

Participant Records –Accessing and Releasing of Information Policy

Every participant's file is established, maintained, and kept confidential at all program levels. Staff is responsible to keep all files and notes regarding the child and their family in a locked file cabinet when not in use.

Arrowhead Head Start maintains an electronic record keeping system for all child and family information.

The two primary electronic systems include:

- Electronic Content Management (ECM)
- Database Software

All electronic systems are:

- Maintained on secured servers
- Password protected
- Backed up for redundancy

Electronic records are archived for a period of seven (7) years. Electronic record destruction takes place for each participant using the records management software rules and parameters configured within the electronic content management system.

Parent/Guardian Access to a Participant's Official File:

- Head Start parents/guardians can request access to their child's records at any time.
- Head Start parents/guardians will work with the Community Relations Manager for access to the official child records.
- The Community Relations Manager will verify there are no access restrictions for the person requesting child records.
- Head Start parent/guardian may be asked for identification prior to access to records.
- A Head Start employee may print copies of records upon parent/guardian request.

Outside Agency Requesting Access to Participant Records:

- The requesting agency must submit a current consent form signed by the participant's parent/guardian granting permission to release the requested information. The exception could be if the request comes through a court order or other legally binding instruction.
- The requesting agency must include specific information they are requesting access to.

- The request, consent, and any forms completed by Head Start will be scanned into the participant's electronic file.

Arrowhead Head Start Requesting Access to Participant Records from an Outside Agency:

- A signed AEOA consent form listing the outside agency that records are being requested from must be in the participant's electronic file prior to any request for records.
- Staff will complete and submit a request for records to the administrative office for processing.
- The administrative office will process all request for records submitted by staff to ensure all required consents are on file and the requests are being sent to the correct agency.

This policy complies with Head Start Performance Standard 45CFR 1302.101 (b)(4), 1303.24

Approved by Policy Council on: 6-2-21

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