

## **PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

The LMHS AHA – *Privacy and Confidentiality* policy specifies the companies commitment and procedures in respecting and providing information to our customers, about how information provided by them is managed within stated privacy industry standards and consistent with LMHS Mission Statement and Values.

## **POLICY**

LMHS is committed to its legislative responsibility to protect the personal information of its customers. When personal information is collected by LMHS, we will ensure that;

- It is collected by lawful and fair means;
- It is used for lawful purposes;
- It is collected with clients consent, and
- The purpose for collection is made clear and explicit.

Specifically it is important that our customers have confidence in the organization to establish and maintain the confidentiality of all tenant information.

Accordingly, LMHS is committed to adhering to Privacy Legislation – State and National Privacy Act, which outlines the extent and scope of what information can be collected, storage and security of personal information, access and correction of information, retention of information, use and disclosure of personal information, unique identifiers and conducting audits.

Including:

- All personal and identifying information will be considered to be confidential and will not be given out to others, outside agreed release agreements or disclosure or without informed consent.
- Being informed about the nature of information recorded and who has access to that information and why.
- Respecting the confidentiality of information obtained in the course of business. Staff will not intruding on, or be insensitive to tenants when collecting information.
- That only essential information will be recorded in accordance with the business needs of LMHS and Housing Services Division in regards to programmatic requirements.

- Staff and management will access tenant files when and only in order to undertake their work/business undertakings. Reading a file without authority to do so would be considered a breach of confidentiality.
- The right to be informed about staff's legal and professional obligations to maintain confidentiality and how these obligations will be implemented.

LMHS staff will follow clearly defined procedures to ensure that our customer's confidentiality is maintained at all times;

- Whether by telephone or in person, conversations will, as much as possible, take place in private surroundings; using an interview room, for example, or make sure the office you are using is private.
- During phone or in-person contact, staff will inform what they are recording, where and why the information is being recorded and who else may view the information.
- Information will be made available about what sort of information will be shared and with who, what sort of information is kept, for which purpose it is kept, who has access to it, and how customers can gain access to it.
- Consent will be gained if it's proposed that information is to be released. The customer has the right to correct or update the information. If the staff person believes that the information should not be altered, they will attach reasons for this belief as well as a statement from the customer outlining the changes they wished to make.
- In the event of undertaking publicity, such as public speaking or promotion, staff will avoid using any personally identifying information about our customers unless given permission to do so. (Using non-identifying statistics, for example).
- LMHS staff will not provide any personal details to anyone unless given direct consent. At times, discretion is called for, i.e: when asked to pass on information etc.
- If police contact seeking information, the staff are not deemed or required to supply police with any information unless a warrant is issued. Reasonable negotiation about information passed between the police and the service is expected, however.
- No LMHS staff member will pass on any information to police without first consulting their supervisor in the above situation.

- Filing notes / customer information in files, will be written avoiding opinions or eliciting any information about their personal issues. Information kept will be practical, rather than interpretive or personal.
- Records / files will be kept in a secure place and filed by numbers or codes, protecting customer's identity and addresses.
- When an application is withdrawn or customer exists the service, the file will be kept on archived as per LMHS Archiving Policy for a period of up to seven years before being for destroyed / shredded
- If a customer is not satisfied with the manner and actions taken to safe guard / deal with their personal information they may make an application of Complaint as per LMHS policy, for prompt action.