

Privacy Statement



Introduction

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) is committed to protecting the privacy of individuals who interact with us and our services.

This Privacy Statement explains how DFES collects, uses, stores and discloses personal information in accordance with the *Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024 (WA)* (PRIS Act).

Who we are and what we do

DFES works to help keep Western Australia safe by supporting communities before, during and after emergencies.

Our functions include:

- responding to fires, floods, storms and other emergencies
- coordinating emergency response activities
- supporting search and rescue operations
- delivering community safety and preparedness programs
- supporting recovery activities following emergencies
- working with other emergency services, government agencies and community organisations.

To perform these functions, DFES may need to collect, use and disclose personal information.

What is personal information?

Personal information is information or an opinion about an individual, whether living or deceased, whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained. This may include:

- name, date of birth, address and contact details
- location and incident-related information
- government identifiers (e.g. drivers licence number)
- financial information
- employment, volunteer or contractor information
- online identifiers and communication preferences.

What is sensitive personal information?

Sensitive personal information can include information that relates to an individual's racial or ethnic origin, gender identity, sexual orientation or practices, political opinions or associations, religious beliefs, membership of a trade union or association, or criminal record. It also includes health, genetic or genomic and biometric information.

Emergency response functions

When DFES is responding to an emergency, quick action may be needed to protect life, health, property or the environment. In these situations, DFES may rely on legal exceptions under the PRIS Act that allow collection, use or disclosure of personal information, including sensitive personal information, without prior notice or consent where necessary to respond to the emergency.

In these situations, DFES will still take reasonable steps to handle personal information carefully. This includes only collecting what is needed, keeping it accurate, protecting it from misuse or loss, ensuring it is securely stored and only kept for as long as required.

How we collect personal information

DFES will only collect personal information that is necessary to deliver services, perform its statutory functions and respond to enquiries. Sensitive personal information will only be collected in limited circumstances permitted under the PRIS Act, including where an individual has consented or where required or authorised by law.

DFES will collect information in a way that is fair, reasonable and not unreasonably intrusive, including:

- directly from you when you contact us, complete forms, attend events or interact with our services
- through operational systems including incident systems, call records and digital platforms
- from authorised representatives acting on your behalf
- from other government agencies, emergency services organisations, contractors and service providers
- from organisations supporting DFES functions or emergency management activities.

Where practicable, DFES will provide a collection notice explaining why the information is being collected and how it will be used.

Where lawful and practicable, you may interact with DFES anonymously or using a pseudonym. This may limit our ability to provide you with clear concise information or respond to enquiries.

How we use and disclose personal information

DFES only uses and discloses personal information for the purpose for which it was collected, for a related purpose you would reasonably expect, with your consent, or as otherwise authorised or required by law.

DFES commonly uses and discloses personal information for the purposes of:

- providing services and responding to enquiries
- managing and coordinating incidents and emergency operations
- supporting affected individuals and communities
- coordinating with emergency services and government agencies
- managing employees, volunteers, contractors and service providers
- administering programs, grants and community initiatives
- meeting legal, safety and reporting obligations
- improving DFES services, systems and operations.

DFES may disclose information to a range of organisations, including but not limited to:

- local and state government agencies
- emergency service organisations
- health services
- contracted service providers.

DFES does not sell personal information.

Examples of how we collect and uses personal information

The following table provides common examples of how DFES may collect and use personal information. It is for guidance only and is not exhaustive. What is collected will depend on the circumstances and nature of your interaction with DFES.

When you...	We may collect...	Why we collect it...
Contact DFES, including emergency calls or enquiries	Name, contact details, location information, incident or enquiry details	To respond to emergencies, assess risk, provide assistance and manage enquiries
Visit our website or interact on social media pages	IP address, device and browser information, usage data, comments or messages	To improve services, manage digital platforms, respond to enquiries and monitor our performance

When you...	We may collect...	Why we collect it...
Subscribe to communications, including newsletters and updates	Name (optional), contact details and preferences	To provide requested updates and communications
Visit DFES facilities	Name, contact details and visitor information	To manage site access, security and enquiries
Register a burn-off or similar activity	Contact details, property location and activity information	To support operational awareness and community safety
Apply for employment	Contact details, demographic information, qualifications, employment history, screening information and application materials	To assess suitability and manage recruitment
Apply to volunteer	Contact details, demographic information, qualifications, training, screening information and relevant health or fitness information	To assess suitability and support operational deployment
Provide services to DFES	Contact details, contract and payment information	To manage contracts and service delivery
Attend DFES events	Registration details, organisation information and photographs	To manage attendance and event delivery

Storage and security of personal information

DFES will take reasonable steps to protect personal information from misuse, loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

Personal information is retained in accordance with the *State Records Act 2000* (WA) and reasonable steps are taken to securely dispose of it.

Access to and correction of personal information

You have the right to request access to your personal information held by DFES and request correction to this information if it is inaccurate, out-of-date, incomplete or misleading.

In some instances, access to personal information may be refused or limited as permitted by law. For example, where disclosure would reasonably affect privacy of another individual.

To make a request for correction, contact the DFES Information Services team or the Privacy Officer using the contact details provided below.

You may also request access to documents held by DFES under the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*.

Transfer of personal information outside of Australia

In limited circumstances, DFES may disclose personal information to service providers or authorities located outside of Australia. Where this occurs, DFES will take reasonable steps to ensure the information is handled securely and in accordance with applicable law, and where practicable, will seek your consent before the transfer.

Automated decision making

Automated decision making is the process in which a decision is made by an automated system, either without human involvement or with the material assistance of the automated system.

Where DFES uses automated systems to assist in decision-making involving personal information, DFES will:

- assess the impact of the automated decision-making on the personal information
- evaluate the operation and effectiveness of the process
- reassess if changes are made in the automated decision-making process, and
- de-identify information where practicable.

Contact us

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about how DFES handles your personal information, please contact our Privacy Officer.

Privacy Officer

Assistant Director, Information Services

privacy@dfes.wa.gov.au

GPO Box P1174

Perth WA 6844, Australia

If you are not satisfied with our response, you may contact the Office of the Information Commissioner (WA).

Office of the Information Commissioner (WA)

info@oic.wa.gov.au

Albert Facey House, 469 Wellington Street, Perth WA 6000

Review

This Privacy Statement will be reviewed at least every two years and updated where required.

Last updated: June 2026