



SARSAS Third Party Request for Notes – Information for Clients

This information explains how SARSAS responds to third-party requests for notes. It is written to help you understand our approach and reassure you about how we prioritise your wellbeing and privacy.

When SARSAS receives a request for your notes from the police, or another third party, we understand this can feel worrying or confusing. This page explains our process clearly and gently, so you know what to expect and what your choices are.

When we receive a request for your counselling or support notes:

1) We will let you know about the request

We will contact you to explain that a request has been made and what it is asking for (unless the police tell us that contacting you could put you or someone else at risk, or could seriously affect the investigation).

It's important to know that a police request is a request, not a requirement, and your notes are not shared automatically.

2) We will invite you to share your views

You are not being asked to give consent for your notes to be shared. Instead, we invite you to tell us how you feel about the request.

If you do not want your notes to be shared, you can tell us this. What you share with us really matters and will be taken seriously. Your wishes are a strong reason not to share your notes, unless there is a serious reason why sharing is legally necessary (for example, to prevent serious harm to someone).

You are not responsible for the final decision.

3) We will offer you the opportunity to view your notes

If it feels helpful, we will offer you the chance to view your notes with a member of the SARSAS team, either: in person, or online.

This will be a confidential and supportive conversation, with time for questions and space to check in afterwards.



Viewing your notes is completely optional and does not mean that your notes will be shared with the police.

4) SARSAS will review the request and make a decision

The Service Manager or Coordinator will carefully assess the request against strict legal rules. Many requests do not meet the legal threshold and are refused.

Where information is shared, it is only because SARSAS has decided that doing so is lawful and justified.

5) If information is shared, notes are carefully redacted

If SARSAS decides that some information can lawfully be shared your notes are reviewed carefully, information that is not relevant is removed (this is called redaction), and names, contact details, and private information about other people are taken out. This process is important and takes time.

6) Notes are shared securely

Any information that is shared is sent securely, for example by: secure email, secure post, or in-person collection.

Only the minimum necessary information is ever shared.

Will this affect my support?

No. Your support from SARSAS does not depend on whether notes are shared, does not depend on cooperating with the police and will continue regardless of what you decide to tell us about your wishes.

Who can I talk to if I'm unsure or worried?

You can contact your counsellor or support worker, or the SARSAS staff member who contacted you about the request.

We know this process can bring up difficult feelings, and you don't have to go through it on your own.