

Australian Privacy Principle 13: Correction of personal information

APP 13 requires APP entities to take steps that are reasonable in the circumstances to correct information they hold to ensure that, having regard to the purpose for which the information is held, the information is accurate, up-to-date, complete, relevant and not misleading. Similar requirements exist under the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#).

(See [Important terms](#) for a definition of the terms accurate, up-to-date, complete and relevant)

The requirement under APP 13 arises in two circumstances:

1. if the entity is satisfied that, having regard to a purpose for which the information is held, the information is inaccurate, out-of-date, incomplete, irrelevant or misleading; or
2. the individual requests the entity to correct the information.

Correcting Commonwealth records

When correcting a Commonwealth record, care needs to be taken to not inadvertently alter or destroy a Commonwealth Record otherwise than in accordance with section 24 of the [Archives Act 1983](#).

Requests for correction of personal information: Guide for decision makers (Aug 2015)

Complaint Resolution has developed the document **Requests for correction of personal information: Guide for decision makers** to assist Defence personnel in responding to a request for correction made under APP 13. This document is available in [pdf](#) or [Word](#) format.

Correction of personal information in the course of your duty

If Defence receives information that suggests that personal information held by Defence is inaccurate, out-of-date, incomplete, irrelevant or misleading, Defence should take steps to correct the record. This should only be done if the person responsible for making the correction is **satisfied that, having regard to a purpose for which the information is held**, the information is inaccurate, out-of-date, incomplete, irrelevant or misleading.

In some circumstances, the person responsible for correcting the record may not need to take any additional steps to satisfy themselves that the information is held is inaccurate, out-of-date, incomplete, irrelevant or misleading and that the new information is correct.


Example: A Defence member notifies Defence of a change in residential address. Defence should take steps to update the record.

However, in other circumstances, particularly where a matter is more complex, the person responsible will need to undertake some action to be satisfied of the need for correction. Where the person responsible cannot be satisfied of the need to correct the information or of the accuracy of the new information, it may be necessary to annotate the record.

Correcting personal information on request

An individual may request an APP entity to correct the personal information the entity holds about them. It is also possible for an individual to request that a statement be associated with the information held by the entity.

A request to correct personal information under APP 13 does not have to be made in writing, however the individual can be asked to put their request in writing.

The  [Defence Privacy Policy](#) contains information on how individuals can request an update of their personal information. Where a person should make a request for the correction of their personal information will vary depending on the individual's relationship with Defence.

Once a request has been received, an APP entity has 30 days to respond to the request. This means Defence must either make a decision on the request within 30 days or must advise the individual why the decision cannot be made within 30 days, the reasons for the delay and the when the individual can expect the decision to be made.

As discussed under correction of personal information, in the course of your duty a correction should only be made if the person responsible for making the correction is satisfied that, having regard to a purpose for which the information is held, the information is inaccurate, out-of-date, incomplete, irrelevant or misleading.

If Defence refuses to make the change sought, the individual must be advised in writing and given reasons for the refusal. Advice about how to seek review of the decision must also be provided.

Notifying other entities of a correction

If an APP entity has corrected the personal information about an individual and the entity had previously disclosed the information to another APP entity, if requested by the individual, the APP entity that made the correction must take reasonable steps to notify the other entities to which it has disclosed the information of the correction.