



Confidentiality & Privacy

Policies & Procedures referring:	Reference No: S5-PP001	Status: APPROVED
	Issue Date: January 2015	Review Date: May 2016

Policy & Procedure Title:	Confidentiality & Privacy
Policy & Procedure No:	S5-PP001
Date Issued:	23 January 2015

1. **Policy:**
The 39plus Confidentiality Policy for Employees, Volunteers and Committee Members is provided for all staff (as defined) as a reference point and minimum standard that is expected to be adhered to by all 39plus personnel.
2. **Purpose:**
The purpose of this policy and procedure aims to ensure the highest levels of ethics and practice is carried out by 39plus staff (as defined).
3. **Scope:**
The policy and procedure applies to all 39plus stakeholders, including permanent and temporary staff, agency staff, casuals, contractors, consultants, students and persons working or providing support to 39plus in a voluntary capacity (for the purposes of this policy referred to as staff).
4. **Definitions:**
 - a. **39plus Staff:**
For the purposes of this policy and procedure includes permanent and temporary staff, agency staff, casuals, contractors, consultants, students and persons working or providing support to 39plus in a voluntary capacity.
5. **Procedure:**
Respecting the privacy of our clients, donors, members, staff, volunteers and of the 39plus itself is a basic value of 39plus. Personal and financial information is confidential and should not be disclosed or discussed with anyone without permission or authorization from the Chief Executive Officer. Care shall also be taken to ensure that unauthorized individuals do not overhear any discussion of confidential information and that documents containing confidential information are not left in the open or inadvertently shared.

Employees, volunteers and committee members of 39plus may be exposed to information which is confidential and/or privileged and proprietary in nature. It is the policy of 39plus that such information must be kept confidential both during and after employment or volunteer service. Staff and volunteers, including committee members, are expected to return materials containing privileged or confidential information at the time of separation from employment or expiration of service.

Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or privileged information is a serious violation of this policy and will subject the person(s) who made the unauthorized disclosure to appropriate discipline, including removal/dismissal.

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 39plus 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 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.

As a staff member/volunteer, you should be aware of the laws and penalties for breaching confidentiality including information about other staff members. Although 39plus is liable for your acts within the scope of



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your duty, giving information to an unauthorized person could result in the organisations 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.

6. References:

- a. Department of Health – Victorian HACC Program Manual 2003
- b. Department of Health & Ageing – HACC Program Guidelines 2007
- c. 39plus Code of Conduct

7. Approval Authority:

This Policy and Procedure is endorsed and approved by 39plus Committee of Management for execution and application by the Chief Executive Officer as indicated and the control copy is one that is maintained within the 39plus Quality Management System and as such all hard copies need to be verified.

8. Related Documents:

S10-FM051 39plus Code of Conduct

9. Review Date:

The next scheduled review for this policy will be in line with the 39plus Quality Management System Schedule as determined and outlined in that policy and the review date is detailed in the header of this document.