

POLICY 815 ETHICS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- 1. Purpose.** To ensure the privacy of all clients and to protect the confidentiality of personal, health, and other related information and assure the confidentiality of Eau Claire County's human resources, payroll, fiscal, and information systems (collectively "Confidential Information").
- 2. Policy.**
 - 2.1 Throughout the course of employment, employees may come into the possession of confidential information. It is the policy of Eau Claire County that the information will not be disclosed to others, including friends or family, who do not have a need to know it.
 - 2.2 This policy applies to all Eau Claire County employees, temporary employees, volunteers, and interns.
 - 2.3 Anyone who intentionally causes a breach in confidentiality will be held accountable and disciplinary action may result up to and including termination. Some circumstances may warrant legal action and criminal penalties for failure to maintain required confidentiality.
- 3. Physical and Electronic Safeguards.**
 - 3.1 Physical and Electronic safeguards to maintain the integrity, confidentiality and availability of confidential information must remain in place at all times. Employees, temporary employees, volunteers and interns are expected to understand and abide by the following practices:
 - 3.1.1 Confidential information will not be disclosed to others, including friends or family, who do not have a need to know it.
 - 3.1.2 Personal access codes, user ID(s), and passwords used to access computer systems are to be considered confidential information.
 - 3.1.3 Confidential Information will not be accessed and equipment will not be utilized for purposes not related to the performance of your job duties.
 - 3.1.4 Confidential information will not be discussed where others can overhear the conversation. This includes, but is not limited to, hallways, elevators, break rooms, restaurants, and social events. It is not acceptable to discuss confidential information in public areas even if a

POLICY 815 ETHICS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Effective Date: January 1, 2012

Revised Date: December 2012

Eau Claire County
Employee Policy Manual

client's name is not used. Such discussions may raise doubts among other clients and visitors about respect for their privacy.

- 3.1.5 Employees will not make inquiries about confidential information for other personnel who do not have proper authorization to access such confidential information.
- 3.1.6 Employees will not willingly inform another person of their computer password or knowingly use another person's computer password instead of their own for any reason, except maintenance or technical support.
- 3.1.7 Employees will not make any unauthorized transmissions, inquiries, modifications, or purging of confidential information in Eau Claire County's computer system. Such unauthorized transmissions include, but are not limited to removing and/or transferring confidential information from Eau Claire County's computer system to unauthorized locations (for instance, home).
- 3.1.8 Employees will password protect any computer prior to leaving it unattended.
- 3.1.9 Employees will comply with any security or privacy policy and/or procedure promulgated by Eau Claire County to protect the security and privacy of confidential information.
- 3.1.10 Upon cessation of employment, all employees will immediately return any documents, or other media containing confidential information to Eau Claire County.

4. Transporting Confidential Information.

- 4.1 When transporting confidential information outside of the employee's office or work area, the following policies apply:
 - 4.1.1 Hard copy documents should be transported in a way that it is not visible. Confidential documents and electronic devices containing confidential information will be transported in a locked vehicle trunk when available. If the vehicle does not have a trunk, the confidential information will be hidden from sight.
 - 4.1.2 When transporting electronically stored confidential information, data must be password protected.

POLICY 815 ETHICS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Effective Date: January 1, 2012

Revised Date: December 2012

Eau Claire County
Employee Policy Manual

- 4.1.3 Confidential Information in any form (hard copy and electronic) will not be left unattended in any place or area to which unauthorized persons may reasonably gain access so as to prevent unauthorized access or theft.
- 4.1.4 Whenever possible, confidential information (hard copy and electronic) should be returned directly to the employee's work area the same day the information is transported.
- 4.1.5 Confidential information may be removed from a vehicle to overnight lodging or the employee's residence when return to the employee's work area is impractical. Confidential information will not be left unattended in either location. If overnight lodging provides a locked safe, it must be used to store the confidential information.

5. Reporting a breach of confidentiality.

- 5.1 A breach of confidentiality may occur through a variety of means, some unintended and others by intent to steal or do harm. These include but are not limited to:
 - 5.1.1 Unintended mistakes that cause accidental disclosures
 - 5.1.2 Abuse of access privileges
 - 5.1.3 Knowingly accessing information for non-work related purposes
 - 5.1.4 Unauthorized physical intruders
- 5.2 Employees will immediately report any activity, by any person, including themselves that is in violation of this policy or of any Eau Claire County security or privacy policy to their direct supervisor. This will allow the process of mitigating the effect of the breach and preventing any additional loss of data.
- 5.3 The employee and/or supervisor will immediately contact the Human Resources Director and Corporation Counsel to report the breach of confidentiality.

6. Appendices.

- 6.1 Ethics and Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix 815 A)

POLICY 815 ETHICS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Effective Date: January 1, 2012

Revised Date: December 2012

Eau Claire County
Employee Policy Manual

POLICY 815 ETHICS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Effective Date: January 1, 2012

Revised Date: December 2012

Eau Claire County
Employee Policy Manual