

How Do I Share Student Information Properly?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the privacy and confidentiality of student **“education records,”** which are any records directly related to a student (current or former) kept in any medium (written, printed, film, computer, etc.) Exceptions to this definition:

- 1) Personal records made/kept by a faculty or staff member that aren’t shared;
- 2) University law enforcement records;
- 3) Student employment records;
- 4) Medical provider records used only for treatment of the student and available only to treatment providers;
- 5) Alumni records after the student is no longer in attendance and that don’t relate to them as a student.

FERPA-protected student information can be shared with **“school officials”** with a **“legitimate educational interest”** in the education records. A school official is:

- A person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position, including health or medical staff.
- A person elected to the Board of Trustees.
- A person or entity employed by or under contract to the University to perform a special task, such as an attorney, auditor, or outside vendor.
- A person who is employed by the Catholic University law enforcement unit.
- A student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or who is assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is:

- Performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or contract agreement.
- Performing a task related to a student's education.
- Performing a task related to the discipline of a student.
- Providing a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement or financial aid.
- Maintaining the safety and security of the campus.

A **quick reference chart for releasing student records** is available on the Office of General Counsel's Campus Legal Information Clearinghouse at <http://counsel.cua.edu/ferpa/resources/> and in the [Student Records Policy](#). Below are a few key suggestions when sharing student information:

- Share only that information that's necessary to achieve the task at hand.
- If e-mailing information to a student, use their CUA e-mail or confirm that the non-CUA e-mail is in fact theirs.
- If sharing data with someone outside the University (e.g. a parent) confirm they're authorized to receive it.

Most important, remember that the safety and security of the individual, the campus, and the community are paramount!

FERPA allows for disclosures of student information in such emergencies. If in doubt, don't hesitate to raise your concerns with appropriate University personnel. If you believe there is a threat to safety or security or other emergency, contact the Department of Public Safety immediately at (202) 319-5111.

Contact the Registrar with questions at (202) 319-5300. You may also e-mail your questions to cua-FERPA@cua.edu. Additional reference materials are available on the University's Campus Legal Information Clearinghouse at <http://counsel.cua.edu/ferpa/index.cfm>.