

CONFIDENTIALITY

Temple College is committed to a strict standard of confidentiality to protect all students and employees from any unauthorized use or dissemination of confidential and private information. This policy applies to confidential or private information identified in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Texas Government Code Chapter 552 Public Information Act, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

This policy applies to any and all confidential and private information regarding students, faculty, and staff. Any confidential or private information belonging to students or employees of the College is not to be used for any unauthorized reason by any individual, nor disclosed to others, during the term of enrollment or employment or any time thereafter. Any direct or indirect unauthorized use or dissemination of confidential or private information relating to employees as provided by law or college policies and procedures is absolutely forbidden.

FERPA (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. All Temple College employees and student workers who have access to FERPA information will complete and demonstrate proficiency through approved training annually. Documentation or certification related to this training will be placed in the appropriate employee or student worker personnel file and stored in the appropriate office at Temple College.

Student grades are not to be posted for open viewing at Temple College. This includes all grades, i.e., homework and tests as well as final grades. Graded materials should not be left outside offices, classrooms, or labs.

The Public Information Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 552, formerly known as the Open Records Act, provides a mechanism for citizens to inspect or copy government records. It also provides for instances in which governmental bodies wish to, or are required by law to, withhold government records from the public. Any information collected, assembled, or maintained by or for a governmental body is subject to the Public Information Act. All government information is presumed to be available to the public. Certain exceptions may apply to the disclosure of the information. The format (paper, electronic, microfilm, etc.) of the record does not affect its status as a public record.

To the extent Temple College is a covered entity under HIPAA, the College must comply with the Privacy Rule, 45 CFR Part 164, with respect to protected health information that is not an education record. 45 CFR § 160.103 and § 164.501.

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