

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

DEFINITIONS:

- Confidentiality is the formal relationship between the client(s) and the service provider(s) in which the service provider agrees to hold confidential, unless otherwise given permission, any information that is shared in the context of the worker/client relationship. No information about any client will be shared with any member of the public.
- Client means both an individual or a group. No client shall have access to information arising from a worker/client contact in which they were not a participant.
- Service provider means any paid or volunteer staff member.

REVIEW OF FILES:

- All records are the property of the County and will be kept in locked files. They are available only to County staff (paid or volunteer) as appropriate. Except for supervisory review or specific visitation forms, client files will be kept on site or in the County Archive files. Clients may arrange with the Division Manager to review their files. Clients will be allowed to read only that information of which they are a part.

EXCEPTIONS:

- For research, reporting, or teaching purposes, statistical information may be drawn from case records but only when precautions have been taken to disguise the identity of the people involved.
- In a medical emergency, to medical or rescue personnel, and at staff discretion.
- To law enforcement agencies when it is reasonably believed the client's life is in danger or had been a victim of a crime. State laws require agencies to report evidence of abuse/neglect, or if it is believed the client may be a danger to self or others.
- To other staff/volunteers and professionals involved in the case.
- There may be occasions where the case record is subpoenaed by the court. In such cases, the Division Director will notify the client and seek legal council.

SELF-DISCLOSURE POLICY

INFORMATION REGARDING OTHER STAFF - PAID OR VOLUNTEER

It is the policy of the County not to give out the home telephone numbers, addresses, or other personal information to non-County related people. When a person from outside the County requests such information, politely inform the caller of the policy and offer to relay their name and phone number to the staff or volunteer in question.

PERSONAL DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

This is a sensitive issue and staff and volunteers are expected to use good judgment in revealing information about their personal lives to clients. There are times when self-disclosure can be used therapeutically! Part of your developing professionalism is knowing when to reveal your own experiences. When in doubt, either before or after a client contact, ask Division Staff for feedback.