



# Practice Points

## Confidentiality and Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect

The purpose of this practice point is to provide a reminder to staff of the absolute necessity for Division staff to maintain the confidentiality of the reporter in all CA/N Investigations, Family Assessments and Referrals as prescribed by [210.150 RSMo](#). There are specific exceptions to the rule, and procedures to follow which are detailed in the Child Welfare Policy Case Record and Maintenance [Section 5 Chapter 2.1 CA/N Investigations and Family Assessments](#) and [Section 5 Chapter 2.4 Procedures for Sharing Information](#).

In accordance with the statute, Division personnel are allowed to release information as needed to appropriate federal, state or local criminal justice agency personnel, or any agent of such entity, with a need for such information under the law to protect children from abuse or neglect (i.e., disclosing reported concerns to the multidisciplinary team members during the co-investigation of CA/N's, providing the juvenile court with CA/N information in order for the court to render a disposition, providing the Prosecuting Attorney with CA/N records in cases involving pending criminal charges, etc.). It is the Division's responsibility to inform those receiving the confidential information of the possible penalties under the statute for wrongful dissemination of the record.

Staff should document in the case record whether the request was made verbally or in writing; identify to whom the disclosure was made; and, for what purpose the information was provided. Staff should document the release all information that falls under [HIPAA](#) in accordance with policy.

Children's Service Workers should not disclose any information which may lead to the identity of the reporter without supervisory consultation and approval. Unwarranted disclosure of the reporter provides a potential safety concern for the reporter and family as well as being a liability issue for the worker and agency.