


ST. LEONARD'S COMMUNITY SERVICES LONDON & REGION
POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

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	Approved By SLCS Executive Director	Last Revision Date July 10, 2023

POLICY

St. Leonard's Community Services' (SLCS) privacy and confidentiality policy guides the collection, use and release of personal information to comply with provincial and federal privacy legislation to ensure responsible and transparent practices in the management of personal information.

PROCEDURE

Information will be used only for the purpose it is intended and is limited to the purposes for which the information was provided.

SLCS' Manager, Human Resources is appointed as the Privacy Officer who ensures the following principles are embraced:

- 1) Accountability:** SLCS is responsible for personal information in its care, custody and/or control. To this end, SLCS is committed to educate its employees on their responsibilities. The Privacy Officer ensures that the collection and storage of personal information is treated in a manner that is respectful of the individual and ensures the confidentiality of program participant and employee files, by monitoring access, and for investigating, documenting and appropriately managing all violations of this policy.
- 2) Identifying Purpose:** Unless the purpose is self-evident, SLCS shall clearly explain to the individual(s) identified, the purpose for which information is collected before or at the time of collection.
- 3) Consent:** SLCS shall ensure the informed consent of program participants is obtained for the collection, use and release of their personal information, except where permitted or required by law. Consent can be either express or implied and can be provided directly by the participant or by an authorized representative, such as a Substitute Decision Maker. Express consent can be given orally, electronically, or in writing, but it is always unequivocal and does not require any inference on the part of SLCS. Implied consent is consent that can reasonably be inferred from an individual's action or inaction. SLCS shall also ensure that participants understand the implications of not providing their consent, and what notice would be required if consent is withdrawn at any point.
- 4) Limiting Collection:** SLCS shall collect personal information only by fair and lawful means limiting the collection of personal information to only those details necessary for the purpose(s) expressed.

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- 5) **Limiting Use, Disclosure and Retention:** Personal information shall only be used for the purpose(s) for which it was collected unless additional consent has been obtained or when it is required or permitted by law. It will be retained only as long as necessary for these purposes or as required by law.
- 6) **Accuracy:** Personal information shall be maintained in as accurate, complete and current form as is necessary to fulfill the purposes for which it was collected.
- 7) **Safeguarding:** Personal information is collected by physical, procedural and electronic security safeguards appropriate to the type of information collected.
- 8) **Openness:** SLCS shall make information available to individuals concerning the policies and practices that apply to the management of their information.
- 9) **Access:** Upon request, SLCS shall inform an individual of the existence, use and disclosure of personal information. Individuals may at any time verify the accuracy and completeness of the information and request that it be amended if appropriate.
- 10) **Challenging Compliance:** SLCS has identified the Human Resources Manager to serve as the contact point for all questions by both internal (i.e. employee) and external individuals with respect to these principles. To this end, a written statement is made available on SLCS' website regarding the procedure for making a complaint in regards to a breach of privacy. All inquiries shall be directed to:

Privacy Officer
St. Leonard's Community Services
405 Dundas Street
London ON N6B 1V9
(519) 850-3777 ext. 225

Additionally, the Privacy Officer shall:

- 1) Review the policies and practices with regard to personal information.
- 2) Implement the necessary changes to guarantee that the collection and retrieval of personal information follows relevant legislation.
- 3) Work within Human Resources to communicate information to relevant parties as to how personal information is collected, used and disclosed.

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- 4) Respond to requests for access to or correction of personal information. An individual will be able to challenge the accuracy and completeness of the information and have it amended, as appropriate. The individual will not have access to third party information.
- 5) Review all complaints with regard to breach and/or perceived breach of privacy.
- 6) Evaluate understanding and compliance during internal audits.
- 7) Initiate improvement initiatives as a result of complaints.

Training


Human Resources is responsible for reviewing privacy and confidentiality with employees at the time of hire and ensuring they sign a Privacy and Confidentiality (HR 100) form which shall be retained in their employee file. Employees will be involved in discussion of examples and scenarios that are frequently encountered in their specific roles, including purposes for which information may be disclosed such as management of internal operations, professional supervision and quality assurance purposes, including accreditation.

Prevention of Unauthorized Access

SLCS' data is stored using secure cloud services, including Microsoft 365 and EMHware. Electronic storage is for agency-related data only and storage of personal data is expressly prohibited. No electronic SLCS data shall be stored on portable USB drives such as flash drives or portable hard drives. Electronic documents and databases containing confidential files with personal information shall be password protected. Managers shall ensure all SLCS computers at their respective sites are secured to ensure the integrity of the data. Additionally:

- All employees and Board members are required to sign the Privacy and Confidentiality (HR 100) form.
- Applicant, program participant and employee information are stored digitally and/or in a locked filing cabinet. Secure storage is provided centrally for applicant/employee and accounting information, with archived storage locally with a Canadian Records Management Service. Current program participant data is securely stored at each program site until such time as they are no longer engaged in services, at which time, archived information may be stored with the records management service until the appropriate date of destruction (See Policy 5.07 Retention of Documentation).
- Employees and members of the Board, where appropriate, have access to records containing personal information, only if required in order to fulfill their duties.

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- When communicating program participant or employee issues/incidents to the Board, non-identifying information is used, as possible. For example, reports shall use initials in place of the actual names.
- Telephones equipped with voicemail are password protected against unauthorized access.
- Visitors do not have unsupervised access to areas where files are kept and used.
- Paper-based personal information is shredded to denote proper disposal and is handled in a secure fashion.

No personal information is released to third parties without express consent of the employee through the completion of Release of Information (HR 102) (i.e. credit references, personal references, etc.). SLCS' employees take reasonable care to confirm the identity of the individual to whom information is released.

Improper Disclosure

In the event of any improper disclosure or unauthorized access to personal information, SLCS employees and/or contractor(s) must promptly advise the Privacy Officer. The Privacy Officer shall evaluate the incident and refer the matter to the appropriate individual(s) for corrective measures as required. In the event of a confidentiality breach, the Privacy Officer will notify employees or program participants who are impacted by the case of theft, loss, or unauthorized use or release of their personal information.

Responsibility

All employees, students, volunteers and their party (individuals/organizations) are responsible for complying with the intent and principles of this policy with respect to personal information to which they have access. Annually, employees review and sign the Code of Ethical Conduct, Privacy and Confidentiality Annual Attestation and Offence Declaration (HR 101).

References: *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA), *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA), Policy 5.07 Retention of Documentation

Attachments: Privacy and Confidentiality (HR 100), Code of Ethical Conduct, Privacy and Confidentiality Annual Attestation and Offense Declaration (HR 101), Release of Information (HR 102)