



**THE NEW BRUNSWICK
ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS**

**GUIDELINE REGARDING
RELEASE OF INFORMATION
AND CONSENT FORM**

**Adopted by the Board
November 2001**



Request for Release of Information

Unless the information must be “released under authority of a statute, order of a court of relevant jurisdiction, or by the Code and Standards of Practice” (NBASW Code of Ethics, 2007, section 1.5.1), the file or any information contained there-in shall not, in whole or in part, be released unless the client has given his/her informed consent to do so.

When the social worker receives a request from a third party (i.e. lawyer, insurance company, etc.)

1. The social worker shall not release information unless s/he receives an original consent form which contains at least the following:
 - The name of the client who is the subject of the request;
 - The name, title, address, telephone number and the organization name if applicable of the person making the request;
 - The name, title, address, telephone number and the organization name, if applicable, of the social worker to whom the request is being made;
 - What information is being requested;
 - Time frame (for what period of time);
 - All effort should be made to clearly define the purpose of the request – ie, how the information will be used;
 - A time limit on the validity of the consent form – a maximum of one year;
 - The original signature of the client and, if possible, the signature of a witness.
2. The social worker should, if at all possible, meet with the client to review the request for release of information, explain what information will be released and the implications of sharing this information with the party requesting it.
3. The social worker should have the client initial each page of the file that is reviewed at the above meeting. This will ensure that no one can dispute the information that was contained in the file at the time of the review.
4. If it is impossible for the social worker to meet with the client to explain the request and its implications, the social worker should state on the consent form what steps were taken to try and ensure the consent is informed and why a meeting was not possible.
5. If applicable and if at all possible, the social worker to whom the request is made should inform any other social workers within the same agency who were previously involved with this client and whose notes are included in the information to be released.

Care should be taken in transmittal of confidential information. It is not recommended that such information be sent by fax or e-mail. It is recommended that such information should be delivered in person to the person requesting it or be sent by registered mail, clearly marked “**confidential – to be opened by the addressee only**”.

When information is released the social worker should enclose /attach a letter with the following caution “**This information is released with the understanding that it will be treated confidentially and not released to any other party without written consent of the client**”.



Release of Information

General Consent Form

I _____ agree that _____
Name of Client *Name of Social Worker*

Name of agency

Address

may release information to / may gather the following information from

Name of agency and its representative

Address

The information to be released has been discussed with me and I have agreed to the release of the following:

Description of information to be released

Comments : _____

This agreement ends on _____ or in one year from the date of signature
Date
whichever comes first.

Signature of client

Date

Signature of witness

Date

Note: In situations pertaining to clients under the age of 16 years, it is recommended to have both the signature of the child and the legal guardian.



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