



# VAWA Confidentiality

## Protecting Survivor Privacy and Safety

Under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) victim service providers **must protect the confidentiality and privacy of survivors receiving services.**

**Confidentiality is required by VAWA!**

### VAWA-funded programs may not:

- Disclose personally identifying information (PII)
- Reveal survivor locations
- Confirm whether someone is receiving services
- Share information with partner agencies without consent

### Confidentiality applies to all survivor information, including:

- Paper files
- Electronic records
- Emails and texts
- Financial assistance records

**Confidentiality enhances the advocacy relationship and fosters safety for the DV survivor!**

## Consent and Information Release

### When Can Information Be Shared?

VAWA allows disclosure only if:

- The survivor signs a written, informed, reasonably time-limited release
- Disclosure is required by a statutory or court mandate

### What About Mandated Reporting?

VAWA does not prohibit state mandatory reporting laws, for instance reporting child abuse. However,

- Only the minimum required information may be disclosed
- Advocates should inform survivors of reporting obligations
- Programs should document the legal basis for disclosure



## Personally Identifying Information (PII)

**Personally Identifying Information (PII) includes:**

- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Email
- Date of birth



**Any information that could easily identify a survivor should be kept confidential!**

## Confidentiality and Secure Records

**It's important that programs serving survivors carefully manage data collection and storage!**

**Programs must ensure that client records are secure!**

- Avoid storing unnecessary identifying information
- Use secure databases and encrypted systems

Note: Programs may share non-identifying, aggregate data for reporting purposes.



## DCADV Can Help!

If you or your agency has questions about confidentiality or would like to request a training, please contact DCADV at:

(302) 658-2958  
training@dcadv.org

