



CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

For External Reviewers, External Auditors, Volunteers, External Researchers, Contractors and Interns

Please read the confidentiality statement and examples carefully. This statement applies to all interactions within or on behalf of Harris County Public Health, including Harris County Animal Shelter. You must sign this statement before you may begin a placement with Harris County Public Health.

All information concerning current and former patients (including animals), HCPH staff, HCPH volunteers and partners, and internal financial and business data is confidential. The sharing of any information or knowledge obtained purposely or inadvertently during volunteer service is prohibited unless expressly authorized to do so by my site supervisor, preceptor, or the Division/Office Director. Confidentiality of all Medical and/or other records, both public and private, will be maintained, in addition to, employee records, personal contact information, citizen complaints, and records of animals under the care and/or possession of Harris County Animal Shelter.

External Reviewers, External Auditors, Volunteers, External Researchers, Contractors and Interns of Harris County Public Health may be exposed to confidential and/or privileged information. Such information must be kept confidential both during and after the conclusion of volunteer service. In accordance to the HCPH values, individuals placed or employed with HCPH are expected to exhibit professionalism in all interactions to avoid unauthorized or inadvertent disclosure of confidential information. As stated in the Harris County Personnel Regulations, section 2.03, "Harris County is the custodian of many types of information, including information that is confidential and private. Individuals who have access to such information are expected to be familiar with and to comply with all applicable laws pertaining to access, use, protection, and disclosure of all such information."

This is a statement of my understanding of the importance of confidentiality in all areas of Harris County Public Health (HCPH). Any violation of confidentiality on my part will be grounds for my immediate removal from the activities of HCPH. If I am uncertain whether documents, files, or patient/client information is deemed confidential, I will speak with my immediate supervisor to address such uncertainties prior to engaging in activities that may compromise the confidentiality of the document, file, or information in question.

EXAMPLES OF BREACHES OF CONFIDENTIALITY

- Obtaining patient and/or client information (both human and animal) when it is not required for your purpose at HCPH.
- Naming a patient and the patient's condition or treatment in a public setting or on social media
- Speaking of a patient or HCPH client within hearing distance of other patients, clients, volunteers, interns, Contractors, or staff not assigned to the care of the patient (including animals)
- Reading confidential correspondence and/or information relating to a patient, client, Contractor, volunteer, intern, or an employee, and discussing that information with others.
- Asking loudly about a patient's condition, treatment, lab results, etc.
- Accessing any confidential or sensitive document, file, or other materials unless expressly authorized to do so by my site supervisor, preceptor, or the Division/Office Director
- Making light of a patient or client's condition or personal characteristics.
- Copying and removing any client, patient, or unauthorized information from any premise of HCPH, including the animal shelter.
- Divulging information pertaining to citizen complaints or other requests for assistance.
- Careless handling of confidential mail, correspondence, electronic communication and media, and faxes.

I have read and understand the above statements and examples.

I understand that I must hold HCPH patient (including animals), client, and staff information in strict confidence. I understand that any violation of confidentiality may result in a criminal or civil legal action against me, or prohibition from volunteering or interning, or termination.