Information-sharing throughout the child protection and family support system is clearly and simply guided by the Child Protection Act 1999.

The Act applies to the whole system, including funded partners, specialist service providers, government agencies and the Independent Person for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child.

It focuses on the wellbeing and safety of children, young people, and unborn children after they are born.

Effective information-sharing means coordinated and integrated services.

Knowing how, when and what we can share will help us to get the best outcomes.

Under the Act, the family support sector can share information for particular purposes.

Services can share relevant information to promote a child’s safety and wellbeing, and to ensure children and families receive the help they need.

The Act tells us how we should share information with each other—and that our requests need to be purposeful, relevant and explicit.

There’s also guidance about consent.

We all need to make our best efforts to get consent from parents and children to share information.

If it’s not safe, practical or possible—and if it’s in the best interests of the child or young person—we can share information without consent.

The Information Sharing Guidelines show how the Act works in practice and how to store, secure, retain and dispose of information.

The Act requires that information must be kept confidential when performing our duties.

There are penalties for not complying.

Working within the Act means we’ll protect people’s privacy and keep their sensitive information safe.