

OFFICE OF LEGAL AFFAIRS

Records Management

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Policy The closed record unit within the Office of Legal Affairs is tasked with managing the agency's closed records. Upon request the closed records unit shall provide copies of records to authorized staff.

Inventory The Department maintains under its jurisdiction child welfare records since the mid-1910s. Child protection records from approximately 1910 through the 1970s are housed at the Connecticut State Library archives.

The Department is statutorily mandated to maintain records of all adoptions completed within Connecticut. The Department's adoption records have been maintained since approximately 1945.

Pursuant to Connecticut State Agency Regulations, when a child care facility closes, the Department may assume jurisdiction over that agency's case records. DCF has obtained records from various agencies. These records are maintained in accordance with the established retention schedules for DCF.

Retention The Department maintains case records in accordance with the retention schedules as established or approved by the Connecticut State Library, Office of the Public Records Administrator.

Child Protection uniform case records are maintained permanently with the exception of records which meet criteria for expungement.

Foster Care Records shall be retained for a minimum of 7 years.

Adoption License Records where the application was withdrawn, or the license closed without a child being placed shall be retained for a minimum of 7 years.

Adoption License Records where a child has been placed or an adoption finalized shall be retained permanently.

Child Care facility licensing records shall be retained for a minimum of 10 years.

Interstate Compact Office records shall be kept for a minimum of 2 years.

Education Records shall be maintained for the minimum as specified in the general records retention schedule for municipalities.

Medical Records (ie. Solnit records) shall be maintained for the minimum period of time as specified in the general records retention schedule for Health Records.

Expungement DCF shall expunge non-accepted reports of abuse and neglect after 3 years.

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Expungement (continued) If DCF has received more than one report on a case, and all reports are unsubstantiated, they shall be expunged five years from the completion date of the most recent case closing.

If at any time an investigation within a case is substantiated, then none of the investigations shall be expunged.

Legal Reference: Conn. Gen. Stat. §17a-101k(h).

Requesting Records A person may request a copy of any or all of their case records, in writing, by email, fax or mail. Requests may be sent to:

DCF Legal Division
Attn: Record Requests
505 Hudson Street
Hartford CT 06106
Facsimile: (860) 920-3013
Email: DCF.RECORDS@ct.gov

Individuals may utilize the Department's "Record Request Form" found on the main DCF website.

Requests for disclosure of records received in the area offices shall be forwarded to the Legal Division at DCF.RECORDS@ct.gov for review and assignment.

Upon receipt, the Office of Legal Affairs shall assign the request to a Paralegal Specialist for review and redaction as required by law.

Requests for adoption records shall be forwarded to the Office of Children in Youth in Placement for response. See DCF Policy 25-1, "Adoption".

Requests for education records of USD#2 or medical records from Solnit, may be responded to by the authorized personnel in the respective facilities.

Requests for personnel/payroll records shall be forwarded to Human Resources for response.

Cross Reference: DCF Policy 6-2, "Confidentiality".

Procedures for Disclosure

When a request is made to disclose information from a person's record to another person or agency, the Department shall:

- attempt to secure the written consent of the person who is the subject of the information or is the subject's parent/guardian;
 - if the subject person does not consent, determine whether the information can be released without the subject person's consent;
 - if any information is disclosed, with or without consent, advise the recipient that the information is confidential and cannot be disclosed further, except as provided by statute; and
 - document what information was released, to whom and for what purpose.
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Denial

The Department shall disclose information or records to a person(s), his/her attorney or authorized representative, at the person's request, unless it is determined to be contrary to the person's best interest.

If the Department refuses to disclose records to any individual, the Department shall provide the individual with notice that:

- records are being withheld;
- the general nature of the records being withheld;
- the Department's reason or refusing to disclose the records; and
- the individual's right to seek judicial relief.

Legal Reference: Conn. Gen. Stat. §17a-28(j)(1).

Correcting the Records

Whenever any person having obtained access to any record, believes there are factually inaccurate entries or materials contained in the record, such person may add a statement to the record setting forth what they believe to be an accurate statement of those facts. Such statement shall become a permanent part of the record.

Legal Reference: Conn. Gen. Stat. §17a-28(l).
