



Privacy and your community organisation

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Regardless of whether your organisation is large or small, our community-based organisations have a responsibility to keep people's personal information private. Depending on the nature of your group, it may just be contact details such as addresses, phone numbers or email addresses you have on file, or it may be much more sensitive information that you collect. Either way, you need to ensure you protect people's privacy and don't share their information with others or use it inappropriately.

Some organisations will also have legal responsibilities under state or commonwealth Information Privacy laws, but even if you are not legally bound by these laws, the Privacy Principles that accompany the legislation are a great guide to good practice for any group. The 10 Victorian Information Privacy Principles are a great guide to make it very easy to ensure you are meeting your obligations to manage people's private information appropriately.

If your organisation is incorporated under the Victorian Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012, there are specific privacy requirements for your Register of Members too. So make a point of looking these up and checking your practice reflects these requirements.

I think one of the most common mistakes organisations make is emailing members with everyone's email addresses visible. Make sure you don't fall into this trap – use the bcc line when sending out any group emails.

With a little bit of thought it is easy to make sure we respect people's privacy – so check your practice and make sure you do too!