

# **YOUTH WITHOUT SHELTER PRIVACY POLICY**

## **Protection of Personal Information**

Youth Without Shelter (YWS) collects, uses and discloses information for purposes related to our mission. Privacy of personal information is an important principle to YWS. We are committed to collecting, using and disclosing personal information responsibly and only to the extent necessary for the services we provide. We strive to be open and transparent regarding how we handle personal information.

## **Identification of Purposes of Collection of Information**

The purposes for which personal information is collected will be identified and disclosed to the client at or before the time the information is collected. If YWS wishes to collect or use personal information for a new purpose, we will take reasonable steps to ensure the individual concerned is informed of the new purpose and gives his or his permission for the collection or use of the personal information for that purpose.

For our clients, the primary purposes for collecting personal information are as follows:

- To evaluate the eligibility and suitability to receive or continue receiving YWS services
- To provide YWS services to the client
- To coordinate client services with other social services agencies concerning issues relating to the client's case management at YWS
- To comply with legal and regulatory requirements and to prepare reports.
- To assess the health and/or safety of the client
- To communicate with family or friends of the client regarding the client's residency or discharge from YWS; and
- To assist in securing housing for the client.

For member of the general public, our primary purposes for collecting personal information are as follows:

- to administer and maintain accounts relating to donations
- to facilitate fundraising in order to provide YWS services
- to communicate with donors and potential donors
- to comply with legal and regulatory requirements; and
- to rent fundraising lists

## **Knowledge and Consent**

We will not collect personal information without the individual's knowledge and prior consent.

YWS will obtain the client's written consent during the Intake Process. YWS staff involved in obtaining the consent of individuals to the collection and disclosure of their personal information will be appropriately trained in the terms of this privacy policy.

In recognition of the donor dollars required to fund our programs and services, and the cost of providing express consent forms in all of our fundraising materials, YWS will, for fundraising purposes, assume that donors implicitly consent to the collection, use and disclosure of their personal information.

YWS understands and will comply with the individual's right to withdraw their consent to the collection, use or disclosure of personal information at any time.

### **Limiting the Collection of Information**

Only that personal information required for the purposes outlined above will be collected by our organization. We only collect information fairly and lawfully. Each person has the right to provide as much or as little personal information as they choose to share.

In some cases it may not be possible for YWS to seek consent as it does not have a direct relationship with the individual. For example, seeking consent may be impractical for a charity that wishes to acquire a mailing list from a direct marketing firm. In such cases, the organization providing the list would be expected to obtain consent before disclosing personal information and YWS would rely on such representations that consent to disclosure of personal information has been obtained.

### **Limiting Use, Disclosure and Retention of Collected Information**

YWS will not use or disclose personal information for purposes other than for which it was collected, except with the consent of the individual or as permitted by law.

Personal information will be retained as long as it is required to satisfy the intended purpose, and in compliance with any laws surrounding information retention.

### **Accuracy of Your Personal Information**

YWS will keep personal information as accurate and complete as needed for the purposes for which it is to be used. We will generally rely on individuals to provide updated information.

## **Safeguards for your Personal Information**

All reasonable security arrangements are used to protect and guard personal information on file with YWS. We understand the importance of protecting personal information. For that reason we have taken the following steps:

- Paper information is either under supervision or secured in a locked or restricted area.
- Electronic hardware is either under supervision or secured in a locked or restricted area at all times. In addition, passwords are used on computers.
- Paper information is transmitted through sealed, addressed envelopes or boxes by reputable companies.
- Staff are trained to collect, use and disclose personal information only as necessary to fulfill their duties and in accordance with our privacy policy.
- Any external agencies or consultants with access to personal information must enter into privacy agreements with us.
- Paper files containing personal information are shredded after retention obligations are fulfilled.

## **Openness of our Privacy Policy and Procedures**

YWS policies and procedures are documented and open to all individuals who wish to view them.

## **Right to Access Personal Information**

At any time, an individual is entitled to view their personal information on file with YWS. A request for access by the individual for his or her information must be received in writing.

## **Your Right to Challenge**

YWS's privacy officer can be reached at any time to address any questions or concerns you may have. If you wish to make a formal complaint about our privacy practices, you may make it in writing to our privacy officer. Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged and investigated promptly.

### Privacy Officer:

Executive Director  
6 Warrendale Court  
Etobicoke, On M9V 1P9  
executivedirector@yws.on.ca