

**DIVISION CIRCULAR #25**

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** October 31, 2002

**DATE ISSUED:** October 8, 2002

- I. **TITLE:** Access to Electronic Files
- II. **PURPOSE:** To establish a uniform system for approving access to electronic files.
- III. **SCOPE:** This circular applies to all components of the Division.
- IV. **POLICIES:**

Each Division component shall maintain an Information Systems Unit. Division Information System Units shall provide security of files and data through use of network access rights and passwords. Unauthorized individuals cannot view or print confidential information.

Users of Division Information Systems databases and files are to maintain security by not sharing their passwords with other users.

Access not stipulated in this circular shall conform with the requirements of NJAC 10:41-2 (Division Circular 30), Access to Client Records and Confidentiality and the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.

Division Information Systems Units will provide network access, file sharing, and security login consistent with this circular, to users authorized by Division administration.

**V. GENERAL STANDARDS:**

- A. **Definitions:** For the purpose of this circular, the following terms shall have the meaning defined herein.

“Central Office Information Systems” means the unit within the Division that has authority over the centralized electronic files of the Division.

“Database” means an electronically stored collection of data elements that can be organized and sorted into information that is used for the business purposes of the Division.

“Data Owner” means the Division Unit(s) that obtains raw data and enters that data into databases and/or files on the network resources.

“Data System” means the linking of multiple databases.

“Division Component” means any of the following components of the Division: Regional Assistant Director’s office, developmental center, regional office, guardianship office or central office unit.

“Electronic files” means information databases, word processing documents, spreadsheets, e-mail messages and web pages.

“Information Systems Unit” means an organizational unit within each division component that maintains and controls network operation and controls physical access to electronic files.

“Network” means an integrated computer linking that allows people to store and share files on centralized storage devices.

“User” means a person given permission to utilize the Division’s network through use of a log-in name and password.

- B. The data contained in electronic files is subject to the same confidentiality requirements as other forms of Division information (Division Circular 30).
- C. Users who request access to electronic files outside the immediate work unit shall obtain authorization from the appropriate Deputy or Assistant Director. If the request involves more than one Division component, the administrative head of the component shall approve requests made within a component.

Examples:

- 1. If a department in a developmental center wishes to have read access to electronic files owned by another department in that same Developmental Center, the Chief Executive Officer would provide the authorization for that access.
  - 2. If a unit in a Community Services region desires access to electronic files owned by a unit in the Regional Assistant Director’s office, the Regional Assistant Director would provide the authorization for that access.
  - 3. If one unit in the Division’s Central Office requests access to electronic files owned by another unit or component in the Division, the Deputy or Assistant Director would provide authorization.
- D. As authorized, the appropriate Information Systems Unit will provide the access to a database by installing the needed software, establishing network access rights, and instructing the user(s) on how to connect to the data system.
  - E. The data owner must provide in-service training for new users as to how the database works and how to interpret the data.

- F. Access to the electronic file shall be on a “need to know” basis. “Need to know” shall be determined by a review of the function of the party making the request, the sensitivity of the information requested and a decision as to whether the information requested is essential for the party to complete his or her official function.
- G. In some cases, it may not be possible to grant access because of incompatibility between data systems.
- H. An individual or unit may request access to all or part of a data base.
- I. Information concerning the status of eligible individuals or applicants who are HIV positive shall not be included in the electronic client file and shall be available in accordance with Division Circular 45 (HIV/AIDS).

**VI. PROCEDURE:**

- A. The individual or unit requesting access to an electronic file owned by another division component will complete a “Request for Electronic File Access” form and submit it for approval. A copy of the “Request for Electronic File Access Form” is appended. The type of access requested shall be indicated on the form.
- B. The request is submitted to the Deputy Director, Assistant Director or administrative head of the component who shall review the reasons for the request and grant or deny access.
- C. The request will be returned to the individual or unit.
  - 1. If the request is approved, a copy of the request will be submitted to the Information Systems Unit and the data owner.
  - 2. If the request for access is denied, the reasons for denial shall be documented on the form.
- D. Upon receiving a copy of the approval, the Information Systems Unit will schedule a time to install needed software. The Information Systems Unit will also provide inservice training on the connection process with users in the requesting component.
- E. After the software has been installed, and the users have been instructed on how to connect to the electronic file, the Information Systems Unit will notify the data owner.
- F. The data owner shall instruct the individual or unit how to use the application(s) and interpret the electronic data.

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James W. Smith, Jr.  
Director

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
REQUEST FOR ELECTRONIC FILE ACCESS**

DATE OF REQUEST: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPONENT MAKING REQUEST: \_\_\_\_\_

DATA OWNER: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF FILE OR DATABASE: \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF ACCESS REQUESTED: (check all desired)

- ADD: Can add new data but not change existing data.  
 READ: Can read the data, but can not add, remove or change any data.  
 UPDATE: Can read all data, can change any existing data, but can not add or delete any records.  
 INSERT: Can read all data, can add new words.  
 DELETE: Can read all data, can remove records.

TIMEFRAME FOR REQUEST:

- ONGOING: Access will continue until further notice.  
 TIME LIMITED: Access will terminate at end of time period.  
Start: \_\_\_\_\_ End: \_\_\_\_\_

REASON FOR REQUEST: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERVISOR: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Administration Use Only)

APPROVED

DISAPPROVED

Reason for Disapproval: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

File Name: DC25