



Fact Sheet: Collecting and storing customer information during COVID-19

Collecting and storing information about customers is a standard practice for many businesses. For example, businesses commonly store and collect information when taking reservations, fulfilling orders, taking payments and confirming appointments.

Businesses are required to collect and store information in a way which complies with Australia's privacy laws.

Additionally, the Queensland Chief Health Officer has powers under the *Public Health Act 2005* to make any directions necessary to assist in containing, or responding to, the spread of COVID-19 within the community.

Collecting information

Under the Queensland Government's approach to easing restrictions for COVID 19, some businesses are required to collect contact information for all customers, workers and contractors for a period of at least 28 days if they wish to re-open their business or offer their services to an increased number of customers.

The *Non-essential Business Activity and Undertaking Closure Direction* specifies that this information includes:

- name
- address
- mobile phone number

The purpose of collecting this information is to assist authorities in tracing infections of COVID-19 if they occur. In many cases businesses will already be collecting this information and will be adequately equipped to adhere to the privacy laws and requirements.

Storing information

The standard approach to storing customers information also applies to business who collect information during COVID-19.

The Australian Office of the Information Commissioner have developed [tips for good privacy practice to assist businesses in storing and collecting personal information](#). Find more information about storing personal information on the Office of the Information Commissioner [website](#).

Frequently asked questions

What obligations does a business have in collecting and storing customer information?



A business must collect and store information in accordance with the privacy laws. In addition, the *Non-essential Business Activity and Undertaking Closure Direction* makes clear that if requested, a business must provide this information to public health officers, store the information securely, not use it for any other purpose and keep it for a period 28 days.

Penalties apply for failure to comply with the public health directions.

What information is a business required to collect and store?

Under the *Non-essential Business Activity and Undertaking Closure Direction* and COVID Safe Checklists, some businesses are required to collect and store contact information about customers, workers and contractors, including name, address and mobile phone number.

To confirm if your business has additional record keeping obligations under Queensland public health directions, please visit the Queensland Health [website](#), your relevant Industry COVID Safe Plan or COVID Safe Checklist (if applicable).

What information do businesses who offer ‘dining in services’ need to collect?

Businesses like restaurants, cafes, pubs, and clubs who offer dining in services need to keep contact information for customers, workers and any contractors for a period of at least 28 days.

For diners, this includes the name, address and mobile phone number of a person at each table – not every person dining at a table.

How should a business collect information?

Examples of methods a business could use to collect the information prescribed under the *Non-essential Business Activity and Undertaking Closure Direction* include:

- order forms
- paper slips or cards
- emails or text messages (for reservations and bookings made in advance)
- online booking applications
- scheduling or planning software
- in-person at reception desk or on entry

How should businesses store personal information?

Businesses should store personal information securely so that it is only available for the purpose for which it was collected and in accordance with any obligations they may have under Australia’s privacy laws.

Businesses are only required to keep personal information for 28 days under the *Non-essential Business Activity and Undertaking Closure Direction*. After this time, a business may wish to securely dispose of, or delete this information.



What if a customer refuses to provide their information?

If a customer refuses to provide their information, a business has the right to refuse service.

Under the *Non-essential Business Activity and Undertaking Closure Direction* some businesses cannot offer some of their services without collecting information for each customer or person they interact with.

Penalties apply for non-compliance with the *Non-essential Business Activity and Undertaking Closure Direction*.

What if a customer has the COVID Safe app instead?

Under the *Non-essential Business Activity and Undertaking Closure Direction* a business must collect the name, address and mobile phone number for customers. A customer having installed the COVID Safe app does not discharge this requirement.

More information

For small business support you can call the Small Business Hotline on **1300 654 687** or visit **www.business.qld.gov.au**.

For general information about the Queensland Government's response to COVID-19 you can call **13 QGOV (13 74 68)** or visit **covid19.qld.gov.au**.