



Policy: Access to Confidential Reports and Records in Cases of Child Abuse or Neglect

ChildNet Number: CN 001.008

Original Approved Date: June 4, 2003

Policy Revised Date(s): December 10, 2009, June 16, 2010, July 9, 2014, April 8, 2026.

Policy Sunset Date:

COA Standard(s): RPM 6.03, 8.01, 8.04

Statement of Policy:

It is ChildNet's policy to release confidential records only to individuals or entities legally entitled to such information and only upon receipt of a valid written request. ChildNet will disclose records in compliance with all applicable federal and Florida laws, regulations, and contractual obligations.

Board Chair's Signature: Josefa Benya **Date:** 4/24/26



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Definitions (If any):

Client: any individual who receives care or related services provided by ChildNet, including a child, parent, legal guardian, or caregiver.

Care: services designed to facilitate a child remaining safely in his or her own home, returning safely to his or her own home if he or she is removed from the home, or obtaining an alternative permanent home if he or she cannot remain at home or be returned home.

Related Services: includes but is not limited to, family preservation, independent living, emergency shelter, residential group care, foster care, therapeutic foster care, intensive residential treatment, foster care supervision, case management, coordination of mental health services, postplacement supervision, permanent foster care, and family reunification.

Statement of Procedure:

- A. Individuals or entities (Requestor) must submit a client specific written request for information/records to the Dependency Case Manager or the ChildNet Legal Department. A review is conducted to determine whether the Requestor has the legal right to receive the requested records.
- B. Requests for records from a closed case shall be submitted to the ChildNet Legal Department via the Request for Confidential Information form. Closed record requests will be reviewed by the ChildNet Legal Department. A review is conducted to determine whether the requestor has the legal right to receive the requested records. ChildNet Legal Department staff will request the records from Records Management and prepare them for legal review and release, as appropriate.
- C. Information released shall be limited to only that which is specifically requested and appropriate for release pursuant to applicable federal and Florida laws, regulations, and contractual obligations. In all cases, the requestor is notified in writing (email is acceptable) of ChildNet's response to the request.



- D. If the client is not the person making the request, ChildNet shall attempt to obtain written authorization for the release of a client's records. If the request is authorized without the client's permission, the client shall be notified of the request and a copy of any written authorization shall be provided to the client, if possible. Client notification of the request will be documented in the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS), if the CCWIS case is open, within 48 hours of receiving the request.
- E. The ChildNet legal department will notify Records Management of the request and provide pertinent information. Records Management will retrieve the document(s), scan and email the documents to the ChildNet Legal Department.
- F. ChildNet Legal Department staff will process the document(s) requested. The processing of the request includes but is not limited to the review of documents to ensure that no statutory confidentiality provisions require that the requested documents be obtained directly from the originating source. Additionally, information which is private and confidential, as established by federal and state laws, will be redacted from the records.
- G. ChildNet Legal Department staff, within 90 business days of receiving the request, shall scan the reviewed document(s), password protect the documents, and forward the documents via email to the Requestor. If the document(s) are not ready at this time, an update will be provided to the Requestor with an estimated date of availability.
- H. ChildNet Legal Department staff is to follow up the email containing the password protected document(s) with a separate email informing the Requestor of the password, allowing them access to the document.
- I. The following requirement contained in s.39.202 (8) F.S. shall be displayed on the first sheet of any document released:

Pursuant to s.39.202 (8) Florida Statutes, a person who knowingly, willfully makes public or discloses to any unauthorized person any confidential information contained in the central abuse hotline is subject to the penalty provisions of s. 39.205, Florida Statutes.

- J. References and related policies and procedures:

Florida Statute 409.986
Florida Statute 39.202
Florida Statute 39.205

President's Signature: _____

Date: _____

4/24/26