



June 2022

CONFIDENTIALITY

Balancing Transparency and Confidentiality in La Leche League

Both transparency and confidentiality are important to the health of any organization.

Transparency involves the organization's responsibility to keep its members fully and honestly informed of issues relevant to the membership.

Confidentiality is needed in La Leche League Canada (LLLC)

- in working with families,
- in working with Applicants,
- within LLLC
- in Board discussions and voting. See *LLLC Director Code of Conduct*, section 7.

In LLLC, the balance between transparency and confidentiality is achieved in the following ways:

Confidentiality for Leaders

A Leader shall keep confidential the medical and personal identifying information of the mothers, children and families with whom they work, unless otherwise required by law, or where the reporting of a danger to an adult or child is specifically required by law. See *LLLC Child Protection*. Personal identifying information is any information that permits the identity of an individual to be reasonably inferred either directly or indirectly.

Therefore, before Leaders reach out to other Leaders for help in supporting a person, they must ask permission to share any information that would enable others to identify the person whom the Leader is supporting. Under no circumstances should a Leader reveal information about a person's medical condition or legal issues without written permission. (Email, Messenger, or text all suffice as written permission.) Evidence of permission should be saved in the Leader's log, or in the Leader's email folder, in case any future questions arise about whether permission was granted. See *LLLC Keeping Records*.

Confidentiality in Working with Applicants

Supporting Leaders and LAD representatives should keep confidential both that an Applicant is working towards accreditation and the details of application discussions.

A Leader Applicant's status will not be disclosed within the Group by the Leader Applicants or Leaders. This practice keeps the Applicant from being put on the spot to answer questions before feeling adequately prepared. It also protects the Applicant from being seen as a representative of LLL. This practice also avoids any potential for difficulties in the case that the Applicant does not become a Leader.

Within LAD, discussions with Applicants should be kept confidential from everyone not directly involved in supporting the application. Those supporting the application may be the Assistant Coordinator of Leader Accreditation (ACLA) and the Area's Coordinator of Leader Accreditation (CLA), the Administrator of Leader Accreditation (ALA) and, if necessary, the Director of Leader Accreditation Department (DLAD). When supporting Leaders or LAD representatives need to consult with others regarding an Applicant's situation, the Applicant must be informed about who will be consulted and give written permission about what information may be shared. In order to protect the Applicant's privacy, no names or unnecessary details should be shared.

Whistleblower Policy

Confidentiality does not preclude someone from "whistleblowing"—that is, reporting policy, financial, or legal infractions committed by any administrator or member of the organization. See *LLLC Whistleblower*.

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