

UMATILLA MORROW COUNTY HEAD START CONFIDENTIALITY

POLICY:

Umatilla-Morrow Head Start, Inc will protect the confidentiality of all student and client information in accordance with both Oregon and Federal laws. Protected information includes, but is not limited to, student and client records, USDA provider records, the CCR&R data base, and staff personnel records. Confidential information is released only with a signed Authorization for Release of Information form.

PROCEDURE:

1. The lives of individuals and families are private matters that are protected from public scrutiny except when:
 - Information is required in order to provide requested services; or
 - A crime has been committed or in certain cases, when there is a solid basis for suspecting one.
2. Information about persons or families may be collected only when needed in the performance of duty and only the specific information required may be gathered. Any information gathered in the exercise of duty must be securely guarded so that such information does not become known by unauthorized persons. If it is received in confidence, it must be maintained in confidence.
3. Agency programs which are funded by the federal government are bound by the laws of confidentiality. Any violation of this policy is considered grounds for immediate dismissal (Please see the Employment Policies section of the Administrative Procedures Manual).
4. Umatilla Morrow Head Start, Inc. will insure that both public and private organizations providing program services to children and families are responsible for maintaining confidentiality as defined by this policy.
5. Umatilla Morrow Head Start, Inc. will train all staff, substitutes and volunteers on confidentiality regulations and practices so that privacy is properly maintained during the collection of any information, its protection while in the hands of the personnel, and when it is stored in the office. Volunteers or other persons placed in the agency (JOBS, JTPA, etc.) will sign a Confidentiality Agreement.
6. Umatilla Morrow Head Start, Inc. will provide supervision to staff and volunteers so that confidentiality is maintained.
7. Umatilla Morrow Head Start, Inc. will provide and maintain appropriate facilities and procedures in the main office, classroom sites, and clinics, so that unauthorized persons will not have access to the information whether stored in files or on computer.
8. Staff will collect only that information required in the performance of duty. The only exception is when child abuse or neglect is suspected. Both federal and state law requires that such information be plainly documented and reported to the proper authorities (Please see Child Abuse and Neglect Policy in the Operations Management of the Administrative Procedures Manual).

9. When gathering information from community agencies and individuals, staff will discuss with the families the need for the information and have the client/ parent/legal guardian sign the Authorization for Release of Information.
10. When a photocopy is made to release or obtain information, staff will sign the photocopy attesting that the authorization is a true copy.
11. Staff will write the information clearly and concisely; will not use terms that are vague or can be misconstrued to mean something else.
12. If the information is reported by another person, rather than observed or given by the person involved, staff will state clearly who said it and exactly what was said. Example Mrs Jones said, My husband has not been here for five days." Do not paraphrase this into something general: Husband has abandoned the family.
13. Staff will take care in recording information given by small children. You may need to listen to it and record the information indicating the information was given by the child.
14. When it is important to state your opinions, staff will state that what is written is your opinion and give the reasons for that opinion.
15. Student, client, and provider files and information will be kept under lock and key except when in direct use.
16. Only the information necessary to conduct a home visit or information that needs to be transferred from one location to another will leave the designated site. Information should travel under lock and key, preferably in the trunk of the car. Home visitors, upon completion of the home visit, will return the confidential materials to the office to be properly stored. Materials will not be left unattended in an unlocked car, desk or file cabinet.
17. Program materials will not be taken home to be worked on.
18. All forms and notes will be placed directly into the student or client files upon receipt to limit lost and misplaced confidential information.
19. Staff members will not discuss sensitive information with other staff. Conversation about students, clients, families or other family members should be avoided in public and your home. If you need advice or assistance, discuss the case with your supervisor.
20. Parents, clients, and legal guardians have the right to inspect their files and may request that the information in the file be released. The process for students and clients is outlined in the Student/Client Records Policy located in this Operations Management section of the Administrative Procedures Manual.
21. Information collected and maintained for Child Care Resource&Referral data base consists of provider's criteria for the child care they can provide. Parent information is also included in the data base when the family is using a CCR&R provider.
22. All information collected for the data base is the property of Umatilla Morrow Head Start, Inc. but shall be available to parents and providers in a timely manner.
23. Information in the data base is updated quarterly and as requested to better reflect the family or provider situation. Access to the data base is through the CCR&R staff or their designee.
24. The information in the data base is used for the following purposes:
Parents are provided information to choose a child care provider who will match their needs.
 - State, community, and local agencies who have a valid need for child care

statistics or listing of providers.

- No individual or agency may obtain information from the data base for the purpose of selling products or materials.
- All requests for information must be in writing and address the reason for obtaining the information and include how, when, and where the information will be used.
- The request will go to the CCR&R Director.