

MADISON COUNTY, VIRGINIA PERSONNEL POLICIES MANUAL

PRIVACY OF INFORMATION COLLECTED OR HELD RELATING TO OTHERS

POLICY NO. 15.9 **EFFECTIVE:** 01/02/2024

The General Assembly has found that:

- A. An individual's privacy is directly affected by the extensive collection, maintenance, use and dissemination of personal information;
- B. The increasing use of computers and sophisticated information technology has greatly magnified the harm that can occur from these practices;
- C. An individual's opportunities to secure employment, insurance, credit, and his right to due process, and other legal protections, are endangered by the misuse of certain of these personal information systems.
- D. To the extent allowed by the Virginia Freedom of information Act, protection of the confidentiality of personal information of employees and members of the public is a requirement of every County official and employee. Each person who handles forms, reports and/or written or electronic information must treat such information as confidential.
- E. Virginia Code Section 2.2-3801 defines "personal information" as any information that describes, locates or indexes anything about an individual; however, the definition specifically excludes (i) routine information maintained for the purpose of internal office administration, the use of which could not adversely affect the individual, and (ii) real estate assessment information.
- F. Adequate measures should be taken to prevent others from gaining access to personal information, including, without limitation: locking computer screens, locking data in drawers, cabinets or offices; not removing data from the workplace; not saving data to flash drives, discs or computer hard drives; and shredding or other secure destruction of old data.
- G. Intentional misuse of data for purposes other than those for which it was collected is prohibited, and shall be grounds for discipline of an employee, up to and including termination of employment.
- H. In the performance of their job duties, County officials and employees shall conduct their record-keeping activities in accordance with the following principles:

- I. There shall be no personal information system whose existence is secret.
- J. Personal information shall not be collected unless the need for it has been clearly established in advance.
- K. Personal information collected shall be appropriate and relevant to the purpose for which it has been collected.
- L. Personal information shall not be obtained by fraudulent or unfair means. 6-5.5.5. Personal information shall not be used unless it is accurate and current.
- M. Any individual shall be afforded the opportunity to learn the purpose for which information has been recorded and particulars about its use and dissemination.
- N. Upon request, any individual shall be allowed to correct or amend, as appropriate and as may be allowed by law, any inaccurate, obsolete or irrelevant personal information about himself. The employee should submit his or her rebuttal in writing for inclusion within his personnel record. No purging, deletion or destruction of records shall be done, except with the approval of the Director of Finance and in accordance with applicable retention schedules of the Library of Virginia.
- O. All requests for verification of employment will be handled centrally by the Finance Department. Neither the Finance Department nor any department head or supervisor shall release any employment or personal information (other than verification of employment, and dates of service) except in accordance with a specific written authorization signed by the employee who is the subject of the request. A standard authorization form shall be obtained from the Department of Finance.