

Devon County Council Children's Social Care

Restricting Access to Client Held Records Policy

1. Restriction of records

All client held information should only be accessed on a need to know basis and for the purposes of fulfilling your role within the organisation. The application of these rules and compliance with your contractual and professional codes of conduct is, ordinarily, sufficient to maintain the appropriate level of confidentiality.

In certain circumstances additional levels of information security may be required through the restriction of records.

2. Criteria for consideration to restrict access.

Restriction of records should only be considered if one of the following criteria apply:

- The death of a child where child protection concerns exist that require investigation.
- The birth record of a child who has been placed for Adoption.
- If requested by the subject of the record, where there is reason to believe that there would be a significant risk to their safety should unauthorised access to the record occur, or where information is of a confidential nature (e.g. issues of domestic violence, witness protection)
- Where the case is highly sensitive or of a confidential nature, such as a specific Child Protection enquiry where a member of staff is identified during a safeguarding investigation.
- If an employee is also a service user or carer and wishes their information to be restricted. Restrictions for this reason will **only** be considered where the situation is deemed complex and/or of a sensitive nature, and the standard restriction of individuals only accessing records in order to fulfil the specific requirements of their role is insufficient.

3. Type of Restriction

Within Eclipse there are two types of restriction:

- Universal restriction to everyone except named individuals or teams. When applied, this restriction will block all from seeing or using that record except named individuals or teams. This type of restriction should only be used when it is necessary to provide blanket confidentiality e.g. children placed for adoption.
- Restriction of the record to named people only. This will ensure that the named person or people will not be able to access the record at all. This type of restriction will preserve confidentiality but also allow practitioners and managers working with the family to continue to do so without impediment.

4. Preparing for a request to restrict.

Most individuals working for Children's Social Work service will have access to Eclipse client record system. Individuals working for other Departments within DCC but supporting Childrens Social work may also have access that is restricted to read only e.g. finance, management information team.

The restriction of record facility only applies to teams, and individuals who have access to Eclipse so when considering this facility, you need to satisfy yourself that this is the case.

When making a request to restrict records you need to be clear what type of restriction you wish to apply, bearing in mind the need to be proportionate.

Prior to making an application, requests to restrict should be discussed and agreed by your line manager.

In reading and authorising requests, Managers should satisfy themselves that:

- The individual/s subject of this request do have access to Eclipse
- The correct type of restriction is being requested and that the situation warrants restriction.

All requests must be approved by Area or Operations Manager via the Eclipse system.

5. Making an Application.

Practitioners requesting a record to be locked down can do so by adding the request to lock a record work list. This will generate the form, which, on completion, must be submitted to your Area Manager/Operations Manager for approval. On approval, the Area Manager/Operations Manager can lock the record themselves using the lock down functionality on Eclipse. Team Managers and equivalent will not have permission to lock records except those in the Adoption Service.

6. Review

The facility to lock a record should only be applied when there is a need to preserve confidentiality and the criteria. As soon as this situation no longer applies the record should be unlocked. All locked down reviews must be reviewed 6 monthly. The Eclipse system will prompt this, and the review date will appear on the practitioner's desktop.

7. Process guidance

Process guidance can be found on the Eclipse page of the [reSOURCE](#)

8. Practice guidance

In the main the only circumstances that would warrant a blanket restriction is children placed for adoption.

For children in care placed for adoption the following users and teams need to continue to have access:

USERS

Social Worker, Team Manager, ATM (if Known), Area Manager, Locality Director, supervising Social worker Fostering,

TEAMS

Adopt South West

The relevant team e.g. Children and Family Team or permanency & Transition team for that area.

The relevant SWTRO team for that area

EDT

The relevant Fostering team

Finance

Management Information

MASH

Placement team

Quality Assurance Reviewing & Safeguarding Service

Quality Assurance Reviewing & Safeguarding Service business support for all four localities

Scomis

Senior Management/Leadership Team

Supervised Contact team for the relevant area

Virtual School (Aga Spier & Sarah Short) if not adoption

CLA nurses (if not adoption)

When the children are adopted the restriction of records need to be amended to allow only Adopt SW access.

9. Document History

Date	Version number	Changes	Author
04/04/2018	1	Policy agreed at Children's Way We Work Group.	Nicky Scutt