



# Relationships Australia and you

## Participant Handbook

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## Welcome to Relationships Australia, Tasmania

We want your experience with us to be a positive one and to make a positive difference in your life. Relationships Australia, Tasmania (RA Tas) works with people to change and transform their lives through counselling, mediation, dispute resolution, support and training.

### Why we're here

To help people and communities thrive

### What we do

We support people to create positive connections

### Where we're headed

Connected people - Empowered communities

### What guides us

We are guided by these values in everything we do - in the way we act and the decisions we make. The respect and care they embody applies equally to the people who use our services and to our own people. We take great pride in the work we do and what we are a part of, and this is reflected in how we apply our values everyday.

RA Tas staff are available to answer your questions about the services we offer and how you can access them. You can call to speak with one of our staff or visit the RA Tas website.

1300 364 277  
[www.tas.relationships.org.au](http://www.tas.relationships.org.au)

## About us

We're a not-for-profit organisation that provides relationship and individual support across the state. We have 70 years of experience and we help over 8,000 Tasmanians each year.

We believe you are the best person to make decisions about your life.

We work with you to make positive changes through:

- counselling
- mediation
- dispute resolution
- support
- training.

## We

- focus on you
- tell you what we are aiming for
- are hopeful
- work as a team
- aim for quality service
- are professional and responsible.

## Our team is highly qualified.

We are not part of a church. We support everyone regardless of their:

- religion
- age
- gender
- sexual orientation
- lifestyle choices
- cultural background
- health or disability status
- financial status.

## What you can expect

We will:

- be welcoming and inclusive
- be respectful
- communicate openly and honestly, straightaway
- listen to you
- tell you beforehand whether there will be a fee for the supports you choose, and tell you how much it will cost
- sort out any problems quickly
- involve you when we're talking about or deciding on your supports
- respect your privacy and keep your information safe.

### Children

We provide a safe, nurturing environment for children, always putting their welfare first

## How we'll support you

We will:

- involve you when we're talking about or deciding on your supports
- provide supports based on your unique identity, preferences and needs
- allow you to choose your worker, wherever possible
- support you to use other mental health or disability services
- respect your decision to agree to or refuse supports
- respect your decision to get a second opinion
- respect your choice of who is involved in your supports, for example, family members or an advocate.

## Advocacy

An advocate is a person you choose to act on your behalf. If you want an advocate, we'll give you a form to complete.

Your advocate can support you with:

- assessments
- fee negotiation
- support planning and evaluation
- making a complaint
- any communication between us.

## Other things we'll do

We will:

- give you the contact details for the person supporting you
- provide supports that meet your needs at your preferred times, where we can
- explain our cancellation policy
- let you know straightaway if we need to
  - o change an appointment
  - o stop providing your supports
- tell you how to make a complaint
- send you invoices, if you need them
- keep records about the supports we provide
- let you know about all of our services
- obey the law.

## What we expect from you

You have responsibilities to yourself, other clients, staff and volunteers.

We need you to:

- respect our staff
- be responsible for your actions and choices, even if they're risky
- tell us
  - how you want us to deliver your supports
  - if your needs change
  - if you are unhappy with your supports or staff
- give us 24 hours' notice if you will miss a scheduled appointment.

## Privacy and confidentiality

We collect and use personal information about you. This can include:

- personal information – like your name and date of birth
- contact information – like your address and phone number
- emergency contacts
- details about your circumstances
- information for reporting to our funding body (we won't share your name or anything that will identify you).

We collect and store your personal information on paper and electronically, so we can support you. We collect, use and share your information according to *The Privacy Act*.


We will only collect information about you and your situation if:

- it is relevant
- the law says we must.

Our services are confidential. We will not give your name or any information about you to anyone else unless:

- someone's personal safety is at risk
- the law says we must.





We must protect you and people close to you. The law says we must report it if you:

- are going to harm yourself or someone else
- tell us about child abuse or neglect that is happening now
- tell us about the risk of child abuse and neglect.

We will protect your privacy by:

keeping information we collect about you confidential

respecting your safety, privacy and dignity when we use your information

making sure we don't misuse or lose your information

making sure the information we have about you is accurate, complete, up-to-date and relevant.

Not sharing your information unless

- you say it's okay, in writing
- it's necessary to keep you or someone else safe
- the law says we must.

Once we complete your support, we save your:

- digital information for 25 years
- paper files for seven years for adults and 25 years for children.



## Information we share

We run our service using government money. To keep getting money, we must give the government general information about:

- people who use our service
- whether we have helped people.

We do not share any personal information like your name. No one will know you used our service.

We must also show that we deliver safe, high-quality services. To show this, we ask an auditor to check what we do. The auditor might ask to check our files. We don't share your personal information with them.

You can ask us not to share your file with auditors.

## Your rights

You have a right to:

- complain if we have not respected your privacy
- know
  - why and how we collect your personal information
  - how we use your personal information
  - who we might share it with and when
- give or refuse consent before we collect information about you
- ask us
  - to explain or change information if it is not correct, misleading, incomplete or out of date
  - to show you your client file
  - for a copy of our privacy and confidentiality policy.

### Seeing your client file

If you want to see your client file, we will ask you to complete a form. We can only show you information about you. We can't show you information about other people. If we can't give you your file we will tell you why, in writing.

## More information

- ask us for our privacy and confidentiality policy or download it from our website at [tas.relationships.org.au](https://tas.relationships.org.au)
- call us on 1300 364 277
- email us at [admin@reltas.com.au](mailto:admin@reltas.com.au)

You can also ask us for an Easy Read version of this information.

Otherwise, you can contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner:

- on [1300 363 992](tel:1300363992)
- at [enquiries@oaic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@oaic.gov.au)



If you have any questions or you would like more information, please do  
not hesitate to contact us



*Relationships Australia*<sup>®</sup>  
TASMANIA

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[www.tas.relationships.org.au](http://www.tas.relationships.org.au)