



Interpreting the legislation – *Information Privacy Act 2009*

Health agencies – dealing anonymously with a health agency (NPP 8)

This guideline does not reflect the current law.

It reflects the *Information Privacy Act 2009* as it existed prior to 1 July 2025.

It has been provided for the use of agencies and Ministers dealing with privacy complaints or compliance issues that occurred before 1 July 2025, and for bound contracted service providers to whom the pre-1 July 2025 IP Act continues to apply.

1.0 Overview

Health agencies¹ are required to comply with the National Privacy Principles (NPPs) set out in the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld) (IP Act).

NPP 8 requires a health agency to allow individuals to deal anonymously with the health agency wherever this is lawful and practicable.

Health service delivery

As health agencies deal with individuals primarily in the context of delivering a health service, this guideline focuses on health service delivery.

2.0 NPP 8

Wherever it is lawful and practicable, individuals must have the option of not identifying themselves when entering into transactions with a health agency.

3.0 Anonymity

An individual may sometimes wish to remain anonymous when seeking health services. Health agencies are only required to facilitate this where it is lawful and practicable. There are situations where it will not be lawful or practicable to provide a service anonymously.

¹ In this guideline, health agency includes a bound contracted service provider to a health agency.



Office of the Information Commissioner
Queensland

Generally, total anonymity is not practicable in a health service context. Anonymity could raise accountability issues and potentially jeopardise the quality and timeliness of the health care provided.

Health agencies may need to maintain accurate and complete records for a range of purposes, including:

- medico-legal purposes
- audit; or
- tracking of patients for notification purposes, for example, when devices such as pacemakers need to be recalled.

However, there may be circumstances where services can be provided without identification, such as health education or advisory services.

Example

Individual may choose not to identify themselves when seeking advice about health issues such as sexual health, drug dependence, or mental health related matters.

For additional information and assistance please refer to the OIC's privacy guidelines, or contact the Enquiries Service on 07 3234 7373 or email enquiries@oic.qld.gov.au.

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Changes to legislation after the update date are not included in this document

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