



St Vincent de Paul of Seattle|King County

# Confidentiality and Information Sharing

## **Why Confidentiality is Important**

Confidentiality is an important aspect of our Vincentian vocation. Maintaining confidentiality is one way we serve our neighbors with dignity and respect at this vulnerable time in their lives. You are encouraged to remind the neighbor early in the home visit or interaction that everything he or she tells you will be held in confidence.

## **Who can you share information with?**

All information offered by a neighbor can be shared with your home visit partner, other members in your conference, and with SVdP staff – case managers or the Manager of Vincentian Support (should a question or issue arise from the interaction).

With the neighbor's consent, you can communicate with neighbor's landlord, utility provider or other potential payee to arrange payment, but should not share the neighbor's personal information with these parties unless he/she has signed a Release of Information (see below).

\*You cannot share neighbors' personal information with anyone else. This includes spouses and pastors!

## **Exceptions to Confidentiality**

- If a neighbor states or in some way makes you suspect that they want or intend to do harm to themselves or another person.
- If you suspect abuse or neglect of any resident or family member you visit.

*Reporting cases of abuse and neglect can have dramatic, irrevocable consequences for families. Before making a report, first confer with your Conference President and the Manager of Vincentian Support to discuss any suspicion of abuse or neglect.*

- You can utilize neighbor information in promotional material such as bulletin stories or pulpit pitches. *However, all names and personal identification information must be changed!*

## **Sharing information with other agencies**

It is common and appropriate to refer a neighbor to other agencies. Have the neighbor sign a "Release of Information" before sharing information with that agency. A sample R.O.I. is included on the reverse side of this document.

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If you have any questions regarding confidentiality, please contact your Conference President or Vincentian Support at [vincentiansupport@svdpseattle.org](mailto:vincentiansupport@svdpseattle.org).