



RAPPAHANNOCK COUNCIL AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT (RCASA) STANDARD ON PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Any and all staff members, volunteers, and interns engaged in providing services on behalf of Rappahannock Council Against Sexual Assault will adhere to the following Standard on Privacy and Confidentiality:

Program staff will respect clients' right to privacy. Staff will not solicit private information from clients unless it is essential to providing services. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply. Program staff may disclose confidential information when appropriate with valid consent from a client or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of a client.

- A valid consent form is described as being informed, written, and reasonably time-limited. A valid consent form is required before any personally identifying information (*defined as "information likely to disclose the location of a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking including: 1) name or address 2) contact information (postal, email, IP address, phone or fax number) 3) social security number 4) date of birth 5) racial, ethnic, religious identity 6) any combination therein*) will be disclosed to anyone outside of the client's direct service provider.

Staff will protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service, except for compelling professional reasons. The general expectation that staff will keep information confidential does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to a client or other identifiable person. In all instances, staff will disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose; only information that is directly relevant to the purpose for which the disclosure is made will be revealed.

Staff will discuss with clients and other interested parties the nature of confidentiality and limitations of clients' right to confidentiality. Staff will review with client's circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required. Staff will inform clients, to the extent possible, about the disclosure of confidential information and the potential consequences, when feasible before the disclosure is made. This applies whether staff disclose confidential information on the basis of a legal requirement or client consent.

Staff will protect the confidentiality of clients during legal proceedings to the extent permitted by law. When a court of law or other legally authorized body orders staff to disclose confidential or privileged information without a client's consent and such disclosure could cause harm to the client, staff will request that the court withdraw the order or limit the order as narrowly as possible or maintain the records under seal, unavailable for public inspection.

Staff will protect the confidentiality of clients' written and electronic records and other sensitive information. Staff will take reasonable steps to ensure that clients' records are stored in a secure location and that clients' records are not available to others who are not authorized to have access.

Client Signature: _____

Date: _____

Staff Signature: _____

Date: _____