

## Policy 2

### RIDING FOR THE DISABLED ASSOC SA INC

#### PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

##### Policy

*Any client/parent/carer, volunteer or staff member has the right to expect personal information provided to RDASA to remain completely confidential.*

*In line with the Privacy Act and amendments made in the National Privacy Principles December 2001 volunteers and staff of RDASA must adhere to the following procedures.*

##### **Privacy and Confidentiality of Information Procedures:**

- The only information held by RDASA State Office and Centres about a client will be information necessary to assess the need for a service and to provide a service. Information should be as non-obtrusive and objective as possible, yet up to date.
- The client has the right to withhold information for privacy reasons.
- Information about a client will not be shared with any other agency without the permission of the client or his/her guardian or advocate.
- Access to client records, by an authorised client representative, may be made if the client has consented. These **procedures** are:
  - Written authorisation must be provided and signed by the client/parent/carer/guardian and be forwarded to the Centre/State Office.
  - The authorised client representative must provide proof of identity to match details in the client authorisation letter.
  - The Centre Manager will accompany the authorised client representative when accessing the identified client file.
  - The client may also notify RDASA at any time that they do not want the organisation to disclose information to particular client representatives, even though prior permission has been given, by written advice.
- Clients have the right to read any personal information kept about them by RDASA. Requests from clients to access files should be referred to the State Manager who should ensure that assistance is provided for the client to access information on his/her file within two weeks. A staff member or volunteer should be made available to explain any terminology to the client.
- Information regarding clients will be stored in a locked filing cabinet when the office is unattended. This information is only accessible to the State Manager, Centre Manager or Coach.
- Discussions in relation to client's needs/progress should occur in a confidential setting and only as necessary.

##### **Records**

The procedure for creating files and file movement involves:

- separate sections in the filing cabinet/s,
  - one for client records and
  - one for general administration;

- An individual file will be created for each client following initial assessment;
- File notes should be kept of client contact which involves
  - assessment
  - review
  - change in program plan
  - change in circumstances of the client
  - complaints\*
  - reports/information from other agencies
  - requests from the client for any change in service
- Files removed from the office should be placed inside a plain manila folder which does not identify the client
- Files should be stored in a locked filing cabinet when not in use;
- Keys to the filing cabinet holding client's records will be held by the State Manager or Centre Manager.

**Length of Time Records Are Held**

If a service to a client has stopped being provided, but may need to be resumed at a future date, information relating to the client will be kept in the filing cabinet for a period of five years before being archived.

If the service will not need to be resumed, the client records will be archived at the end of the financial year. All information regarding clients will be destroyed seven years after they cease to receive services.

**Training**

All staff and volunteers should be aware of, and understand, the policy on privacy and confidentiality. Volunteers and staff will be trained on privacy procedures and the organisations privacy policies.

**Complaints\***

The State Manager must be notified of all client complaints. These will be addressed quickly and effectively and reported on at the appropriate committee levels. (See \*Grievance/Complaints Policy)

Any identification of systematic or ongoing compliance problems will be addressed as necessary and further training provided where necessary.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

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*Reviewed:                                    Feb 2003, Aug 2004, Feb 2006*  
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