



Association for Agency-Based Counselling
& Psychotherapy in Ireland Ltd

Guidelines: Confidentiality Policy

This document is only to be used as a guideline for organisations

*Should you require any further support or have any queries please contact
(AACPI National Director)*

www.aacpi.ie

All information concerning clients, former clients, staff, volunteers, and financial data, and business records of [Name of Organisation] is confidential. “Confidential” means that you are free to talk about [Name of Organisation] and about 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.

[Name of Organisation] requires you to respect the privacy of clients and to maintain their personal 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 employment or contract or other corrective action. This policy is intended to protect (staff) as well as [Name of Organisation] 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



Association for Agency-Based Counselling
& Psychotherapy in Ireland Ltd

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.

Example of signed agreement:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF CLIENT INFORMATION

I agree to treat as confidential all information about clients or former clients and their families that I learn during the performance of my duties as _____ (position title), and I understand that it would be a violation of policy to disclose such information to anyone without checking first with my supervisor.

Signature of Staff Member/Volunteer

_____ Date
_____ Name

It is recommended that organisations ensure a client be clearly made aware of confidentiality and its confines and to sign and agree before therapy begins.

This may include the following:

- All information you disclose to the therapist is confidential. However, there are circumstances where this confidentiality may need to be broken and they are as follows.
- Exceptional circumstances where your life and safety or that of others is threatened.
- Where a child or young person is in danger of being harmed or is reported to being harmed. (Child Protection Guidelines)



Association for Agency-Based Counselling
& Psychotherapy in Ireland Ltd

- Where there is a disclosure of criminal intent.
- Where a therapist is subpoenaed to appear in court.
- That therapist is in supervision
- GDPR guidelines pertaining to retention of client files (number of years files are stored for) and the 'right to be forgotten
- Fees, donations
- Cancellation policy
- Outline if therapist is a 'student therapist' or qualified pre-accredited or accredited therapist