

Review Date: 8/23

Last Reviewed: 8/20

Review Responsibility: Board and Administrative Policies Committee

FCCS PROCEDURE

NO.: 6E

**SUBJECT: CLIENT ACCESS TO OPEN CASE
RECORDS**

Approved by: Executive Council

Effective Date: 04/23/07

Date(s) of Revision: Apr 23, 2007; Jan 31, 2011; Apr 15, 2013; Aug 2, 2016

Responsible for Implementation: All Staff

Procedures:

- 1) All current Client requests for access to their open case records must be made in writing on the A-12 "Consent for Information Release Form." The form may be signed by the Client at the record review appointment and a copy shall be maintained for the record.
- 2) Regional Directors or Designee are responsible for the following:
 - a) Forward the Client request to the Administrative Assistant for the Legal Department located at 4071 East Main Street, 3rd Floor, Whitehall, Ohio 43213. The Legal Department will submit a request to LPOD for them to prepare an electronic version of the entire record.
 - b) Once the record has been redacted by the Legal Department and returned to the Regional Director, contact the Client to arrange for the viewing of the redacted record at the Franklin County Children Services office, in the presence of agency staff.
 - c) Document in the record any decision to deny a Client's request to access and forward to the Assistant Director for Program Services and the Chief Legal Counsel. Appropriate reasons include, but are not limited to the following:
 - i) If the client suffers from severe mental illness and a licensed psychiatrist or psychologist documents in writing to Franklin County Children Services that the release or review of a particular record would pose a serious risk to the client's mental health, access may be denied.

- ii) If the client appears delusional or under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of review, access at that time may be denied.
- 3) The Assistant Director and Chief Legal Counsel will respond in writing regarding the appropriateness of limiting access to the records. The report shall be placed in the Legal section of the case record.
- 4) If the Client's access to the record is restricted, the Client may designate, via written consent, the following individuals to review the record on their behalf. The designated reviewer must sign a statement that information determined to be harmful will not be provided to the Client:
 - a) Licensed professional counselor or licensed independent social worker, provided the individual is licensed through the Counselor, Social Worker and Marriage & Family Therapist Board of Ohio;
 - b) Licensed psychologist
 - c) Licensed psychiatrist; or
 - d) Any other professional approved by the Executive Director of Franklin County Children Services.
- 5) Any information, the disclosure of which is prohibited by law must be redacted or removed before a Client accesses the copy of the case record. The Paralegal Supervisor/Legal Administrative Assistant will maintain an electronic copy of both the un-redacted and redacted versions of the records.
- 6) Clients must present picture identification prior to accessing their records (driver's license, State ID, passport or military ID [government issued photo ID]).
- 7) Any client may insert a statement into their case record. If Agency staff wish to insert a response to such statements, the Client must be given a copy of the response.
- 8) If Client requests a copy of any document reviewed, please note the following:
 - a) Copies may be released at a charge of \$.05 per page; however, the first forty (40) pages are free of charge.
 - b) The Client must complete the A-12 "Consent for Information Release," and specify the exact information they desire to be copied. The laws governing the re-release of documents may limit the agency's ability to satisfy a Client's request.
- 9) Any request for information on closed cases must be sent to the Legal Department.