

# Oakville Distress Centre Privacy Policy

## Privacy Overview

The Oakville Distress Centre is committed to protecting all personal information of our volunteers, clients, board members, donors, and other stakeholders and adhering to all legislative requirements with respect to personal privacy.

During the course of our service provision, fund raising, various projects and other activities we frequently gather and use personal information. Anyone from whom we collect such information should expect that it will be carefully protected and that any use of or other dealing with this information is subject to consent. Our privacy practices are designed to achieve this. Note that information received from anonymous callers is not considered personal information because we have no way of confirming such information.

However, Oakville Distress Centre cannot guarantee that private and confidential information will be protected from subpoenas, search or coroner's warrants or from the need to report suspected child abuse as required by legislation. Also, in situations where we believe there is a significant and imminent risk of harm to self or others by an Oakville Distress Centre client, we reserve the right to notify authorities and/or persons at risk.

## Definition

Personal information is any information that can be used to distinguish, identify or contact a specific individual. This information can include an individual's opinions or beliefs, as well as facts about or related to the individual. Exceptions: business contact information and certain publicly available information, such as names, addresses and telephone numbers as published in telephone directories, are not considered personal information.

## Accountability

The Executive Director of the Oakville Distress Centre, or designate, is accountable for the privacy of personal information collected and/or used by the Oakville Distress Centre. These responsibilities will include;

- general oversight of the practices related to privacy
- privacy policy communication and roll out to all staff, volunteers and board
- ongoing monitoring of privacy compliance
- stewardship of changes and corrective action to close compliance gaps
- decisions regarding privacy matters

## Information Collected and Uses

Purposes for which information is collected must be identified at or prior to the time that such information is collected. Collection of the information must be limited to what is necessary for the identified purpose.

Generally, we collect information to:

- Assist in the correct identification of individuals such as staff, volunteers and board members.
- Assist in the correct identification of Telecheck clients.
- Assess performance of staff and volunteers
- Facilitate contact with above individuals
- Facilitate contact with relative or friend in emergency situations
- etc.

## Third Parties

Information cannot be shared with third parties without prior, written authorization from the individual to whom the information pertains. Exceptions are outlined in the section 'Policy overview'

## Consent

Except where otherwise stipulated in this document or in the Oakville Distress Centre Privacy Practices, express written consent is required for collection, use or disclosure of personal information prior to such information being disclosed or used.

## Retention

Records containing personal information with regards to clients, volunteers, staff, clients, board members, donors, and other stakeholders will be kept only as long as these individuals are active or have the potential and likelihood of becoming active following a period of inactivity.

## Security

Safeguards must be in place for the protection of personal information and must include;

- Limiting access to information to those individuals carrying out the identified "uses"
- Limiting access to the data required for those uses
- Protecting information, regardless of format, against loss, theft and unauthorized access, modification and disclosure
- Extending this protection, contractually, to third party service providers
- Ensuring disposal practices are appropriate to sensitivity of information