



# Additional legacy information on the COVIDSafe App

3 January 2023

The COVIDSafe app was launched on 26 April 2020 as a tool to assist state and territory health officials identify and contact people who may have been exposed to COVID-19.

The app used Bluetooth® technology on a user's mobile phone to record close contact with other app users. When a user came into close contact with another app user, the phones exchanged a 'digital handshake'. The details of the contact were securely exchanged and recorded between phones through end-to-end encryption.

If an individual tested positive for COVID-19, their local state or territory health official would contact them and ask them, if they had the COVIDSafe app, to voluntarily upload their digital handshake information for use in contact tracing. Downloading and using COVIDSafe was always voluntary.

On 14 May 2020, Parliament passed the *Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Act 2020* to support the COVIDSafe app and ensure users' privacy was protected. From 16 May 2020 to 26 September 2021, the Digital Transformation Agency was the sole National COVIDSafe Data Store Administrator. Between 27 September and 4 October 2021, the function of the National COVIDSafe Data Store Administrator transitioned to the Department of Health and Aged Care, and the department became the sole National COVIDSafe Data Store Administrator from 5 October 2021.

On 31 July 2022, the Minister for Health made a determination under section 94Y of the *Privacy Act 1988* to end of the COVIDSafe data period as the COVIDSafe app. The Privacy (Public Health Contact Information) (End of the COVIDSafe data period) Determination 2022 came into force on 16 August 2022.

Once the COVIDSafe data period ended, the department was responsible for ensuring all privacy obligations were met under section 94P of the Act. The department deleted all app data from the National COVIDSafe Data Store including all:

- registration information
- encrypted user IDs
- device diagnostic information
- contact data.

No COVID app data has been retained.

On 16 November, the legislation supporting COVIDSafe was repealed, in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*.

The COVIDSafe app is no longer available to download, and people should delete the COVIDSafe app from their device/mobile phone. This will delete all COVIDSafe app information from the device/mobile phone.