

Privacy & Confidentiality

Independent Advocacy in the Tropics Inc. (trading as Independent Advocacy Townsville) is committed to maintaining the privacy rights of people with respect to personal information kept by the agency.

Information will be collected about you in order to:

- Identify specific advocacy issues and gather other relevant information as part of the new referral process
- Facilitate the provision of advocacy support to you on the basis of a specific identified issue

Information will be collected about you only with your signed consent, or the consent of the formal or informal guardian where this is appropriate as indicated on the Consent for Individual Advocacy form. Information collected is to be specifically in relation to the issue currently subject to advocacy support, or as per any specific agreement between IAT and you. Information being sought from specific agencies or other people will be collected only with specific consent to seek information from that person or agency as indicated by a signed consent to release information form.

Any relevant information collected in relation to the individual advocacy effort will be recorded in both hard copy and electronic copy in the Advocacy Support – Individual Profile

All information collected will be kept in a personal file. Hard copy files are to be secured in a locked filing cabinet when not in use. Electronic files are to be stored in the relevant directory in a system accessible by a password known only to staff of the agency. All information will be archived after two years and stored for the required period of seven years and then destroyed.

Independent Advocacy will only use the personal information collected for the purposes for which it was collected, or other purposes that are agreed to between the organisation and you.

Access to the personal information gathered will also be disclosed to the Commonwealth Department of Families and Community Services and Disability Services Queensland in their respective capacity as the funding bodies of IAT, and only as specified in their funding agreements with IAT. However consent for the release of such information must be gained from the you or decision maker prior to the commencement of advocacy services as indicated on the Consent for Individual Advocacy form. Other than this specific instance Independent Advocacy undertakes to disclose your data only under the following circumstances:

- a) where required by law;
- b) with your permission;
- c) where permitted by law;

You have the right to nominate an independent support person of your choice, who will act in your best interests, to assist you to access your information. Independent Advocacy will provide access to your information and that access will be:

- Convenient
- Without reasonable delay
- Without cost
- Available in various formats according to your needs

Should it be determined, through thorough consideration between advocate and Coordinator that providing you with a copy of your information may not be in your best interests. You will be fully supported to access your information within the confines of the IAT office and you have the right to make notes and be assisted by a trusted person acting in your best interests.