

AAAOM Confidentiality Policy

Adopted April 18, 2012

Confidentiality of information, both written and verbal, is an important responsibility of board directors, committee and task force members, other volunteers, and staff (collectively referred to as “volunteers and staff”). It is important for volunteers and staff to understand what information needs to be kept confidential, and agree to maintain that confidentiality.

The AAAOM requests that all volunteers and staff maintain confidentiality of any information which, if disclosed, would cause harm to either an individual or the association, or would impede the decision making process. Volunteers and staff should disclose information on a “need to know” basis, and seek guidance if they are uncertain about the sensitivity of specific information. Volunteers and staff should exercise good judgment and care at all times to avoid unauthorized or improper disclosures of confidential information in public places such as restaurants, elevators, and public transportation, etc.) if there is a possibility that confidentiality could be compromised.

Some information, such as personal information that could cause injury to a person if disclosed, personal records, etc., is clearly confidential. Other information, such as draft documents, etc., is confidential until it is formally announced by authorized spokespersons such as the President or Executive Director of the AAAOM. Other information, such as deliberations and discussions of issues or policies, should be kept confidential in order to maintain an atmosphere of trust and open communications. Without this, individuals will be reluctant to share their opinions, challenge assumptions, or raise issues that are important to the association, and valuable discourse will be compromised. If this occurs, the association would be deprived of information needed to make well-informed decisions.

Confidential information may include any non-public information such as internal board and staff communications, business or product plans, technical data, contracts, draft documents, internal presentations, etc. It may also include the work in progress of the board or any committee, task force, or workgroup. Information that is acquired as a director, staff member, or volunteer is solely for the purpose of AAAOM-related work or services, and should remain confidential even when a person is no longer a director, staff member, or volunteer.

When a violation of confidentiality is such that it could potentially cause harm or threaten to undermine the work or reputation of the association, the person who has disclosed the information may be subject to an ethics violation.