

Voluntary Disclosure of Personal Information Regarding a Mental Disorder and/or Disability



VICTORIA POLICE

Who is this Fact Sheet for?

This fact sheet is for people with, and parents and guardians of people with, mental illness, intellectual disability, acquired brain injury, neurological disorder or personality disorder, who believe that providing police with information about their disability or disorder may be beneficial to interactions they may have with police in the future.

What is this Fact Sheet about?

This fact sheet outlines the purpose of voluntarily disclosing personal information to police and explains how this can be done.

Why provide personal information to police?

Volunteering information about a person's disability or disorder will assist police to make timely and considered decisions during any interaction they may have with the person.

How is volunteering personal information helpful to police?

An understanding of a person's needs will assist police to tailor an appropriate and supportive response in circumstances where the person may be:

- Reported missing;
- In distress;
- Experiencing difficulty in:
 - thinking clearly;
 - dealing with a problem;
 - understanding and/or communicating what is happening to them; or
 - conveying what has upset them.

Volunteered information can include contact details of a support person whom police may notify in such circumstances.

Who can give personal information to police?

- The person themselves, if they are 18 years and over and can provide informed consent;
- The person's parent, if under 18 or if requested by the person.
- The person's legal guardian, if under 18 or requested by the person.

What information is relevant?

Police do not need clinical information. Rather, police need information that will help them to understand how best to interact with a person. Information might include:

- Typical behaviours / triggers (e.g. how the person is likely to respond to; police and other emergency services; when distressed; and/or what exacerbates their distress)
- Any known risks (e.g. may use violence when feeling threatened)
- Effective communication techniques (e.g. how best to calm a situation and obtain information)
- Any other mental disorder-related information (e.g. if the person is on a treatment order)
- Contact person (e.g. a person police may contact, if necessary or appropriate)
- Information source (e.g. who has provided the information).

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How can I provide this information to police?

Personal information can be provided to police by contacting the officer in charge of any police station, either by telephone or in person, and requesting an appointment with the Mental Health & Disability Liaison Officer. At the appointment the Liaison Officer will explain the process, address any concerns or queries you may have and record your volunteered information on the police database (known as LEAP).

If attending an appointment is difficult, inform the Liaison Officer and alternative arrangements can be made to collect your personal information.

What to take to the appointment

- Proof of identification.
- A copy of this fact sheet.

If a person is under 18 years of age they must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

What will police do with the information?

- When personal information is volunteered to police, an initial form is completed then details are entered into the police database.
- The information will be stored within the database and only utilised in the event of interaction between the person and police.
- When personal information is volunteered, police are obliged to explain to the person, their parent or their guardian, how the information will be stored and used.

Who has access to volunteered personal information?

Personal information can only be accessed by police and '000' call takers. There is strict policy about who can access this information and the police database records the details of any person who has accessed it.

Can volunteered information be deleted upon request?

Volunteered personal information can be deleted at any time upon request of the person or their parent or guardian, if there has been no interaction with police.