

RCW 74.34.095 Confidential information—Disclosure. (1) The following information is confidential and not subject to disclosure, except as provided in this section:

(a) A report of abandonment, abuse, financial exploitation, or neglect made under this chapter;

(b) The identity of the person making the report; and

(c) All files, reports, records, communications, and working papers used or developed in the investigation or provision of protective services.

(2) Information considered confidential may be disclosed only for a purpose consistent with this chapter or as authorized by chapter 18.20, 18.51, or 74.39A RCW, the long-term care ombuds programs under federal law or state law, chapter 43.190 RCW, or the office of the developmental disabilities ombuds program under chapter 43.382 RCW.

(3) A court or presiding officer in an administrative proceeding may order disclosure of confidential information only if the court, or presiding officer in an administrative proceeding, determines that disclosure is essential to the administration of justice and will not endanger the life or safety of the vulnerable adult or individual who made the report. The court or presiding officer in an administrative hearing may place restrictions on such disclosure as the court or presiding officer deems proper.

(4) (a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, upon a request for information regarding a specifically named vulnerable adult, the department may disclose only the following information:

(i) Whether or not a report was received;

(ii) The status of the report; and

(iii) The outcome of an investigation.

(b) The department may not disclose any information regarding a specifically named vulnerable adult if any of the following circumstances apply:

(i) The information concerns a vulnerable adult residing in or receiving services from a department licensed or certified facility or provider where an unannounced investigation in response to the report has not been initiated;

(ii) The requester is the alleged perpetrator;

(iii) The department has a reasonable belief that disclosure may compromise any investigation by a law enforcement agency, disciplinary authority, the department, or the department of children, youth, and families; or

(iv) The department has a reasonable belief that the information may endanger any person. [2023 c 44 s 3; 2013 c 23 s 218; 2000 c 87 s 4; 1999 c 176 s 17.]

Findings—Purpose—Severability—Conflict with federal requirements—1999 c 176: See notes following RCW 74.34.005.