



## **Confidentiality**

The nature of services provided by Seasons Center requires that information be handled in a private, confidential manner. All information concerning clients, former clients, our staff, volunteers, and financial data, and business records of Seasons Center is confidential. "Confidential" means that you are free to talk about Seasons Center and about your program and your position, but you are not permitted to disclose clients' names or talk about them in ways that will make their identity known. No information may be released without appropriate authorization. This is a basic component of client care and business ethics. The board of directors, staff and our clients rely on paid and volunteer staff to conform to this rule of confidentiality.

Seasons Center expects you to respect the privacy of clients and to maintain their personal and financial information as confidential. All records dealing with specific clients must be treated as confidential. Staff members are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of information relating to other staff members and volunteers, in addition to clients.

Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of your employment, or other corrective action. This policy is intended to protect you as well as Seasons Center because in extreme cases, violations of this policy also may result in personal liability.

### *Rationale*

Confidentiality is the preservation of privileged information. By necessity personal and private information is disclosed in a professional relationship. Part of what you learn is necessary to provide services to the applicant or client; other information is shared within the development of a helping, trusting relationship. Therefore, most information gained about individual clients through an assignment is confidential in terms of the law, and disclosure could make you legally liable. Disclosure could also damage your relationship with the client and make it difficult to help the person.

Before you begin your assignment as a staff member/volunteer, you should be aware of the laws and penalties for breaching confidentiality. Giving information to an unauthorized person could result in the agency's refusal to support you in the event of legal action. State statutes govern confidentiality of records.

## **Certification**

I have read the Statement of Confidentiality presented above. I agree to abide by the requirements and inform my supervisor immediately if I believe any violation (unintentional or otherwise) has occurred. I agree that no client identifying information will be removed from the premises, copied, or related to others in verbal, written, or any other form within the legal bounds of confidentiality in accordance with 42 C.F.R. 2.53(b)(2).

I understand that violation of this policy will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of my service with Seasons Center.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_