Privacy & POPIA Policy

Fresh Start Women's Clinic | Website and patient information

Your privacy matters. This notice explains how personal information is used for enquiries, appointments, healthcare and practice administration. It applies to our Marshalltown, Midrand and Braamfontein branches and our website, freshstartwomensclinic.com. POPIA means the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013.

1. Information we may collect

Depending on the service, we may collect your name, contact details, date of birth, identity or passport details, address, appointment preferences, medical aid details, payment references and correspondence. Clinical information may include your medical history, medicines, allergies, symptoms, pregnancy information, examination findings, scans, test results, consent forms and treatment records. We seek only information relevant to the purpose.

2. How we obtain information

Information is usually supplied by you through a booking enquiry, consultation, telephone call, email, WhatsApp message or patient form. Where appropriate and lawful, information may also come from a referring practitioner, laboratory, medical aid or person authorised to assist you. Basic technical information may be generated when you visit the website, depending on its configuration.

3. Why we use it

We use relevant information to answer enquiries, arrange and confirm appointments, assess and provide care, issue prescriptions, communicate results, coordinate referrals and follow-up, process payments and medical aid claims, maintain records, resolve complaints and meet legal or professional duties. We will explain whether requested information is required or optional. Without essential details, we may be unable to complete a booking, claim or provide safe care.

4. Health information and lawful processing

Health and reproductive information receive special protection. Processing must have a lawful basis, including appropriate healthcare grounds, consent where required, or applicable legal duties. Patient confidentiality remains central. Website use is not blanket consent to every use of your information, and privacy acknowledgement is separate from consent to a medical procedure.

5. Sharing and confidentiality

Relevant information may be shared with authorised clinic staff, treating or referring practitioners, laboratories, pharmacies, medical aids, payment providers and service providers supporting the practice, where needed and lawful. Service providers handling data on our behalf must act under appropriate confidentiality and security obligations. Disclosure to authorities or others may occur when legally required or otherwise lawfully justified. We do not sell patient information or disclose it to relatives, partners or employers merely because they request it.

6. Contact preferences and discreet communication

Tell us which telephone number or email address is safe to use and whether messages may be left. We aim to keep appointment messages discreet. Email, WhatsApp and shared devices can expose information; avoid sending unnecessary medical documents, ID copies or payment-card details through general website enquiries. Ask the clinic for an appropriate route for sensitive records. Social media comments are not a confidential channel for patient information.

Your Choices & Privacy Rights

7. Security, retention and overseas providers

Our policy is to use reasonable organisational and technical safeguards, restrict access to authorised people and protect information held by service providers. No system is risk-free. Records are retained for relevant care, legal and professional requirements, then securely disposed of or de-identified when appropriate. If a provider stores or processes information outside South Africa, applicable transfer safeguards must be met. Security compromises will be assessed and notifications made where POPIA requires them.

8. Your privacy rights

Subject to applicable conditions, you may request access, correction or deletion; object to processing; withdraw consent where processing relies on it; and complain. Withdrawal does not undo earlier lawful processing. Some medical records must be retained. We may verify identity before responding and explain any lawful restriction or applicable access fee.

9. Marketing, photographs and testimonials

Our policy is to obtain a separate, voluntary opt-in for electronic promotional messages. Declining marketing does not affect your care. You can opt out using the message instructions or by contacting the clinic. Appointment reminders and care messages are separate from marketing. We require specific permission before publishing an identifiable patient photograph, story or testimonial; agreeing to treatment does not authorise publication.

10. Cookies and external services

Website functions may use cookies or similar technologies. Any analytics, advertising tools, embedded maps or third-party booking features must be explained in a cookie notice reflecting the live website, with suitable controls for optional tracking. Links to other websites are governed by their own privacy notices. Our cookie details must be confirmed before publication; this draft does not assume that particular tracking tools are installed.

11. Children and authorised representatives

Information relating to children or patients represented by another person must be handled under the relevant privacy, confidentiality and healthcare rules. Staff will verify the representative's authority where necessary. A person assisting with a booking is not automatically entitled to the patient's clinical records.

12. Requests, complaints and policy updates

For a privacy request, contact the clinic through the published Locations & Contact page and ask for the Information Officer. Provide enough information to identify your request without sending unnecessary sensitive details. You may also complain directly to the Information Regulator (South Africa): **POPIAComplaints@inforegulator.org.za**, **010 023 5200**, or inforegulator.org.za/complaints/. The current policy version and revision date will be displayed on the website when updated.

Suggested booking-form wording

Privacy acknowledgement: I have read the Privacy & POPIA Policy and understand how my information will be used to respond to this enquiry and arrange my appointment.

Optional marketing consent - separate, unticked box: I agree to receive promotional messages from Fresh Start Women's Clinic by my selected contact channel. I can withdraw this consent at any time.

Before publishing - for the clinic and developer: Add the verified legal responsible party name, physical address and direct Information Officer contact. Confirm the actual service providers, overseas processing, security practices, record-retention schedule and cookie inventory; replace section 10 with the live cookie notice. This policy is a draft of commitments, not verification that operational POPIA requirements have been implemented.

Legal reference: Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013, gov.za/documents/protection-personal-information-act. Regulator contact: inforegulator.org.za/contact-us/. Draft prepared 4 October 2026.