

HRS Guide to Responding to Requests for Information

A. INTRODUCTION

This directive governs the release of employee information contained in personnel files or other personnel records maintained by the UAA Human Resource Services (HRS) Department.

University personnel records are available for legitimate internal use. Such documents are not to be used for other purposes.

Alaska law with respect to public records requests from outside the institution requires relatively “LIBERAL” RELEASE OF UNIVERSITY PERSONNEL RECORDS. University employees are not within certain statutory exceptions granted to state employee personnel records. The employee’s constitutional right of privacy, however, continues to be an issue. It is important that records requests seeking personnel information are given close consideration.

Examples of potential exceptions to the obligation to release records include:

- Records that have nothing to do with the operation or organization of the University, such as personal insurance information, beneficiaries, etc.
- Records required to be kept confidential by state or federal law, including attorney client privilege, pre-decisional deliberative information developed for superiors to act upon, welfare/public assistance, student information, etc.
- Adoption information.
- Medical and health records.
- Computer passwords, electronic signature keys, or other information that would compromise University security.
- Unpublished research, trade secrets.

B. INFORMATION REQUESTED FROM PARTIES WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

Upon clearance from the Human Resource Director or designee, supervisors and University officials may, as relevant to their function, view employee information and request copies of select information from personnel records held by the UAA Human Resources department. Information concerning employees may not, however, be released for purposes of scientific studies without the written consent of the General Counsel. Information accessed on this basis will not be disclosed for other than institutional purposes.

C. INFORMATION REQUESTED BY, OR WITH THE WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION OF, THE EMPLOYEE

Employees, or others with the employee's written authorization, may review and receive copies of information or documents from their personnel files or their other personnel records held by UAA Human Resources department upon written request. The release must be approved by the HRS Director or designee. (See Attachment A.)

Employees need to present picture I.D. when they arrive in HRS for their records.

D. INFORMATION REQUESTED BY PARTIES OUTSIDE THE UNIVERSITY

The HRS Director or designee should immediately notify employees of an intent to comply with public records requests from outside the university that seek personally identifiable information from personnel files or other records maintained by the Human Resource Services department. Except in cases of immediate need, employees should be allowed up to 5 working days before release of their records to seek legal advice and/or judicial intervention preventing such release. (See Attachment B.)

Information requests for personnel information or files from the media should be handled in consultation with the Public Relations department. Information requests from others outside the University will be handled by the HRS Director in consultation with the Office of General Counsel, as the personnel manager deems appropriate.

In no event, however, will personally identifiable employee information unrelated to university operations be disclosed to persons outside of the University without written direction from the Office of General Counsel.

E. FORM OF REQUESTS & RESPONSE TIME

Requests for personnel records should contain specific information identifying the employee, records desired, and the authority for the request under this policy. Typically, the information required will include:

1. Name and social security number of subject employee.
2. Specific information requested.
3. Evidence of authority, if acting for the employee.
4. Need for the information (applicable to internal requests, but not to employee authorized releases.)
5. Basis for the request pursuant to this directive.
6. Signature, affiliation, and contact information of requester.

Responses from HRS will, whenever possible be completed within 5 working days.

F. CHARGES FOR LOCATING/PRODUCING RECORDS

Reasonable copy charges are appropriate if the requesting party agrees to pay for the University to make copies in advance.

Actual cost for time and materials may be charged for retrieving and copying electronic records.

Charges with respect to either paper or electronic records requests may be waived.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A

EMPLOYEE WAIVER / AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION

TO: Human Resource Services

I am requesting the University of Alaska Anchorage to provide an employment verification. Please include the following information in the verification:

- ___ Dates of employment
- ___ Job title (s)
- ___ Rate of pay
- ___ Year to date earnings
- ___ Prior year earnings
- ___ Type of employment
- ___ Hours worked per week
- ___ Other (please specify)_____

When the verification is complete:

- ___ Contact me at _____ and I will pick it up.
- ___ Mail it to _____

- ___ Fax it to _____

I hereby release the University of Alaska, your organization, and your office's employees, and others from any liability or damage which may result from furnishing the information requested, including any liability pursuant to any state or local code or ordinance, or any similar laws.

Signature

Date

Full Name (Print Legibly)

Social Security Number

Attachment B

DATE: Date

TO: Employee Name
Street Address
City, AK Zip

FROM: Pam Jacobs
HRS System Consultant

RE: NOTIFICATION FOR REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The attached correspondence details information requested from your personnel records. The information will be released no sooner than one week after the date of this memorandum.

If you do not feel this information should be disclosed, you are advised to take whatever action you feel appropriate, such as seeking advice from legal counsel.

Pam Jacobs
(907) 786-1422

Attachment

cc: personnel file