

Access and Records Procedure

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Created by: Business Systems Manager

Approved by: CEO.

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Purpose

Rights Information and Advocacy Centre (RIAC) is committed to transparency in its operations and ensuring it is open to public scrutiny. It must also balance this with upholding the rights of individuals and the organisation to confidentiality on sensitive corporate matters.

RIAC will prevent unauthorised persons from gaining access to an individual's confidential records and permit individuals to access their own records when this is reasonable and appropriate.

Accordingly, access to some RIAC documents and records will be limited to specified individuals and unavailable to others for viewing.

Scope

This procedure applies to all eligible RIAC Personnel and clients.

Responsibilities

All RIAC personnel are responsible for operating in accordance with this work procedure.

Procedure

Client records

Client records will be confidential to clients and to appropriate staff, as determined by the CEO.

Client information may only be made available to other parties with the client's consent or as required by law.

All client records will be kept securely and updated, archived, and destroyed in accordance with legislation.

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*unless otherwise indicated, this policy/procedure/work instruction will still apply beyond the review date

If clients would like a copy of their client file held by the organisation, a request must be made in writing to the CEO.

Board

Once accepted by the board, board minutes will be open to members of the organisation, except where the Board passes a motion to make any specific content confidential. The minutes, papers, and materials from any sub-committee meeting will be available to the board members and the CEO.

RIAC Membership records

RIAC members will have access to a list of current members upon request. Personal information about members, including address and contact details, is confidential and may only be accessed by the Board, CEO, and approved staff.

Personnel files

A personnel file is held for each staff member and contains:

- contact details and contact details in case of an emergency.
- a copy of the employee's contract; and
- all correspondence relating to job description changes, salary changes, and leave entitlements such as extended service, continuous service, and unpaid and parental leave.

Access to personal information is restricted to:

- the individual staff member accessing their own file upon request.
- the CEO.
- the employee or Volunteer's line Manager; and
- approved external Auditors.

Corporate records

Corporate records are those that contain confidential or commercially sensitive information about the organisation's business.

They include:

- The financial accounts and records.
- Taxation records.
- Corporate correspondence with incorporation regulator.
- Records of staff or other internal meetings.
- Funding applications.

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- Financial records.
- Project management files.
- Contracts between the organisation and other parties.

Access to these records is limited to the Executive Team, Auditors (on request) and the Board.

Requests for access – general records

All records and materials not falling into the categories above may be released to the public at the discretion of the CEO.

Any request for access to information should be directed to the CEO, who will:

- make available to staff or Board members information that they are entitled to access; and
- refer any request from RIAC members or the public for access to the organisation's records or materials to the Board Chair.

In considering a request, the CEO will take into consideration:

- a general presumption in favour of transparency.
- the relevant provisions of the RIAC constitution regarding information to be made available to members; and
- the business, legal, and administrative interests of RIAC, including commercial confidentiality and privacy obligations.

Where an external party requests access to information that requires staff to devote time to collating, copying, or otherwise making material accessible, the CEO may determine a fee to be charged.

Requests for access - client records

All clients have the right to request access to their records and advise the organisation about inaccuracies.

Clients are:

Informed about their right to access records containing personal information about themselves and how they can request this when they commence with the service. All client requests to access files are documented, including any fair and appropriate decisions about permitting or refusing access to personal information. Requests must be made in writing to the CEO.

Requests for information about clients from outside agencies or individuals will be referred to the program Manager. Before any information is released, the Manager/or their delegate will contact the client concerned to obtain consent.

Appeals

Individuals who are refused access to their own records or information files may appeal by contacting the CEO who will review the decision with the Board Chair in the context of this procedure.

Documentation

[RIAC Authority to Enquire and Correspond.](#)

Related Documents

[RIAC Information Privacy and Data Protection Policy.](#)

Easy Read [RIAC Privacy Brochure](#)

Resources

Public Records Office Victoria Standards
Australian Privacy Principles
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
Freedom of Information Act 1982
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)