

Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this confidentiality policy is to ensure that all information regarding children and adults who engage with Rites for Girls is handled with the utmost respect and privacy. This policy outlines the standards and procedures to maintain confidentiality and protect the privacy of individuals.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, facilitators, mentors, volunteers and board members of Rites for Girls.

Policy Statement

Rites for Girls is committed to protecting the confidentiality of personal information of all individuals, especially children and adults, who interact with our organisation. All information obtained through our work, including personal, sensitive, and health-related data, will be treated as confidential.

Definitions

- **Confidential Information:** Any information that can identify an individual, including but not limited to names, addresses, contact details, medical records, personal history, and any other information that could be considered private.
- **Disclosure:** The sharing of confidential information with someone outside Rites for Girls or with unauthorised personnel within the organisation.

Principles

1. **Need-to-Know Basis:** Confidential information will only be shared among staff and volunteers who need the information to carry out their duties.
2. **Consent:** Whenever possible, explicit consent from individuals (or their guardians, in the case of minors) will be obtained before sharing information.
3. **Data Protection:** All personal information will be stored securely, whether in physical or digital form, to prevent unauthorised access.
4. **Anonymity:** Wherever feasible, data will be anonymized to protect individuals' identities.

Procedures

1. Collection of Information:
 - Obtain consent from individuals (or their guardians) before collecting any personal information.
 - Explain the purpose of data collection and how the information will be used.
2. Storage of Information:
 - Store physical records in locked cabinets accessible only to authorised personnel.
 - Protect digital records with strong passwords and encryption.
 - Regularly review and update security measures to protect against breaches.
3. Access to Information:
 - Limit access to confidential information to authorised personnel only.
 - Ensure that all personnel understand the importance of confidentiality and adhere to this policy.
4. Disclosure of Information:
 - Do not disclose confidential information without explicit consent, except in situations where there is a legal obligation to do so or where the safety of an individual is at risk.
 - Record any disclosures made, including the reason and the recipient of the information.
5. Breach of Confidentiality:
 - Any breach or suspected breach of confidentiality must be reported immediately to Kim McCabe.
 - Conduct an investigation to understand the breach's circumstances and take corrective actions to prevent future occurrences.
 - Notify affected individuals if their information has been compromised.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updates will be communicated to all personnel to ensure ongoing compliance and protection of confidential information.

Conclusion

Maintaining confidentiality is critical to the trust and integrity of Rites for Girls. By following this policy, we ensure that all personal information is handled with care and respect, safeguarding the privacy of children and adults we work with.

Approved by:

Kim McCabe, Founder Director

This policy was last reviewed on: February 2025