

**STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

**Access to Confidential Records**

In order for Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central West Virginia to provide a responsible and professional service to clients, it is necessary for volunteers, clients, and parents or guardians of clients to be asked to divulge extensive personal information about themselves and their families. The agency respects the confidentiality of client and volunteer records and, with the exception of situations listed below, shares information about clients and volunteers only among the agency and professional staff.

All records are considered the property of the agency and not the agency workers or clients or volunteers themselves. In order to provide a service which is in the best interest of the children served by the program, information from outside sources, including confidential references must be assessed along with information available for review by the clients or volunteers. At the time of application, clients and volunteers shall be provided a copy of the limits of confidentiality along with the exceptions which define the limits of confidentiality. Clients and volunteers shall sign a confidentiality statement that he or she has read and understands the agency policy on confidentiality and agrees to program participation under the guidelines it sets forth.

**Limits of Confidentiality**

1. Information contained in client or volunteer records will be released to other individuals or organizations only upon presentation of an authorized "consent to release information" form appropriately signed by the client or volunteer.
2. Identifying information regarding clients and volunteers may be used in agency publications or promotional materials, unless the client or volunteer specifies that it not be used.
3. For the purpose of program evaluation, audit, or accreditation, and with the prior approval of the Board of Directors, certain outside bodies such as Big Brothers Big Sisters of America may have access to client and volunteer records. These outside organizations shall be required to respect the agency policy on confidentiality. Outside parties shall be required to use information only for the purpose(s) stated in the approval action of the Board of Directors.
4. Members of the Board of Directors have access to client files only upon authorization by formal motion of the Board of Directors. The motion shall state who shall be authorized to review records, the specific purpose for such review, and the period of time during which access shall be granted. Members shall be required to comply with the agency policies on confidentiality and may use the information only for the purposes stated by the approved action of the Board of Directors. Known violations shall be reported to the Board of Directors. A violation of the agency's confidentiality policy by a Board Member shall result in immediate removal from office.

5. Information shall only be provided to law enforcement officials or the courts pursuant to a valid and enforceable subpoena.

6. Information shall only be provided to an agency's legal counsel in the event of litigation or potential litigation involving the agency. Such information is considered privileged information, and its confidentiality is protected by law.

7. State law mandates that suspected child abuse be reported to the appropriate authorities (Department of Health and Human Resources).

8. If an agency worker received information indicating that a client or volunteer may be dangerous to himself or herself or to others, necessary steps may be taken to protect the appropriate party. This may include a medical referral or a report to the local law enforcement authorities.

**I have read, and do hereby understand, the above document which states the agency policy with respect to confidentiality of client and volunteer records. I agree to program participation under the conditions it sets forth.**

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Volunteer's Signature

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Date

Revised 4/2001