

CONFIDENTIALITY

Policy

Confidentiality is an important, legal issue. Individuals acting as agents of the **CARC** staff must respect the privacy of clients, staff, board members, and volunteers, and hold in confidence all information obtained.

For HIV/AIDS Related Matters

Confidentiality is an important, legal issue. Individuals acting as agents of the **CARC** staff must respect the privacy of clients and hold in confidence all information obtained.

1. Staff will not disclose to anyone over the phone that **CARC** works with a particular HIV/AIDS infected person unless the employee knows whom he/she is speaking to and for what purpose they have called (a signed release of information from the client must be on file unless the employee is speaking to an authorized individual (supervisor, officer of the court, etc.)
2. Staff must inform clients fully about the limits of confidentiality in a given situation, the purposes for which information is obtained and how it may be used.
3. All individual case files shall be coded. All files shall begin with the birth date of the client and then followed by the first two letters of the first name and last name. For example, for client John Merz, the file shall be marked 032864JOME. All files must be labeled in this fashion.
4. All documentation that is kept outside of the files should also be coded in this fashion. Exceptions include the use of the first four letters (JOME) on agendas, minutes of team meetings and waitlist. This includes phone messages, scrap paper etc. Any paper with client name that does not belong in file should be shredded.
5. Any phone contacts, face to face meetings and letters with other providers (not otherwise authorized by law) must be backed up with a signed approved **Release of Information/Informed Consent**. These releases should specify that employee(s) from the **CARC** are allowed to discuss the client's situation.
6. All client files shall be kept in locked drawers/file cabinets in the office. The drawers/file in designated cabinets will be locked when staff is not in the office.
7. No client file or paperwork should be left on desks or tables without staff present. Please put all files away before leaving desk or work area.
8. Staff should not use client names or discuss confidential client information except with those staff members on the release of information form. Please make certain clients are not discussed with office doors open, in the waiting area or in the presence of other clients.

Below are CT statutes governing the HIV-related information. By signing this form, I understand and agree to abide by the laws of Connecticut and the policies stated above.

_____ Staff Signature
_____ Date

Sec. 19a-581. Definitions. (8) "**Confidential HIV-related information**" means any information pertaining to the protected individual or obtained pursuant to a release of confidential HIV-related information, concerning whether a person has been counseled regarding HIV infection, has been the subject of an HIV-related test, or has HIV infection, HIV-related illness or AIDS, or information which identifies or reasonably could identify a person as having one or more of such conditions, including information pertaining to such individual's partners;

(9) "Release of confidential HIV-related information" means a written authorization for disclosure of confidential HIV-related information which is signed by the protected individual or a person authorized to consent to health care for the individual and which is dated and specifies to whom disclosure is authorized, the purpose for such disclosure and the time period during which the release is to be effective. A general authorization for the release of medical or other information is not a release of confidential HIV-related information, unless such authorization specifically indicates its dual purpose as a general authorization and an authorization for the release of confidential HIV-related information and complies with the requirements of this subdivision.

Sec. 19a-583. Limitations on disclosure of HIV-related information. (a) No person who obtains confidential HIV-related information may disclose or be compelled to disclose such information, except to the following:

(1) The protected individual, his legal guardian or a person authorized to consent to health care for such individual; (2) Any person who secures a release of confidential HIV-related information; (3) A federal, state or local health officer when such disclosure is mandated or authorized by federal or state law; (4) A health care provider or health facility when knowledge of the HIV-related information is necessary to provide appropriate care or treatment to the protected individual or a child of the individual or when confidential HIV-related information is already recorded in a medical chart or record and a health care provider has access to such record for the purpose of providing medical care to the protected individual; (5) A medical examiner to assist in determining the cause or circumstances of death; (6) Health facility staff committees or accreditation or oversight review organizations which are conducting program monitoring, program evaluation or service reviews; (7) A health care provider or other person in cases where such provider or person in the course of his occupational duties has had a significant exposure to HIV infection, provided criteria are met; (8) Employees of hospitals for mental illness operated by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. Disclosure shall be limited to as few employees as possible and only to those employees with a direct need to receive the information to achieve the purpose authorized by this subdivision.