

Application Form



Historical
Forced
Adoptions
Redress
Scheme

The Victorian Government established the Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Scheme (the scheme) to acknowledge the impact of historical forced adoption practices and to provide support to mothers who continue to live with the serious, complex, and ongoing effects of their experience of forced separation from their newborn babies.

The scheme is administered by the Department of Justice and Community Safety and is independent of any institutions that were involved in forced adoption practices.

The scheme has a dedicated team available to guide you through the application process, answer questions, and assist you with any supporting information that may be required. It is important to be aware you do not need a lawyer to apply to the scheme.

Important information

Who can apply?

- Mothers who gave birth in Victoria, or were a Victorian resident but gave birth interstate, and who were forcibly separated from their newborn babies before 1990.
- Mothers who received a payment from the Forced Adoption Exceptional Circumstances Fund are still able to apply for the scheme.
- Applications cannot be submitted on behalf of a person who has passed away.
- You can only make one application to the scheme.

Supporting documents

- Our support team will talk with you to confirm what documents may be required and how we can help you with your application.

The terms we use

- The scheme uses the term 'mothers' to refer to its applicants to mirror the language that was used in the 2021 Parliament of Victoria *Inquiry into Responses to Historical Forced Adoption in Victoria* (the Inquiry). The Victorian Government acknowledges that some applicants may not identify with this term. We recognise that people of diverse backgrounds and gender identities give birth. This scheme is open to people of all identities, if they gave birth to a baby they were forcibly separated from.
- We also acknowledge that the term 'forced adoption' may not resonate with all mothers, noting not all mothers' experiences of past policies and practices resulted in adoption. As this term was used in the Inquiry, it is used to refer to forced separation practices that the Inquiry and scheme cover.

Contact us for a confidential discussion about your application:

Phone: 1300 217 425 9am-4:30pm Monday-Friday (excluding public holidays)

Email: forcedadoptions.redress@justice.vic.gov.au

If you need to use a Translating or Interpreting Service, we can assist you with this.

What you need to do

- Complete Part One:** Read the **Privacy Collection Notice** and confirm that you agree by ticking the box on page 5.
- Complete Part Two:** This section is about you. Please provide **your personal information** so we can identify you as the person applying for the scheme.
- Complete Part Three:** This section has questions about **your experiences** at the time you were separated from your newborn baby. This information will help us to process your application for redress.

If you need help, our support team can assist you with this part of your application and discuss the type of information needed.

- Send us your application form:** Once you have filled in as much of the application form as you can, please **send us your application form:**

By email: forcedadoptions.redress@justice.vic.gov.au

Or by post:

Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Scheme
Department of Justice and Community Safety
PO Box 18217
Collins Street East VIC 8003

What happens next

Once we have received your application form, our support team will contact you to confirm your application has been received.

Our support team will guide you through the application process and talk with you about any information or documents that may be required. It is important to be aware you do not need a lawyer to apply to the scheme.

PART ONE: Privacy Collection Notice

This privacy collection notice explains how the scheme will manage your information. The Department of Justice and Community Safety (the department) is committed to protecting your information in accordance with applicable privacy laws.

The law

The *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*

The *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (the PDP Act) is the law that regulates how the Victorian public sector collects and handles personal and sensitive information.

Personal information is recorded information or an opinion (whether true or not) about an individual that identifies or has the potential to identify a living individual.

Sensitive information is information about a living person's race or ethnicity, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, sexual preferences or practices, criminal record, or membership details (such as membership of a professional association or trade union).

The PDP Act requires that the department complies with a number of obligations in the way it collects, uses, discloses, and stores personal and sensitive information about individuals.

You can access the department's Information Privacy Policy at: <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/your-rights/privacy/information-privacy-policy>

The *Adoption Act 1984*

The *Adoption Act 1984* (Vic) (the Adoption Act) is the law for the regulation, and recognition, of adoptions in Victoria.

Part VI of the Adoption Act regulates access to information held in records about adoptions that were negotiated or arranged by the Secretary of the department, an approved agency, or a private adoption agency under the *Adoption of Children Act 1964* (Vic). The Secretary of the department may only

use and disclose adoption information in limited circumstances set out by the Adoption Act.

Within Victoria, access to adoption information is facilitated by Adoption Information Services (AIS), which is part of the Department of Justice and Community Safety.

The *Health Records Act 2001*

The *Health Records Act 2001* (the Health Records Act) is the law that regulates how the public and private sector collects and handles health information.

Health information is information or an opinion about the physical, mental or psychological health of a person, a disability of a person, a person's wishes about the future provision of health services to them, or health services that are provided or will be provided to them, that is also personal information.

The Health Records Act requires that the department complies with the fair and responsible handling of health information.

There are consequences for not complying with the PDP Act and the Health Records Act. We take our obligations under these laws very seriously.

Collection of your personal, sensitive and health information

We will collect personal information about you where it is reasonably necessary to perform our functions under the Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Scheme, including to confirm your identity and to process your application.

The personal information we collect through your application to the scheme includes:

- Your name, contact details, and date of birth
- Personal documents that confirm your identity
- Information about your experience of forced adoption practices.

We will collect this information from you, or from someone you nominate to help you make an application to the scheme.

We will seek your consent to collect any sensitive or health information that you may provide in your application, as indicated in the 'consent to collect information' section below. This could include information about the impact of forced adoption on your health or wellbeing.

The scheme will only seek your adoption information, such as that held by AIS, to confirm the birth of a baby before 1990, and to confirm that a separation occurred at or around this time.

With your consent, the scheme can request information from AIS on your behalf, for the purpose of processing your application. In making this request, the scheme will have to share your personal information with AIS, so they can identify you and search for relevant information. If you do not wish for the scheme to liaise with AIS on your behalf, the scheme can provide information on how to self-refer to AIS.

If you choose not to provide all or part of the information we request, we may not be able to provide you with services under the scheme that you would otherwise be eligible for.

Use of your personal, sensitive and health information

The department has obligations under the PDP Act around how we use and manage your personal information, including who has access to it, how it is stored, and who it can be shared with.

We will use your personal information and adoption information (and any sensitive or health information that you may provide) for the purpose of processing your application and determining your eligibility for redress.

Your information will only be accessed on a need-to-know basis by scheme employees, and staff are not permitted to share a participant's information to any other party outside the scheme without consent, unless otherwise required or authorised by law, including where it is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to a person's life, health, safety, or wellbeing.

We may use your de-identified information as part of an aggregated data set, for the purposes of reporting on the scheme or for the scheme's service planning.

Where you have provided your consent, we will provide your personal information to AIS, for the purpose of obtaining adoption information to support your application.

Accessing your personal, sensitive and health information

You can request access to the personal, sensitive and health information the scheme holds about you at any time. You can also request your personal information to be corrected if it is wrong, incomplete, or out of date.

Your request can be made by emailing forcedadoptions.redress@justice.vic.gov.au.

You can also make an application to the department's Freedom of Information Unit by emailing foi@justice.vic.gov.au, or in writing to GPO Box 4356, Melbourne VIC 3001

Within Victoria, adoption information is accessible through AIS, which can be contacted by emailing adoptionrecords@justice.vic.gov.au. As detailed previously, with your consent, the scheme can liaise with AIS on your behalf to obtain adoption information to help us process your redress application.

Data security

All areas of the department have security measures in place to protect your personal, sensitive and health information from misuse, loss, unauthorised access or disclosure.

The department stores information in accordance with policies aligned with the [Public Record Office Victoria's](#) guidelines, which set out how information is retained and securely disposed of.

Information security risks

We have policies, measures and employee training to protect the personal, sensitive, health and adoption information we have under our control.

We take reasonable measures to protect your information, however, you should be aware that there are risks associated with transmitting your information over the internet.

If you have concerns about providing your information over the internet, please contact the scheme.

Making a privacy complaint

If you wish to make a complaint about the way your personal, sensitive and health information has been handled, you can contact the scheme by emailing forcedadoptions.redress@justice.vic.gov.au.

Alternatively, you can make a privacy complaint to the department:

Manager, Information Privacy Unit
Department of Justice and
Community Safety
GPO Box 4356
Melbourne VIC 3001

Email: privacy@justice.vic.gov.au
Phone: 03 8684 0178

The department is committed to resolving privacy complaints in a timely, fair, and reasonable way. If you are not satisfied with how the department resolved your matter, you can make a complaint to the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC). OVIC is an independent body that investigates complaints about possible privacy breaches in the Victorian public sector. For more information, visit the OVIC website at www.ovic.vic.gov.au or call 1300 006 842.

You can also make a complaint to the Health Services Commissioner, if your complaint relates to the handling of your health information and you are not satisfied with how the department resolved your matter. For more information, visit www.hcc.vic.gov.au or call 1300 582 113.

Consent to collect information

I consent to the department collecting my personal information for the purpose of processing my application for redress. I also consent to the department collecting any sensitive or health information that I choose to include in my application (for example, in describing the impact of forced adoption practices on my health and wellbeing), which may be used in consideration of my application.

I understand that I may revoke my consent at any time by contacting the scheme by email at forcedadoptions.redress@justice.vic.gov.au.

- I have read the scheme's privacy collection notice and consent to the collection of personal, sensitive, and health information by the department which may be used in consideration of my redress application.

PART TWO: Information about you

This information is required to identify you as the person applying to the Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Scheme and to let us know how we can support you.

Q1 Your identity											
Title: For example: Ms, Mrs, Miss, other. You can also leave this space blank.											
Your current name:											
First name:											
Middle name:											
Surname:											
Preferred name:											
Did you have a different name when you gave birth to your baby?											
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Please provide your full name at the time:											
Note: We will need this information to connect any relevant adoption records to you. We will also need this information if you would like the scheme to request information from Adoption Information Services on your behalf to support your application.											
Please list any other previous names (if applicable):											
Q2 Date of birth				D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y
Q3 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander											
Do you identify as one of the following:											
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> Torres Strait Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander											
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/> No											

Q4 Preferred spoken language

Q5 Do you have a disability?

No Yes Prefer not to say

If yes, please briefly describe your disability:

Q6 Accessibility

Do you have any accessibility requirements?

No Yes Prefer not to say

If yes, please briefly describe your accessibility requirements.

The answer to this question will help us to support you to complete your application. For example, you may require an interpreter, or support to understand or complete forms.

Q7 Your contact details

Postal address:

Email address:

Telephone number:

Q8 Preferred contact method

Phone Email Post

Please let us know if you have any preferences in relation to how we contact you.

For example, to protect your privacy, you may request that we send correspondence in unmarked envelopes. You may request that we do not leave telephone messages or that we only call your mobile phone number.

Q9 Nominee or support person

Would you like to appoint a nominee or support person to act for you or to assist you with making an application?

Yes (If yes, please contact the scheme to obtain a nominee form) No

Q10 Do you have copies of adoption records?

Our support team will talk to you to confirm what documents are required to support your application.

Your answer to this question will help us to understand if you already have relevant documents and how we can assist you.

Do you already have copies of adoption records?

Yes. Please briefly describe the documents that you have (*important - please do not include copies of records with your application at this stage*):

No. Our support team will assist you to identify and access relevant documents to support your application.

Q11 The Forced Adoption Exceptional Circumstances Fund

If you received a payment from the Forced Adoption Exceptional Circumstances Fund you are still able to apply for this scheme.

With your consent, the scheme can access your application to the Exceptional Circumstances Fund to determine if you are eligible to have your scheme application prioritised.

Did you receive a payment from the Forced Adoption Exceptional Circumstances Fund?

Yes No

If yes, do you consent to the scheme accessing your application to the Forced Adoption Exceptional Circumstances Fund?

Yes No

Q12 Next of kin

If we become aware that you have passed away during the application assessment stage, we will continue to progress the assessment. If your application is in scope for a redress outcome, the redress payment will be paid into your estate.

You can choose a trusted person to be your next of kin who can discuss your application with our support team if this occurs. You should tell your next of kin to contact the scheme if this happens.

Please identify your next of kin:

Full name:

Relationship to you:

Phone number:

Email address:

Postal address:

Please contact our support team if you are unclear about this question, would like to appoint more than one next of kin, or have any other questions.

PART THREE: Information about your experience

The information you provide about the birth of your baby and your experience of forced adoption will assist us to process your application for redress.

We recognise that providing this information may be difficult. Our support team is available to help you.

If you had more than one experience of forced adoption, please advise our support team so that each experience can be documented separately. However, only one redress outcome is available for each applicant to the scheme.

Q13 When did you give birth to your baby?

Please enter the date:

D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y
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If you cannot remember the specific date, please provide an estimate as close as possible.

Q14 When were you and your baby separated?

Please describe the point in time at which you and your newborn baby were separated. Please be as specific as you can. For example, immediately after birth, or the number of hours, days, or weeks following birth. If you can, please provide the specific date.

Q15 Where did you give birth to your baby?

Victoria

Other Australian state or territory:

New South Wales South Australia Tasmania Australian Capital Territory
 Queensland Western Australia Northern Territory

Name of hospital or other service

Please provide the name of the hospital or other service where your baby was born. If you gave birth to your baby at home or another place/residence, please indicate this.

Q16 Where did you live during your pregnancy?

Victoria

Other Australian state or territory:

New South Wales South Australia Tasmania Australian Capital Territory
 Queensland Western Australia Northern Territory

What was your address?

If you cannot recall a specific address, please provide the suburb or city.

Did you spend time in a maternity home or mother-and-baby home?

Yes. Please provide the name of this institution and location. No

Name of institution:

Location of institution:

Q17 Where was your usual place of residence prior to becoming pregnant?

Victoria

Other Australian state or territory:

New South Wales South Australia Tasmania Australian Capital Territory
 Queensland Western Australia Northern Territory

What was your address? If you cannot recall a specific address, please provide the suburb or city.

You may wish to include information such as whether you were living alone, with family, friends, or housemates.

Q18 Please tell us about your experience of forced adoption.

Your response to this question will help us to understand the circumstances surrounding the separation of you and your newborn baby. Please tell us as much as you can in your own words.

We understand providing this information can be difficult. Our support team can help you with this part of your application and talk with you about the type of information needed.

Please provide your response to this question in a separate document and attach it to your application form.

- You may type your response (such as in a Word document) or handwrite it (please ensure any handwritten content is clear and legible).
- If you have previously prepared a document that details your experience, you can provide this to the scheme. For example, your submission to the *Inquiry into Responses to Historical Forced Adoption in Victoria*.

What to do next

Once you have filled in the application form and provided as much information as you can, please send it to the scheme:

By email: forcedadoptions.redress@justice.vic.gov.au

Or by post: Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Scheme
Department of Justice and Community Safety
PO Box 18217
Collins Street East VIC 8003

You will receive confirmation from the scheme that your application has been received.

Our support team will work with you to discuss any additional information required, and to provide advice and updates on the status of your application as it is progressed.

Application checklist

Use this checklist to ensure your application is complete.

- Part One:** Have you read the scheme's privacy collection notice and checked the consent box?
- Part Two:** Have you completed this section with your personal information:
 - Your contact details
 - How you would like us to contact you
 - Nominee details (if relevant)
 - Next of kin details (if relevant)
- Part Three:** Have you provided as much information as you can about your experience of forced adoption? Our support team is available to talk to you about this.



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