



FORTE FAMILY LAWYERS
PRIVACY POLICY

Forte Family Lawyers is committed to protecting your privacy. We aim to ensure that the personal information you provide to us is handled securely and confidentially.

This statement has been prepared in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles in the *Privacy Act 1988*. A copy of the principles can be viewed at the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner at <http://www.oaic.gov.au/>.

In addition to our obligations under the *Privacy Act 1988* the information we hold on your behalf will usually also be subject to legal professional privilege.

What is personal information?

Personal information is information from which a person's identity can be identified or from which the identity is reasonably identifiable. It may include your name, date of birth, contact details, photographs, credit information and your dealings with us.

Sensitive information is any information about a person's racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, membership of a political association, religious beliefs or affiliations, philosophical beliefs, sexual preferences or practices, criminal records or health information.

We will not ask you to disclose sensitive information unless it is necessary for providing our services to you. However, if you provide unsolicited sensitive information to us, it may be stored by us.

Why do we collect personal information?

We collect personal information to enable us to provide services to you, and to manage our ongoing relationship with you. This generally occurs when you seek legal advice and legal services from us, ask to receive information from us, apply to work for us or provide services to us.

How do we collect personal information?

Usually we collect your personal information directly from you during the course of our relationship with you. We may collect it from other sources, such as the internet, other parties or lawyers involved in your case or through searches of the Land Titles Office or ASIC records.

We only collect personal information which is reasonably necessary for, or directly related to our dealings with you, functions and activities.

We normally collect personal information by way of face-to-face meetings, telephone conversations, emails and from third parties such as regulatory authorities. We only collect personal information by lawful and fair means.

Information security

We take reasonable steps to protect the information we hold about you including your personal information. We may store your personal information in paper form, electronic form or both. We take all reasonable steps to protect your personal information from misuse, loss, unauthorized access, modification or disclosure.

Our staff are required to adhere to a confidentiality agreement that is binding upon them during their employment and after they leave our employment. Our information technology systems and our office have tight security.

Use and disclosure of your personal information

We may disclose your personal information to:

- Other entities as part of providing services to you, including barristers, experts and/or valuers who have been engaged by us in the course of legal proceedings. Personal information may also be disclosed to other parties involved in the dispute resolution process;
- Third party service providers;
- Our professional advisors and insurers; and
- Other parties where you have consented for us to do so.

We do not routinely disclose personal information overseas, unless it is specifically appropriate and required to provide our legal services to you because of your particular circumstances.

This information may be required to be disclosed to other parties in accordance with your instructions and in the process of conducting your matter. Other parties may include:

- Statutory bodies, including Courts and Tribunals in all jurisdictions (e.g. Family Court, Federal Circuit Court, and Magistrates' Court), Land Use Victoria, State Revenue Office, A.S.I.C and the Department of Health and Human Services.
- The *Family Law Rules* 2004 require us to advise the court and the other party as the amount and source of funding of your legal costs from time to time;
- Storage facilities and archive services, financial institutions, process servers, title searchers and other external parties who provide services in connection with the operation of our legal practice.

Keeping your personal information up-to-date

We take all reasonable precautions to ensure that the personal information we collect, use and disclose is accurate, complete and up-to-date. However, the accuracy of that information largely relates to the information you provide. We recommend that you let us know if there are any errors in your personal information and keep us up to date with changes to your personal information such as your name or address.

Correction of personal information

It is important to us that the personal information that we hold about you is both accurate and up to date.

We encourage you to contact us to update any of your details or to correct any inaccuracies which may have inadvertently been recorded by us.

How to access your personal information

If you have any queries regarding our privacy policy or wish to gain access to personal information we may hold about you please contact us at enquiries@fortefamilylawyers.com.au.

Our website

You can visit and use our website anonymously.

We may collect general anonymous information from the users of our website, such as a user's domain name or IP address, browser type, desktop system and resolution. This may be used to analyse trends and manage our website so as to improve our website.

Other websites are linked on our website. We do not warrant that these sites comply with the legal obligations of those sites regarding privacy. Accessing these sites is at the risk of the user.

Complaint process

Any complaint made in relation to our privacy policy will be investigated and the outcome of any investigation will be communicated to you in writing. Please allow for at least 30 days for us to respond to any complaint made.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of any investigation, you may contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner at enquiries@oaic.gov.au or on 1300 363 992.

Updates to this policy

We may vary this policy when there are changes in law, technology or the way we operate. The most recent version can always be accessed on our website.

Alternatively, you can write to us at: Privacy Officer, Forte Family Lawyers, Level 2, 535 Bourke Street, Melbourne VIC 3000.