

**ALL AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS THAT PARTICIPATE IN MAACLINK MUST ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING STANDARDS:**

All users must have received MAACLink user training and have their OWN user name and password in order to access the system.

In order to receive training and a user name, the user must complete the Statement of Confidentiality form, get it signed by the executive director, and send it to MAAC by fax or mail.

MAACLink users must adhere at all times to the Statement of Confidentiality agreement.

If MAACLink administrators detect a violation of any piece of the Statement of Confidentiality or the Privacy Agreement by an individual user, a Notice of Violation will be mailed to the executive director. Multiple violations may result in discontinuation of user or agency rights to MAACLink and is considered a breach of contract.

All individuals who apply for a service or program enrollment at your agency must grant informed consent to put their files into the MAACLink system.

Each agency is responsible for storing the clients' signed consent/release forms on site. The agency may decide how often to ask the client to sign a consent/release form – each time a service is given or on a periodic basis.

An agency may obtain a verbal consent from clients as long as they have completed the Verbal Consent Agreement form and faxed or mailed it to the MAAC office.

The Verbal Consent Agreement is not for each client, but instead serves as a notice to MAAC that your agency intends to collect informed verbal consent instead of signed consent from clients you serve.

Exception: Clients who receive a service from a MAAC-managed utility fund MUST sign a consent form or the Standard Intake Form that contains the consent paragraph.

Clients own their MAACLink files.

Clients have the right to see their files if requested. Please keep this in mind when putting client notes, household notes or case management notes into the system.

Clients have a right to revoke their consent.

If a client of your agency asks to have his/her file removed from MAACLink, call the MAAC office immediately and ask him/her to complete a Client Revocation form. The Client Revocation form is included in the Privacy Packet.

MAACLink is not connected to any federal or national data collection facility.

MAACLink data is collected only at the local level and will never be electronically fed into a national database for homeless or at-risk individuals.

The Mid America Assistance Coalition uses *aggregate* data from the Kansas City metro area to create the Annual Statistical Report and for other advocacy efforts on behalf of our homeless and at-risk populations.

Aggregate data does not identify individuals or include pieces of personal information, such as a client's social security number.

MAACLink administrators may access your clients' personal information in order to help users with data entry or reporting questions.

The administrators at MAAC who have access to the MAACLink system must abide by the same privacy agreement as other users AND sign an additional statement of trust. MAACLink administrators will only view client information: 1) at the user's request during a helpdesk call, 2) in the case that there is a technical problem with a client's file that is affecting system performance, or 3) to remove a client from the system when a Client Revocation form is received at MAAC.

Reports that identify clients and that are generated directly from MAACLink should not be shared with outside organizations at any time.

An outside organization is one that is not online with MAACLink and has not submitted a contract to MAAC.

Do not give client information to outside organizations or individuals who call your agency and request it by phone.

Because MAACLink is a shared database, most clients' files have been updated by more than one participating agency. Therefore, it creates a liability for *all* participating agencies if client information is shared with outside entities. You may refer the caller to MAAC's Executive Director if he/she persists. This rule applies even to law enforcement officials.

If your agency is served with a subpoena that requires you to hand over a client's electronic file, this subpoena can only apply to the client's information that has been entered by your agency. **Call the MAAC Executive Director if your agency's electronic files are subpoenaed.**

Always log off of MAACLink or lock your computer screen before walking away from the computer.

Do not write down your user name and password and stick it to your computer.

If you feel like you must write down your password in order to remember it, please be sure you hide it in a secure place. If you suspect someone may have learned your log-in information, change your password immediately.

Do not send clients' social security numbers in emails.

Email is not a secure way to transmit client-specific information because it can be intercepted (or hacked) in transfer.

Do not share client information with authorized coworkers in public places or common areas in your workplace.

Be aware of the possibility that unauthorized people, including other clients, may overhear your conversation or phone calls.

**TWO EXCEPTIONS TO THE PRIVACY AGREEMENT:**

Duty to Warn.

As professionals, we all have a duty to guard each other from harm. If a client has threatened you, him/herself, or others at your organization you must warn other users of a potential threat through the MAACLink system. The best way to do this is by using a Warning Notification ('Notifications' in the left column under the Client Case Management tab). This note should read, "Alert! Alert! Please call [agency name] at [agency number] before serving this person." Call a MAACLink administrator for help or questions.

Child Abuse and Neglect.

If you see evidence or have reason to believe that a child/children have been abused or neglected then you have a duty to report it to authorities, regardless of confidentiality agreements. You may call 1-800-422-4453 to find a local phone number for reporting purposes.

**Enforcement of Confidentiality Policy**

MAAC has the absolute right to terminate without notice services of MAACLink for the purpose of investigation of any suspicion of breached confidentiality. Thereafter, MAAC may terminate this agreement if MAAC, in its sole discretion, determines that there has been a breach of confidentiality.