

## Contain and Communicate Privacy Breaches

### Guidance for Northern Territory public sector organisations

NT public sector organisations often handle individuals' personal information. It is important to be aware that if personal information is lost, accidentally disclosed or compromised, a privacy breach may have occurred.

Privacy breaches can cause great reputational and financial damage to an organisation and significant harm to affected individuals.

Examples of situations where personal information may become compromised include:

- the loss of hardcopy documents containing personal information, such as spreadsheets or notebooks;
- sending an email to an incorrect recipient;
- unauthorised or accidental publication of personal information online; or
- a failure to dispose of records containing personal information securely.

#### Tips for responding to privacy breaches

If a privacy breach does occur, the key point to remember is that **there is help available to assist your organisation** manage the breach.

If documents or datasets containing personal information become compromised, lost, or unauthorised access is detected, it is important to **act quickly** to contain the breach, evaluate the risks, take steps to remediate any harm, and notify relevant parties.

Your first point of contact should be your Information/Privacy Officer, your Supervisor or the person nominated by your organisation. They are there to help and will be able to assess a suspected privacy breach and advise you of the steps to take to contain and manage the breach.

If you suspect a privacy breach may have occurred, **don't try to ignore or cover up the breach**. Proactive management of privacy breaches is essential in order to minimise damage to your organisation and to affected individuals.

If your organisation has any questions you can get in touch with the Office of the Information Commissioner. We will be able to support your organisation to contain, address and prevent privacy breaches in the future.

For more information on how to contain and manage privacy breaches, check our website <http://www.infocomm.nt.gov.au>

#### For further Information, contact us

1800 005 610 / 8999 1500

<http://www.infocomm.nt.gov.au>

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#### Disclaimer

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