



# How am I protected in a private session?

*A private session is a confidential meeting between you and a Commissioner from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (the Royal Commission).*

It is the most private way to share your experiences. Your information can only be disclosed in very limited circumstances and you get extra legal protections.

## Legal protections

If you have a private session, you will get the following legal protections from the *Royal Commissions Act 1902 (Cth)*:

Legal protections	Penalties for breaches
1. No information or document you give in, or for, a private session can be used as evidence against you in any civil or criminal case in any court.	There is no penalty, but the court will not allow the information or document to be used against you in any court case.
2. No one can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bribe you, or</li><li>• try to make you lie, or</li><li>• try to stop you from giving a document for a private session.</li></ul>	Jail for up to 5 years.
3. No one can stop you from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• attending a private session, or</li><li>• providing documents for a private session.</li></ul>	Jail for up to 1 year.

Legal protections	Penalties for breaches
<p>4. No one can cause you any:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hurt,</li> <li>• punishment,</li> <li>• damage,</li> <li>• loss, or</li> <li>• disadvantage</li> </ul> <p>because of any information you give in a private session, or because you attend a private session.</p>	<p>Fines up to \$1,000 or jail for up to 1 year.</p>
<p>5. At work, no one can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dismiss you from your job, or</li> <li>• prejudice you in your job</li> </ul> <p>because of any information you provide in a private session, or because you attend a private session.</p>	<p>Fines up to \$1,000 or jail for up to 1 year. *</p> <p>*This does not apply if you were dismissed or disadvantaged for some reason other than being part of a private session.</p>
<p>6. No one can record, use or share any information you give during, or for, a private session without your consent.</p>	<p>Fines up to \$2,000 or jail for up to 1 year.</p>

## How do these legal protections and penalties work?

You get these legal protections when you take part in a private session. But the penalties for breaches are not automatically imposed.

If you or someone you know has been bribed, hurt or disadvantaged for attending a private session, you can choose to report it to police for investigation. The Defence and Veterans Legal Service can discuss your options with you.

## How is my information protected?

See the 'What happens after a private session?' factsheet to find out how your information is protected in a private session.

## Who can I contact if I have more questions?

**Call us on 1800 33 1800 for free legal advice.**

The Defence and Veterans Legal Service is independent and separate from the Royal Commission, the Department of Defence, and the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Any conversation between yourself and a lawyer will be confidential and protected by legal privilege.