

Because of requests for information from various services regarding individuals/families served by Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region (EAFWR), there is a need for a written policy regarding the confidentiality of information relating to individuals/families. Information refers to the release of data whether in a written, printed, spoken, photo or computer form. Please also refer to the EAFWR Computer Policy and the Internal Social Networking/Blogging Policy.

#### **Policy:**

1. The policy of EAFWR is that no employee, respite or FamilyHome provider, volunteer, placement student, contracted company/individual or member of the Board will release any information regarding individuals/families including the publishing of photos or posting of photos of individuals/families on the internet or any other public media unless one of the following conditions is met, other than through the ordinary course of employment or the provision of services on behalf of EAFWR:
  - a) An appropriate release of information must be signed, witnessed and dated by the adult affected and in the case of a child, by their parent/guardian. This form should specify the recipient of the information and should not be a blanket coverage form;
  - b) The courts have appropriately subpoenaed the organization's records;
  - c) A search warrant is produced for the purpose of securing the organization's records.
2. Without the above conditions being met, information may be produced where delay in providing information may result in injury or death to the "client" or other people.
3. Each employee, respite or FamilyHome provider, volunteer, placement student, contracted company/individual and member of the Board will be required at the outset of their relationship with EAFWR to sign a confidentiality agreement outlining the policy and a copy of this agreement will then be filed in the appropriate personnel file or other appropriate file. All existing employees, providers, volunteers, contractors and Board members will also be required to sign this confidentiality agreement and the same will be stored in the appropriate personnel file or other appropriate file. The terms of the confidentiality agreement and the obligations provided for in this policy shall survive the termination or cessation of the relationship between EAFWR and its employees, providers, volunteers, contractors and Board members and the agreement shall remain in effect thereafter.
  - a) EAFWR believes that conveying confidential information through gossip or disclosure to any person without proper consent is considered unprofessional conduct and is not tolerated according to the code of the Canadian Association of Social Workers.
4. Access to records/statistical information for research purposes must be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director.
5. Access to records is limited to appropriate and designated staff on a need-to-know basis. Records may only be removed from the Association's jurisdiction and safekeeping in accordance with court order, subpoena or statute.
6. An individual has a right to review his/her records. Any request to review a file should be made in writing to the Executive Director/designate, which will make the records available within 2 working days.

Approved by Board November 2003  
Amended March 26, 2007  
Revisions approved by the Board June 15, 2011  
Reviewed April 2017  
Revised November 2017

Addendums:      *Consent Form (general)*  
                         *Photo Consent Form*

**AGREEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY/PRIVACY REGARDING INFORMATION**  
(Abbreviated Version)

In signing this document, I give notice that I am fully aware of the following:

1. First, that my relationship with EAFWR will, from time to time, bring to my knowledge confidential information concerning individuals and families or put in my possession photos of individuals/families;
2. Second, that all children/adults and their families who are involved with EAFWR are entitled, as a matter of right, to know that such information will be held in the strictest confidence by those who come into possession of it and that individuals/families have a right to confidentiality and privacy regarding any such information as well as any photos taken by me or in my possession of children/adults and their families who are involved with EAFWR;
3. Third, that it is the stated policy of EAFWR that such confidentiality/privacy be strictly recognized and preserved both during and after my relationship with EAFWR ends;
4. Fourth, that EAFWR employees work as a team and, therefore, specific information may need to be shared with others within the organization relevant to the work that I do in accordance with the principles outlined in the Confidentiality/Privacy Policy.

I, therefore, promise to keep confidential and private any and all such information and I promise not to disclose it to anyone other than relevant EAFWR employees except where the family signs a release of information which authorizes the disclosure of information about them. I will also honour the right of individuals/families to privacy and confidentiality concerning photos and will not publish such photos without written permission from the family.

My signature below indicates that I have read and understand the Confidentiality/Privacy Policy. I have received a copy of this policy and am aware that the original copy of this agreement is included in my file. Copies of the full Confidentiality/Privacy Policy are available upon request.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_