ICPHAA

Irish Counselling, Psychotherapy & Allied Healthcare Professionals Association

GOVERNANCE OF THE ASSOCIATION

Public-Facing Transparency Policy

What ICPHAA publishes about itself, its standards and its members' status, how the public can request information, and the limits that confidentiality and data protection place on disclosure.

REFERENCE	ICPHAA-POL-36	VERSION	1.0
EFFECTIVE	9 November 2026	NEXT REVIEW	9 November 2027
POLICY OWNER	ICPHAA Board of Directors		

GOVERNANCE OF THE ASSOCIATION · ICPHAA-POL-36

Public-Facing Transparency Policy

APPLIES TO	The ICPHAA Board of Directors, Registry and Accreditation Department in publishing and disclosing information; members and the public who seek information from the Association.
VERSION	1.0 · effective 9 November 2026 · next review 9 November 2027
POLICY OWNER	ICPHAA Board of Directors
CONTACT	ICPHAA Registry · admin@icphaa.ie

AT A GLANCE

- ICPHAA is open by default about its standards, policies, governance and how to raise a concern.
- Anyone can check a member's current status at www.icphaa.ie/verify-certificate.
- ICPHAA describes itself honestly: a voluntary, not-for-profit association, not a statutory regulator.
- Requests for information are answered promptly, with reasons given for anything withheld.
- Confidentiality, data protection and fairness to individuals set the limits of disclosure.

CONTENTS

1 Purpose 2
2 Scope 3
3 Principles 3
4 What ICPHAA publishes 4
5 Member status and verification 4
6 Honest representation of the Association 5
7 Requests for information 5
8 Limits on disclosure 6
9 Responsibilities and concerns 6
10 Monitoring and review 7

1. Purpose

Transparency is how a professional association earns and keeps public trust. People who are choosing a practitioner, who have a concern about one, or who simply want to know what a professional association stands for, are entitled to clear, accurate and accessible information.

This policy sets out the commitment of the Irish Counselling, Psychotherapy & Allied Healthcare Professionals Association (ICPHAA) to openness: what it publishes, how the public can check a member's status, how requests for information are handled, and where the limits of disclosure lie.

2. Scope

This policy covers information about ICPHAA itself, its standards and processes, and the status of its members. It applies to the ICPHAA Board of Directors, the Registry and the Accreditation Department when publishing or disclosing information, and to anyone, whether a member or a member of the public, who asks ICPHAA for information. Requests by individuals for their own personal data are dealt with under the Legal & Data Governance Policy.

The policy complements the External Relations Policy, which deals with how ICPHAA speaks to the media and works with other organisations, and the Document Control Policy, which makes sure that published documents are current and approved.

3. Principles

- **Open by default.** Information about how ICPHAA works is published unless there is a good reason not to.
- **Accuracy.** Published information is correct, current and not misleading, and errors are corrected promptly.
- **Accessibility.** Information is written in plain language, easy to find on www.icphaa.ie and available in alternative formats on request.
- **Fairness.** Openness is balanced with fairness to individuals, including members who are the subject of concerns that have not been decided.
- **Reasons.** Where information is withheld, ICPHAA explains why, as far as it can.
- **Timeliness.** Information is published when it is approved and updated promptly when it changes, so that what people read reflects the current position.

These principles apply to every channel ICPHAA uses, including its website, member communications, certificates and verification records, and answers given by email.

4. What ICPHAA publishes

INFORMATION	WHERE TO FIND IT
The Vision Statement & Ethos and the ICPHAA Code of Conduct for Members	www.icphaa.ie
The policies and procedures of the ICPHAA policy and procedure framework, with version and review dates	www.icphaa.ie
Membership categories and the ICPHAA accreditation requirements	www.icphaa.ie, published by the Accreditation Department
How to raise a concern about a member, and the Complaints Procedures	www.icphaa.ie
Current status of members	www.icphaa.ie/verify-certificate
Membership fees and other charges	www.icphaa.ie
Information about the Association's governance, including the Board of Directors	www.icphaa.ie
Summary information on the Association's activities, finances and, in anonymised form, concerns received and their outcomes	Reports to members, as the Board decides
How ICPHAA handles personal data	The Legal & Data Governance Policy and the Privacy Policy — Website Forms

5. Member status and verification

Anyone can check whether a person is a current ICPHAA member, and in which membership category, at www.icphaa.ie/verify-certificate. The verification service is a key public protection measure.

- The information shown is limited to what is needed for verification, such as the member's name, membership category, status and membership or certificate number.
- Members are told at joining that their status will be verifiable in this way.
- The Registry updates status promptly when membership is renewed, changes category, lapses or ends.
- Certificates issued by ICPHAA carry details that allow them to be checked against the verification page, so that a certificate shown to a client or employer can be confirmed as genuine and current.
- Employers, training providers and members of the public are encouraged to check status online rather than relying on a printed certificate alone, since a certificate shows status only at the date it was issued.
- Where a decision under the Fitness to Practise Policy or Disciplinary Procedures affects a member's status, for example suspension, the verification information is updated as those procedures provide.

Outcomes of concerns

ICPHAA balances openness about how it handles concerns with fairness to the people involved. In particular:

- ICPHAA does not publish the names of members who are the subject of a concern that is still being considered, or that was not upheld.
- Where an outcome changes a member's status, the change is reflected on the verification page as the relevant procedure provides.
- Anonymised summary information about the number and type of concerns received and their outcomes may be reported to members, so that the profession can learn from them, without identifying any client, complainant or member.

> WHAT VERIFICATION MEANS
>
> Verification confirms ICPHAA membership status only. It is not statutory registration. To check whether a practitioner is registered with CORU, consult CORU's own register.

6. Honest representation of the Association

Transparency begins with being honest about what ICPHAA is, and also about what it does. The Association explains in plain terms how membership categories are awarded, what accreditation involves, how concerns about members are handled and what the outcomes can be, so that members of the public can make informed choices and know what to expect if they raise a concern.

Transparency also means being honest about the Association's status. In all its publications and communications, ICPHAA describes itself as a voluntary, not-for-profit professional membership association. It does not claim to be a statutory regulator, to license practitioners, to have government recognition or statutory powers, or to guarantee any outcome for clients or members. It explains clearly that statutory registration of counsellors and psychotherapists is a matter for CORU. ICPHAA expects its members, partners and accredited training providers to represent the Association with the same accuracy.

7. Requests for information

1. Requests can be made in writing to the ICPHAA Registry at admin@icphaa.ie. No particular form of words is needed.
2. The Registry acknowledges the request and, if it is unclear, asks for clarification.
3. If the information is already published, the Registry directs the requester to it.
4. If not, the Registry decides whether the information can be released, consulting the Board or others as needed, and taking account of the limits below.
5. The Registry responds promptly with the information or, where any is withheld, an explanation of why.

6. A requester who is dissatisfied can ask for the response to be reviewed by a director not involved in the original decision.

Requests for a person's own personal data are handled as data subject access requests under the Legal & Data Governance Policy. Enquiries from journalists are handled in line with the External Relations Policy. ICPHAA does not charge for responding to reasonable requests for information about how the Association works, and it will help anyone who needs assistance to make a request, for example because of a disability.

8. Limits on disclosure

Openness has limits. ICPHAA will not disclose information where doing so would:

- breach the confidentiality of clients, complainants, witnesses or members, or data protection law;
- prejudice a concern, investigation or hearing that has not concluded, or be unfair to a member before a decision has been made;
- disclose legally privileged advice or commercially sensitive information;
- put any person at risk of harm.

Where only part of a document is affected, ICPHAA releases the rest where it is practical to do so.

Correcting published information

If ICPHAA learns that information it has published is wrong, including information on the verification page, it corrects it promptly. Where the error was significant, for example where it could have misled someone about a member's status or about an ICPHAA requirement, the correction is dated and, where appropriate, drawn to the attention of those likely to have relied on it. Members who notice an error in their own verification details should tell the Registry straight away.

9. Responsibilities and concerns

- **The ICPHAA Board of Directors** owns this policy and decides what summary information is reported to members.
- **The Registry** keeps published information current, operates the verification service and handles requests.
- **The Accreditation Department** publishes and maintains the ICPHAA accreditation requirements.

Anyone who finds published information that is inaccurate or out of date, or who is unhappy with how a request was handled, can contact the ICPHAA Registry at admin@icphaa.ie.

10. Monitoring and review

The Registry checks the accuracy of published information regularly and reports to the Board on requests received. The Board reviews this policy by the date shown on the cover, and earlier if the law, statutory regulation or the Association's activities change.

READ ALONGSIDE

- External Relations Policy
- Legal & Data Governance Policy
- Privacy Policy — Website Forms
- Organisational Governance
- Document Control Policy
- Public Protection Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

VERSION	DATE	CHANGE	APPROVED BY
1.0	9 November 2026	Reissued in the ICPHAA policy framework (replaces the former ICPA version).	ICPHAA Board of Directors

Support · Develop · Empower

ICPHAA
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