

Lakeshore Community Services

**POLICY AND PROCEDURES RELATING TO CONFIDENTIALITY  
FOR ALL PROGRAMS OF LCS**



Approved by the Board of Directors of the LCS

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**POLICY**

It is the policy of Lakeshore Community Services to maintain the confidentiality and often the anonymity of clients using our services and not to disclose any identifying information about the client and his/her circumstances except as authorized by the client. All statistics documented from enquiries will be in aggregate form and will contain no identifying information without the expressed formal consent of the person involved. Staff and volunteers must hold in strict confidence any information obtained in the course of their work or association with Lakeshore Community Services.

In some extraordinary circumstances, in the course of an inquiry or other agency activities, a client may reveal potentially dangerous or profoundly critical circumstances. In such a case, the staff or volunteer will request that an anonymous client agree to identify his/herself and accept immediate and appropriate intervention. If the client refuses, the counselor must respect this decision. Formal documentation of the circumstances should be made. Staff and volunteers are directed to seek guidance in such matters from their supervisor. It may be appropriate to report such a circumstance to the appropriate authority or agency, even if the name or identity of the client is not available. Staff members who are aware of any circumstance involving elderly/vulnerable persons abuse must meet all legal obligations to report such circumstances to the appropriate authority.

**PROCEDURES**

1. All Staff and volunteers will acknowledge their signature on this form, their understanding, acceptance and agreement to abide by the *Confidentiality Policy and Procedures* as set out in this document.
2. Clients of the agency who believe that their expectation of confidentiality has been violated in contravention of the *Confidentiality Policy* have the right to have their complaint or concern addressed by the agency.

2.1 Initially, the complaint or concern should be directed to the Executive

Director or Program Supervisor who will report to the Executive Director of the agency. Whenever possible, the issue should be outlined formally, in writing. In the absence of a written statement by the client, the Executive Director must record the concern in writing in a form which expresses the concern clearly and to the satisfaction of the individual and must immediately inform the President of the Board.

## **Policy and Procedures Related to Confidentiality**

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- 2.2 The Executive Director must make a formal reply to the client within two weeks of receipt of the complaint and will ensure that the response is in a form, which is accessible to the client. The Executive Director must record the client's level of satisfaction with the response and identify whether the client wishes to pursue the matter to the next step. The Executive Director must report to the Board of Directors that a complaint concerning a violation of confidentiality has been made.
- 2.3 If dissatisfied with the response of the Executive Director, the client may choose to request that the situation be reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. In response to the formal request of the client, the Executive Director must immediately submit documentation of the concern to the Executive Committee and the client must be offered the opportunity to meet with the Executive Committee or a designate to discuss the concern. The Executive Committee must respond formally to the concern within four weeks of initial receipt of the information. The client shall receive and official response in a form which is accessible. Throughout Step 2.3, it is critical to ensure that the anonymity of the client in relation to the Executive Committee is preserved unless the client chooses to discuss the situation in person.
- 2.4 The Executive Committee must report to the Board, without identifying information, the results of any complaint brought to its attention through this process.

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By my signature I acknowledge that I have read, understood and agree to abide by the *Confidentiality Policy and Procedures* as outlined in this document.

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**NAME**

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**SIGNATURE**

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**DATE**