



ACTION169

# ROSE HOUSE

A RESTORATION HOME FOR WOMEN 18+

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## **Confidentiality Policy**

### *Staff + Residents*

Action169 is committed to maintaining high standards of confidentiality in all aspects of its work. This includes records and information relating to staff, volunteers, board members, and clients/residents.

The purpose of this policy is to give guidelines to the staff, volunteers, board members, clients, and residents of Rose House on maintaining confidentiality and the circumstances where disclosures may be necessary. Breaches of confidentiality may jeopardise the wellbeing of staff, volunteers, board members, clients and residents, and consequently may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

## **Disclosure of information relating to residents**

### *Staff - Refer to the Confidentiality and Authorization for Release of Information Policy*

Any information disclosed by residents at Rose House is confidential, except where the disclosure could prevent serious harm to others. If a resident requests that information be passed on to any third party, this will be done under the following conditions:

- If the resident has asked Rose House to liaise on their behalf with another statutory or voluntary organization and release has been completed.
- If the resident has requested disclosure of information, the implications of that disclosure need to be explored with the resident.

Where information reported by the resident will be used in court, the implications of this also need to be discussed with the resident. Any concerns should be discussed in the appropriate case management or team meeting setting. Disclosure of information that may increase the resident's risk should be considered only on the rarest of occasions, following further discussion with a manager or senior practitioner and that discussion should be noted in the case file.

Action169-Rose House will not disclose information to a resident's partner/ex-partner and it is not the role of any member of staff to mediate or pass information between partners.

### **Confidentiality Between Residents**

Any information disclosed by the residents at Rose House is confidential and is to be treated as such between all residents. This requires that residents do not disclose any information shared by another resident at Rose House with anyone outside the organization. Residents are required to treat any information disclosed with respect and sensitivity.

Due to the nature of residing in the home, Action169-Rose House cannot guarantee that residents will maintain one another's confidentiality. However, Action169-Rose House will undertake every reasonable step to ensure that this is done. In any group session, house meeting or activity, the issue of confidentiality will be discussed and residents will be asked to maintain one another's confidentiality.

### **Information About Staff**

A request for a staff member, volunteer or board member's home address, telephone number, e-mail address or any other personal information will always be requested from the individual concerned before any information is disclosed. Such requests will be referred to the Rose House management team who will notify the staff member, volunteer or board member in question.

### **Discussion of Residents**

This section gives guidance regarding staff discussing residents amongst themselves/discussing a resident with another agency on the telephone/when residents visit Action169's office:

The discussion taking place needs to occur in an appropriate office or counselling room, for example not in an office where other staff are working or where people are coming in and out of that office space. Details and personal facts about a resident may not be discussed with another resident or with another resident present.

### **Review of Files**

All information pertaining to a resident's case must be kept in a confidential file which is to be locked in a filing cabinet at the Action169 office. Confidential information may not be left lying around or visible on a screen, but is to be put away in the appropriate place (locked filing cabinet).

All residents have the right to view their files. Residents may submit their request to view their files to a member of the Rose House management team. No residents are allowed access to any information from a third party (e.g. the client's partner, children or other agencies) which is stored in their files. This is to protect the safety and confidentiality of others.

### **Photos**

No photographs may be taken for use that does not concern the work of Action169 and without the approval and knowledge of the Executive Director or approved Management. There are to be no photos taken of the home for any reason. No resident may be in any photo unless approved by the Executive Director and only when permission is given by the resident.

### **Location of RH**

The location of Rose House is not to be shared with anyone under any circumstance other than what outlined in this policy. A breach of this will result in immediate termination. In response to questions about Rose House consider the following: *Rose House is in an undisclosed location in Southern, MN.*

The location of Rose House can be shared on a must know basis for the following reasons only:

1. Emergency (i.e. ambulance, law enforcement)
2. Transportation such as Uber or cab; however, the home is not to be referred to as Rose House, but rather the address can be given separately from naming the home.
3. Visitors who've been approved in the safe family/friends list of a resident; however, meeting at a location other than Rose House will be promoted. Phase 1-2 residents may not have visitors.
4. Maintenance/electric/plumbing etc... needs; however, the home is not to be referred to as Rose House, but rather the address can be given separately from naming the home.

Because Rose House is in a small town and due to the reality it is likely that local residents may learn of the location, if asked about Rose House: *I cannot confirm or deny the location of Rose House.*

Other statements to protect the location of Rose House:

*Rose House is in Southern, MN*

Should nearby neighbors seek to ask questions to staff or residents about the home, those that live there are simply tenants.

## **Confidentiality + Home Safety**

Locked Doors/Windows:

Doors at Rose House will remain locked at all times for safety. This is to keep out those who do not belong. Residents always have the choice to leave at any time they choose in accordance with their IRP and/or as cleared with an advocate and in-line with curfew. Doors are not to be opened for anyone, even if known – including residents or staff. Staff will open doors as quickly as they are able to do so. Windows are to remain closed and locked at all times. Sensors on the windows can and will give signal when opened.

If you have been given a key, it is your responsibility to lock the home when you leave. The RHM, Executive Director and Sister Advocates will also have access to enter the home at any time and will lock the home when leaving. The house and gate/fence is to be locked at all times (whether home or not).

Confidentiality Letter from the Resident Handbook

### **Confidentiality:**

We ask that you keep Rose House a safe place to live, and you are required to keep the address/location of the safe house confidential. We also ask that you respect the privacy of your housemates by not sharing their information or their location. You may not, at any time, be dropped off or picked up by anyone at or near the shelter. Examples of breaking confidentiality include: disclosing where you are staying in public; taking pictures of other residents; disclosing the names of other residents; and talking with past residents about current residents.

Any information disclosed by you or other residents at Rose House is confidential and is to be treated as such between all residents. This requires that residents do not disclose any information shared by another resident at Rose House with anyone outside the organization. All residents are required to treat any information disclosed with respect and sensitivity.

Due to the nature of residing in the home, Rose House cannot guarantee that residents will maintain one another's confidentiality. However, Rose House will undertake every reasonable step to ensure that this is done. In any group session, house meeting or activity, the issue of confidentiality will be discussed and residents will be asked to maintain one another's confidentiality.

*Breaking confidentiality is grounds for immediate departure from the program, and depending on the severity, you may not be able to return to the program.*

By signing and agreeing to this policy you certify that you understand that any information (verbal, written or other form) disclosed within Action169-Rose House must remain confidential. This includes all information about residents, their families, members and other individuals or organizations. Staff members, volunteers, board members, clients and residents commit to upholding the value of confidentiality by not sharing information in public spaces or in front of non-staff members (e.g. residents) or on the telephone while there are non-staff members next to you.

I have read the Action169 Confidentiality Policy and hereby agree to adhere to the guidelines of confidentiality. I understand that any breach of confidentiality will be investigated and may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

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Employee/Volunteer/Intern Full Names Signature

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Management Name Management Signature