

## LCCS POLICY 153

### Confidentiality of the Clearing Process

<b>Original Issue Date:</b>	7/27/1989
<b>Revision Dates:</b>	2/10/1999, 2/26/16, 1/22/2020
<b>Revision Number:</b>	3
<b>Current Effective Date:</b>	1/22/2020
<b>Obsolete/Combined Date:</b>	
<b>Reason for Obsoleting/Combining:</b>	
<b>See new Policy #:</b>	

<b>Scope:</b>	This policy applies to all Data Management staff, Intake, Assessments and DFS Caseworkers and Supervisors, Switchboard Operators and Security Personnel
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Data Management Unit
<b>Purpose:</b>	To ensure that telephone calls are handled in a way that protects information concerning neglected and abused children, while protecting the privacy of the reporting source and principals of the case.
<b>Legal Cite:</b>	O.R.C. §§ 2151.421, 2151.423, 5101.13-5101.134, 5153.17, O.A.C. 5101:2-33-21 and O.R.C. Chapter 1347.

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### **POLICY STATEMENT**

LCCS will respond to telephone requests for information in an expedient manner that does not disclose any information protected under the law.

LCCS will only share information with those individuals authorized to receive it as defined in the OAC.

The fact that an open case exists will not be shared with anyone except those individuals cited in the OAC.

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### **PROCEDURE - including required timeframes and documentation**

When a telephone call comes to the agency requesting to speak with a caseworker, and the caller knows the caseworker's name, the call will be forwarded to the caseworker. If the caller does not know the caseworker's name or is requesting other information, the call shall be referred to the Data Management Unit.

The Data Management Unit will:

- Determine the identity of the caller if possible.
- Ask the caller if he/she wishes to make a referral.
- Refer the call to the Intake Department, if the caller wishes to make a referral.
- If no one is available to answer the call in Intake, the call will go to the automated messaging service.

If the caller does not wish to make a referral, the Data Management Unit will determine the case status (i.e. open, closed).

## **CLOSED CASES**

If the caller is wishing to determine the status of a referral that was screened out, Data Management will transfer the call to the Intake Supervisor or Assistant Manager of Assessments.

For all other inquires on a closed case (Assessment or Ongoing Case) the Data Management Unit will transfer the call to Information Release.

Information Release will share the appropriate information only as allowed by OAC and in consultation with Chief Counsel as required.

## **OPEN CASES:**

The Data Management Unit will:

- Tell the caller that they will connect them with someone who can help them. (Data Management will not identify the person they connect the caller with as the caseworker).
- Attempt to connect the caller to the assigned worker
- Stay on the telephone until the connection is made with the worker
- If the worker is not available or no one answers, Data Management will transfer the caller to the Clerical Assistant for the unit.

**Do not identify the persons as the caseworker and supervisor – only give their names.**

If the caller is a party on the case and is requesting the name of the caseworker, then Data Management will:

- Provide the name and phone number of the caseworker.
- Attempt to connect them to the assigned caseworker. If the caseworker is not available and Data Management determines that the request is not critical, have them leave a message with the caseworker.
- If Data Management determines that the request is critical, connect them with the supervisor or the worker of the day or other appropriate official.

**This policy will be reviewed with all staff/employees every six months.**

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## **CASE PRACTICE GUIDES**

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### **RELATED POLICIES and FORMS**

LCCS Policy 149 (Sharing Information with the Media)

LCCS Policy 150 (Confidentiality and Release of Information)