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| About protective markings |
| Guide for clients, partners and third parties who share or provide official services |
| OFFICIAL |

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| Information obtained, received, reused, or stored for an official purpose or in supporting official activities **must have** one of these protective markings (including personal information) applied.  Please ask the originator about the handling requirements of the information with respect to the protective marking. | OFFICIAL  Compromise of this information could cause MINOR harm or damage to our operations, organisations or individuals.  This is most of our routine business operations and services information.  This may include information (or an opinion) about an identifiable individual (e.g., members of the public, staff etc) but would not include information defined as sensitive information under the Privacy Act. | OFFICIAL: Sensitive  This information is official information that, due to its sensitive nature requires limited dissemination.  Compromise of this information could cause LIMITED harm or damage to our operations, organisations or individuals resulting in one or more of the following:   * Breach of personal information (including sensitive information as defined in Schedule 1 of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*) * Humiliation, distress or embarrassment * Non-life-threatening injury * Financial hardship   E.g., Staff, clients and commercially sensitive information. | PROTECTED  This information is official information that has been evaluated as valuable, important, and sensitive.  Compromise of this information could cause MAJOR harm or damage to our operations, organisations or individuals resulting in one or more of the following:   * Breach of personal information (including sensitive information as defined in Schedule 1 of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*) * Humiliation, distress or embarrassment * Irreversible or life-threatening injury * Direct threat to life * Financial hardship (e.g., bankruptcy or dissolution of assets).     E.g., Child protection records, identities of clients where legislation restricts the disclosure of their identity, and similar information. | PROTECTED //  Cabinet-In-Confidence  Any information which:   * is or forms part of a document to be considered by Cabinet, even if that document is in draft or withdrawn prior to consideration * is attached to a document to be considered by Cabinet and is not already in the public domain * contains or refers to a Cabinet decision or deliberation or relates or refers to the development or progress of a submission.   (More information on page 2). |

# About protective markings

## How to handle information with protective markings

Protective markings are visual sensitivity cues and are required to meet the Victorian Protective Data Security Framework (VPDSF).

If information does not have a protective marking, contact the originator to understand its confidentiality requirements and enquire which protective marking is appropriate. Protective markings should not be altered without consulting with the originator of the information.

More information can be found in the [Office of Victorian Information Commissioner’s Protective Marking user guide](https://ovic.vic.gov.au/resource/user-guide-handling-protectively-marked-information-v2-0/) <https://ovic.vic.gov.au/resource/user-guide-handling-protectively-marked-information-v2-0/>.

## Cabinet-In-Confidence information handling requirements

Cabinet-In-Confidence (sometimes referred as ‘CIC’) information must be handled in compliance with the Victorian governments *Cabinet Handbook*. More information can be found on the Victorian government’s website and their [Guidelines for working in government](https://www.vic.gov.au/guidelines-working-government) <https://www.vic.gov.au/guidelines-working-government>.

## Handling information with a protective marking from former protective marking schemes

Information that has been protectively marked under a former scheme must be reassessed under the current VPDSF protective marking scheme when actively used. Documents not in active use do not need to be reassessed, or re-marked. Please request the originator to re-assess the information and replace the former protective marking.

The new protective marking scheme is heavily influenced and aligns with the Commonwealth government’s Information Security requirements of the [Protective Security Policy Framework (PSPF)](https://www.protectivesecurity.gov.au/information/sensitive-classified-information/Pages/default.aspx) <https://www.protectivesecurity.gov.au/information/sensitive-classified-information/Pages/default.aspx>.

## Handling information with a protective marking from former protective marking schemes

Table 1 - Protective marking comparisons from former schemes

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| Some of the protective markings from former schemes | New (current) protective marking scheme under VPDSS |
| No equivalent. | ‘unofficial’ (informal protective marking and therefore, invisible). |
| CONFIDENTIAL | No direct replacement. Re-assess the information and apply an appropriate protective marking. |
| UNCLASSIFIED | OFFICIAL |
| FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY | OFFICIAL: Sensitive |
| PROTECTED | PROTECTED |
| Protected: Vic Cabinet  Sensitive: Vic Cabinet | PROTECTED // Cabinet-In-Confidence |

* ‘CONFIDENTIAL’ (former marking) -> No direct replacement. Re-assess the information and apply an appropriate protective marking
* UNCLASSIFIED (former marking) – replace with ‘OFFICIAL’.
* FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY (former marking) – replace with ‘OFFICIAL: Sensitive’.
* PROTECTED protective marking is unchanged.
* ‘Protected: Vic Cabinet’ and ‘Sensitive: Vic Cabinet’ (former marking) – replace with ‘PROTECTED // Cabinet-In-Confidence’.

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