom of Information Act* to access your file.

You can:

- * Speak to your Counsellor.
- * Read your file while accompanied by your Counsellor who will answer any questions you may have.
- * Take a copy or summary of your file.
- * Request changes be made if you identify any information that is incorrect or you do not agree with.

Retention of files

From 2013, Barwon CASA will retain client files indefinitely. This means at anytime in future you will be able to request your information.

Prior to 2013 client files were retained by Barwon CASA for a period of 10 years after last contact date. Children's files were retained on the same basis after the child had reached 18 years of age.

What Laws protect my information?

Our organisation complies with the requirements of the *Information Privacy Principles 2000*, the *Victorian Health Records Act 2001* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. This governs how your information is collected, held, managed, used, disclosed, transferred or destroyed.

Need more information?

If you have further questions or concerns regarding your privacy you may contact the Chief Executive Officer during business hours on (03) 5222 4318.