



This document is designed to inform you of your rights and responsibilities in respect of your child as a recipient of Open Arms services and the management of personal information that you provide to Open Arms.

## Purpose of collecting information

1. As part of providing a counselling service to your child, Open Arms will need to collect and record personal information that is relevant to your child's current situation. Personal information is collected for the purposes of assessing your child's eligibility for services and to enable your child's counsellor to plan and review the effectiveness of his/her counselling.
2. Aggregated, de-identified data may be used for research and reporting purposes.
3. You do not have to disclose personal information to Open Arms; however Open Arms counsellors can only work with the information you provide and if you chose not to provide some information this may limit the services able to be provided to your child.

## Confidentiality

4. Open Arms is committed to preserving and upholding your and your child's right to privacy and confidentiality. Subject to certain limited exceptions (described below), your and your child's personal information is kept strictly confidential and stored securely, at all times.
5. All Open Arms client information is stored separately from the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA). Open Arms will not provide any information about you or your child to DVA, except in aggregate and de-identified form to meet reporting requirements (for example, in the DVA Annual report).

## Exceptions to confidentiality

6. It is important to note that, in certain circumstances, Open Arms may be required to disclose personal information without your consent. This may occur when:
  - information about your child is subpoenaed by a court or tribunal in legal proceedings;
  - you, your child or another person is at serious risk of harm;
  - the disclosure is necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law; or
  - disclosure is otherwise required or authorised by law.
7. In these circumstances, Open Arms will endeavour to ask for your written consent before disclosing any information about you or your child to a third party (Form: Open Arms Parent/Guardian Consent to Exchange Personal Information) unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so.

## Accessing your information

8. You have a right of access to information Open Arms holds about you or your child in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.
9. Requests for access should be made in writing to Open Arms. Upon receiving your request, Open Arms will discuss your access options with you.
10. Examples of where access to information Open Arms holds may be restricted are where disclosure:
  - would pose a serious threat to your child's physical or mental well-being, or the physical and mental well-being of others;
  - would infringe on the privacy of others; or
  - would hinder law enforcement activities.

## Client Rights and Responsibilities

11. You should have been provided with a Client's Rights and Responsibilities brochure by Open Arms in, or prior to, your child's first session. You and your child's rights and responsibilities as a Open Arms client are also listed as an Attachment to this form. Before finalising this consent form, please raise any issues or questions you may have about this information with your child's counsellor.

Open Arms is bound by the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs). For more information on how Open Arms manages personal information, please visit [www.openarms.gov.au/about/confidentiality-and-privacy](http://www.openarms.gov.au/about/confidentiality-and-privacy) or email [openarms.coord@dva.gov.au](mailto:openarms.coord@dva.gov.au) and request a copy of our Privacy Policy.

**PART A****Confirmation of informed consent**

I have read and understood the information on page 1. I acknowledge that my and my child's rights and responsibilities have been explained to me by an Open Arms counsellor.

I give my informed consent for Open Arms to provide my child with services for the duration of this episode of care.

1. **Child's name**

2. **Parent's name**

3. **Parent's signature**

Date

4. **Counsellor's name**

5. **Counsellor's signature**

Date

**PART B****Open Arms Client Rights and Responsibilities**

While signing the Open Arms Client Rights and Responsibilities is not a requirement for receiving support from Open Arms, not signing may limit the services Open Arms is able to provide.

**Client Rights**

As a client of Open Arms you can expect to:

- be treated with respect, dignity and courtesy regardless of age, disability, cultural and linguistic background, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and religious or spiritual beliefs;
- have your right to privacy and confidentiality protected, within the limits imposed by the law and duty of care;
- have fair and equal access to Open Arms services, including the use of an interpreter if required;
- have access to information about your counselling and treatment options and be involved in decision-making regarding these options;
- be able to refuse any, or all, assessment and care that is offered;
- access your records by records by request, in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*;
- receive services that comply with appropriate standards of professionalism, competency accountability.

**Client Responsibilities**

As an Open Arms client, you are responsible for:

- respecting the right of other clients and staff to privacy and confidentiality;
- treating other Open Arms clients and staff in a respectful manner;
- ensuring that you are not under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, and/or not behaving in a way which makes delivery of service difficult or dangerous;
- attending appointments and advising the relevant Open Arms centre or counsellor as soon as possible if you are unable to attend;
- respecting counselling centre property;
- honouring agreements made with Open Arms about service provision and care.

1. **Child's name**

2. **Parent's name**

3. **Parent's signature**

Date

4. **Counsellor's name**

5. **Counsellor's signature**

Date