



Mermaids Confidentiality Policy

Charity No: 1160575

All information concerning clients, former clients, our staff, volunteers, and financial data, and business records of Mermaids is confidential. “Confidential” means that you are free to talk about Mermaids and about your program and your position, but you are not permitted to disclose clients’ names or talk about them in ways that will make their identity known. No information may be released without appropriate authorization. This is a basic component of client care and business ethics. The board of directors, staff and our clients rely on paid and volunteer staff to conform to this rule of confidentiality.

Mermaids expects you to respect the privacy of clients and to maintain their personal and financial information as confidential. All records dealing with specific clients must be treated as confidential. General information, policy statements or statistical material that is not identified with any individual or family is not classified as confidential. Staff members are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of information relating to other staff members and volunteers, in addition to clients. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of your employment, or other corrective action. This policy is intended to protect you as well as Mermaids because in extreme cases, violations of this policy also may result in personal liability.

Rationale

Confidentiality is the preservation of privileged information. By necessity personal and private information is disclosed in a professional working relationship. Part of what you learn is necessary to provide services to the applicant or client; other information is shared within the development of a helping, trusting relationship. Therefore, most information gained about individual clients through an assignment is confidential in terms of the law, and disclosure could make you legally liable.

Disclosure could also damage your relationship with the client and make it difficult to help the person. Before you begin your assignment as a staff member/volunteer, you should be aware of the laws and penalties for breaching confidentiality. Although the agency is liable for your acts within the scope of your duty, giving information to an unauthorized person could result in the agency's refusal to support you in the event of legal action. Violation of the state statutes regarding confidentiality of records is punishable upon conviction by fines or by imprisonment or by both.

Under S22 of the Gender Recognition act if you disclose a trans persons status once there are in receipt of a Gender Recognition Certification a Fine of £5000 is payable. This is a strict liability and has no defence in law.

Certification

I have read Mermaids’ policy on confidentiality and the Statement of Confidentiality presented above. I agree to abide by the requirements of the policy and inform my supervisor immediately if I believe any violation (unintentional or otherwise) of the policy has occurred. I understand that violation of this policy will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of my service with Mermaids.

Signature _____ Name _____ Date _____