

Confidentiality Policy¹

(Program Name) employees and volunteers are committed to respecting the child's right to privacy by maintaining confidentiality in a manner that is consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

Volunteers:

CASA/GAL volunteers are responsible for maintaining confidentiality of all information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a party to their case, another program case, another volunteer, or staff. Volunteers are not authorized to solicit other persons outside the CASA program to aid them with specific duties outlined in the CASA position description.

A CASA/GAL volunteer becomes an officer of the court (**or Guardian ad litem, if applicable**) upon assignment to a case and their court order details the confidential information they have access to. Any information pertaining to the individual families or children that the CASA/GAL volunteer receives in the discharge of his or her duties is confidential and must not be used for any purpose other than advocating for the child(ren) on the case to which they are assigned. This information must not be discussed with anyone except the following:

- County Juvenile Court
- CASA Program staff
- CPS
- Others whose request for access to confidential information is permitted by statute or by the court.

The volunteer should confer with their volunteer supervisor before releasing their case file to any involved party.

Volunteers must ensure care with their case file. Volunteers should maintain their files in a way and place that does not allow for any breach of confidentiality. Volunteers must return their entire case files to the program within two weeks of case closure.

Violation of confidentiality can result in the discrediting of the CASA program and may be cause for immediate dismissal.

Employees:

All information provided by clients or potential clients is confidential and may not be disclosed outside the agency without written permission from the client unless required by law. If the client is incompetent, written permission must be obtained from the client's legal guardian or representative. If there is any question about whether a disclosure is appropriate or necessary, the case manager must consult with the supervisor and the Executive Director.

Program staff should take measures to ensure that all electronic and hard copy correspondence, files and records are safely and securely maintained. Case files must remain in a locked cabinet, to which all staff have a key in order to ensure staff can access records at any time. All staff must log off of their computers whenever they leave the office and each monitor must be password protected.

Care will be taken by all staff and volunteers to protect the identity of clients within e-mail transmissions by omitting the client's name where possible. Staff and volunteers should use the client's initials when identification is necessary within e-mails.

Any confidential materials received from another individual or agency, including all information kept on file for governing board, advisory committee members, staff, volunteers and donors, may not be disclosed to anyone outside the CASA/GAL program's professional staff, except by court order or written consent of the party involved.

¹ Used with permission from the Ohio CASA/GAL Association

Approved by Board of Trustees 10-08