

# Vidhi Thakkar

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## Privacy Policy

As a counsellor committed to trauma-informed, person-centered care, I deeply value your right to privacy. This policy outlines how I collect, store, and protect your personal information, in alignment with the Australian Privacy Principles (Privacy Act 1988) and the ethical codes of my professional bodies:

- PACFA – Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia

## Why Information Is Collected

I gather personal information to support your care and ensure ethical, responsive practice. This allows me to:

- Understand your needs and context
- Maintain accurate records of our work together
- Communicate clearly and respectfully
- Uphold professional and legal responsibilities

## What Information May Be Held

Depending on our engagement, I may hold:

- Intake and consent forms
- Notes from counselling or supervision sessions
- Emails, texts, or other written communication
- Booking and payment details
- Information shared verbally or through social media
- Details provided by your guardian (if under 18)
- Reports or correspondence from other health professionals (with your consent)

## How Information Is Stored

I take care to protect your information from misuse, loss, or unauthorised access.

- Paper records are stored securely in locked cabinets
- Digital files are kept in password-protected folders
- Wherever possible, identifying details are minimised or removed

Records are retained for seven years after our work concludes, in accordance with legal guidelines. If a security breach occurs, I will take appropriate action and notify you as required.

## Accessing Your Information

You're welcome to request access to the information I hold about you. This might include session notes or forms. If you're unsure what to ask for, we can explore it together.

A small fee may apply to cover the time and resources involved. In rare cases, access may be limited—such as when it could cause harm or conflict with legal obligations. If that applies, I'll explain with care and transparency.

You may also request corrections to any information that feels inaccurate or incomplete.

## **Sharing with Others**

If you'd like me to liaise with another practitioner—such as a GP, psychiatrist, or support service—I'll ask for your written consent. You'll be invited to specify:

- Who I'm connecting with
- What information you'd like shared
- Why it feels supportive

Outside of legal obligations (such as mandatory reporting), I will never share your information without your permission. If disclosure is required, I'll aim to involve you in the process and keep you informed.

## **Making a Complaint**

If you believe your personal information hasn't been handled appropriately, I invite you to contact me directly. I'll do my best to resolve concerns with openness and respect.

If you're not satisfied with the outcome, you may lodge a complaint with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC).

## **Contact**

If you have questions or concerns about how your information is held, please feel free to reach out. I'm here to listen.

Last updated: August 2025