

POLICY & PROCEDURES

COUN-02: CONFIDENTIALITY

PREAMBLE

Individuals who conduct business on behalf of PEAC must be committed to the values of the organization, one of which includes the belief in transparent, consistent and fair practices. Ethical considerations demand that information acquired through participation in accreditation processes shall not be used for purposes other than those related to accreditation matters. In this way, all those involved in accreditation activities must respect confidentiality as a principle of good practice.

Participation in an on-site accreditation review, decision-making and all related processes and materials are considered to be of a highly confidential nature. Therefore, PEAC volunteers (including Board members, Committee members, Peer Review Team members and others) and contractors are not authorized to discuss activities of the specific on-site review, or related documents and the findings of the on-site review except with other members of the PRT, PEAC staff and other PEAC representatives as appropriate.

1.0 POLICY

1.1 Individuals who participate in any aspect of PEAC activities must maintain the confidentiality of written and orally presented information received or produced as a result of the accreditation process. This includes but is not limited to:

- documents related to the accreditation process that are prepared by the education program, for example, the Self Study Report or Progress Reports
- documents that are prepared by PEAC or other individuals, for example, Peer Review Team Reports, Accreditation Dossiers
- proceedings of meetings of the Accreditation Committee or the Board of Directors with respect to determining accreditation status of an education program
- discussions during accreditation on-site reviews with staff, faculty, students, clinicians and others
- information about the outcomes of accreditation on-site reviews

- 1.2 Any information or materials acquired through accreditation processes must not be used for purposes other than accreditation matters, unless permission is granted from the education program or institution, and PEAC.
- 1.3 Any breach of confidentiality or unauthorized use of information shall result in dismissal from participation in the accreditation program.
- 1.4 All individuals conducting business on behalf of PEAC are required to comply with policy COUN-04 Electronic Storage of Confidential Data.

2.0 PROCEDURES

- 2.1 Board and standing committee members
 - 2.1.1 Issues and expectations related to confidentiality will be discussed with all members as part of orientation to PEAC.
 - 2.1.2 All Board and committee members will be asked to review PEAC's policy COUN-02 Confidentiality and COUN-04 Electronic Storage of Confidential Data, and to sign a Confidentiality Agreement (FORM-06) once annually.
 - 2.1.3 All Board and committee members will be asked to destroy confidential materials when notified by PEAC at the conclusion of accreditation decision making meetings.
 - 2.1.4 At the end of meetings, the Chair of the meeting will note any specific issues or documents related to confidentiality.
- 2.2 Peer Review Team (PRT) members and other ad-hoc committee members
 - 2.2.1 Issues and expectations related to confidentiality will be discussed with all PRT and ad-hoc committee members as part of orientation to PEAC.
 - 2.2.2 All PRT and ad-hoc committee members will be asked to review PEAC's policy COUN-02 Confidentiality and COUN-04 Electronic Storage of Confidential Data, and to sign a Confidentiality Agreement (FORM-06) prior to being given access to any confidential material.
 - 2.2.3 Once an accreditation decision is made about a program, PRT members will be advised about the decision and will be asked to dispose of all materials related to the accreditation review by shredding, by deleting digital copies from all electronic devices, and/or by removing documents from any third-party data service provider. PRT members will be required to sign FORM-01 Confirmation of Document Disposal and return it to PEAC to indicate how they have disposed of the materials.

2.3 Contractors

- 2.3.1 Issues and expectations related to confidentiality will be discussed with all contractors as part of orientation to PEAC.
- 2.3.2 All contractors will be asked to review PEAC's policy COUN-02 Confidentiality and COUN-04 Electronic Storage of Confidential Data, and to sign a Confidentiality Agreement (FORM-06) prior to being given access to any confidential material.
- 2.3.3 All contractors will be required to secure offsite document backup services meeting the requirements of PEAC's policy COUN-04 to ensure continuity of services in the event of technology failure.
- 2.3.4 Upon completion of a contract, contractors will be required to sign FORM-01 Confirmation of Document Disposal and return it to PEAC to indicate how they have disposed of the materials.

Policy Number: COUN-02	
Date of last revision	Associated documents
<i>Aug 2001</i>	FORM-01 Confirmation of Document Disposal - PRT
<i>Dec 2004</i>	
<i>Sep 2008</i>	FORM-06 Confidentiality Agreement
<i>May 2012</i>	PEAC Member Handbook
<i>June 2013</i>	PRT Member Handbook
<i>April 2016</i>	Board Member Handbook
	COUN-04 Electronic Storage of Confidential Data