



## Policy 319: Confidentiality

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Part of the duty of being an Onslow County volunteer is to exhibit discretion, respect for the privacy of others, and sound judgment in accessing or handling confidential or sensitive information:

*All volunteers of Onslow County are reminded that certain personnel information gathered by the County in any form, relating to any employee or volunteer, by way of illustration and not limitation, applications for employment, selection or non-selection for employment, and performance and certain other personnel actions, are confidential pursuant to GS Section 153A-98. Confidential personnel information includes information about applicants as well as former employees. Failure to keep such information confidential is a Class 3 misdemeanor may subject an individual to criminal penalties. Volunteers who fail to comply with known work rules, including the privacy of personnel and health information pursuant to applicable state and federal laws, are subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.*

As an Onslow County Volunteer, Employee, Department/Division Head or member of Management, you may be involved in processes or have access to software programs or data that provide access to confidential or sensitive employee financial, legal or human resource information, personnel records or protected health information.

- Confidential Information is any information of any kind, nature, or description concerning any matters affecting or relating to an Employee's services for Onslow County, the human resources, finance, or legal operations of Onslow County, protected health information, and/or the confidential employee or patient data of Onslow County.
- Sensitive Information is any information of any kind, nature or description that can be linked to a specific individual (including other County employees and citizens) that an Employee or Volunteer may process, acquire or access in the course of performing his or her's assigned duties. This information includes data, records and information gathered, created or maintained during the normal course of County business but which is **NOT** otherwise confidential under this Policy or under applicable law.
- Protected Health Information (PHI) includes any information about health conditions, health status, provision of health care, or payment for health care that can be linked to a specific individual. This includes any part of a patient or employee's medical record or payment history.

Volunteers are expressly prohibited from reviewing, sharing, or discussing information regarding confidential or sensitive information or employee records (both public and private) or PHI except as needed to perform the duties of employment or as required by court order or other applicable law. Your compliance with this policy is required.



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Accordingly, to protect the Confidential Information, Sensitive Information and PHI (hereinafter referred to collectively as “Protected Information”) of Onslow County or any of its volunteers or employees, the undersigned Volunteer acknowledges that he/she understands the following:

- A. Volunteer will hold the Protected Information received from Onslow County in strict confidence and shall exercise a reasonable degree of care to prevent disclosure to others.
- B. Volunteer will not disclose or divulge either directly or indirectly the Protected Information to others unless first authorized to do so in writing by Onslow County, or as directed or required to do so by court order, subpoena or other applicable law.
- C. Volunteer will not reproduce the Protected Information nor use the Protected Information commercially or for any purpose other than the performance of his/her duties for Onslow County.
- D. Volunteer will, upon the request or upon termination of his/her relationship with Onslow County, deliver to the County any information, documents, equipment, and materials received from the County or originating from employee activities for the County.
- E. Onslow County reserves the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including termination for violations of this Policy.

This policy statement does not change any Volunteer’s at-will status and is not intended to supersede the legal requirements of the Public Records Act or other applicable laws or regulations.

Signing below signifies that the Volunteer has received this Policy, understands this Policy and has been given an opportunity to ask questions. Volunteer further understands the importance of this Policy and that any violation will result in discipline up to and including immediate termination of employment.

**VOLUNTEER:**

**WITNESS:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Volunteer Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Department/Division Head Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Volunteer Print Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

cc: Volunteer Personnel File  
Onslow County Human Resources