

NORTH GEORGIA HEALTH DISTRICT
County Board of Health Personnel Policy #603
Cherokee, Fannin, Gilmer, Murray, Pickens, Whitfield

OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FILES

EFFECTIVE DATE: August 1, 2010

RELEASE DATE: August 1, 2010

REFERENCES: State Law (O.C.G.A. §50-18-70 et seq. – Georgia Open Records Act)
State Law (O.C.G.A. §45-1-5 – Purging of Personnel Records)
CBH Human Resource/Personnel Policy #601 – Employment Information
CBH Human Resource/Personnel Policy #602 – Access to Personnel-Related Public Records Based on the Georgia Open Records Act Retention Schedules for State Government (Revised Dec. 2002)

Official personnel files for County Board of Health (CBH) employees are maintained by the District Personnel Office. Other personnel files may be maintained by CBH work units, but are not considered official personnel files.

FILING GUIDELINES

1. Documents that should be placed and retained in official personnel files include, but are not limited to: appointment packet material, performance-related documents and requests for personnel/payroll actions. A more inclusive list is provided in Attachment #1.
2. Documents that should be maintained **SEPARATELY** from official personnel files include, but are not limited to: supervisory files, competency files, medical information, criminal history records investigations, garnishments and employee grievances. A more inclusive list is provided in Attachment #2.
3. Supervisory files are to be maintained by each employee's work unit for the duration of employment in the unit. When employment in the work unit ends, supervisory files should be maintained until the end of the calendar year plus one additional calendar year. They should then be destroyed, unless there is an ongoing issue involving the individual employee's employment with the North Georgia Health District.

CUSTODIANS Custodians of official personnel files include the District Personnel Manager or designees.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

1. The Georgia Open Records Act provides that all CBH records are public and accessible unless specifically exempted for reasons such as an order by the Georgia Court or by law.

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2. Certain personal information about employees is not subject to disclosure, and will only be released to authorized officials. This information includes: an employee's social security number, mother's birth name, debit and credit card information, other banking/financial information, insurance and medical information and birth day/month. All other information maintained in official personnel files is generally accessible under the Georgia Open Records Act.
3. Under limited circumstances, State law allows the media to access an employee's social security number and birth day/month. This news media exception applies only when a written request, signed under oath, states that the person or entity is gathering information as a representative of a news media organization for use in connection with news gathering and reporting. The District Personnel Office must be immediately contacted if a request is received from the media.
4. Personal information about current or former CBH employees is accessible under the following circumstances:
 - 4.1 The custodians have access to the information for maintenance purposes.
 - 4.2 Employees may have access to their own personal information and may grant access in writing to other individuals or organizations.
 - 4.3 The District Health Director or designees and employees' supervisors may have access to the information when necessary for employment-related purposes or on a "need-to-know" basis.
 - 4.4 For purposes of investigating employment-related misconduct or for other legal, administrative, or regulatory reasons, information is available to authorized officials with organizations including, but not limited to, the following:
 - DHR Office of Child Support Enforcement,
 - DOAS Workers' Compensation,
 - Georgia Department of Labor,
 - Federal Department of Labor,
 - Social Security Administration,

OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FILES (continued)

- Georgia Bureau of Investigation,
- Federal Bureau of Investigation,
- Other federal, state or local law enforcement or investigative agencies with a “need to know.”

4.5 Information may also be released in response to a subpoena or other appropriate inquiry issued in the course of litigation.

5. Custodians are to ensure that confidential information is removed prior to allowing access to official personnel files, unless one or more of the conditions in **paragraphs 3 or 4** exists.
6. Access to official personnel files that has been authorized will be permitted during regular business hours (i.e., Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. through 4:30 p.m., excluding holidays and other non-work days).
7. Individuals requesting access to official personnel files should give advance notice. Identification is required prior to authorizing access to confidential employee information.

TRANSFER OF OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FILES

1. Official personnel files of CBH employees who transfer to other State agencies must be forwarded to the appropriate agency Human Resource/Personnel Office in a timely manner.

PURGED FILES

Official personnel files may be purged as a result of settlement agreements made with employees who have been terminated from employment.

1. In such cases, the official personnel files and any associated work history must be clearly designated with a notation that records have been partially purged as a condition of settlement agreement. (See Attachment #3)

NOTE: Notations regarding purged records are to be entered into terminated employees’ computer based work histories by the District Personnel Staff.

2. Notations regarding purged records will be disclosed to any governmental entity requesting information on former employees’ work histories for the sole purpose of making hiring decisions.

For additional information or assistance, please contact the District Personnel Office at 706/272-2342.

OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FILES (continued)

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment #1 – DOCUMENTS TO BE RETAINED IN OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FILES

Attachment #2 – DOCUMENTS TO BE MAINTAINED SEPARATELY FROM OFFICIAL
PERSONNEL FILES

Attachment #3 – NOTIFICATION OF PURGED RECORDS
