

FERPA Guidelines



The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records, including the right to inspect their education records, request an amendment of the records that the student believes are inaccurate, and the right to control disclosures of their records except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception permitted by FERPA is the release of Directory Information to parties outside the institution. Directory Information is defined as information which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed by Allan Hancock College.

The following Directory Information may be released without student signature of approval:

- Student name
- Dates of attendance
- Major field of study
- Degrees and awards received
- Honors and dean's list recognition

For athletic purposes, coaches and the athletic director may release:

- Student name
- Dates of attendance
- Most recent previous school attended
- Major field of study
- Participation in officially-recognized sports
- Height and weight of athletic team members
- High school of graduation of athletic team members
- Athletic awards

NOTE: Students may withhold Directory Information by notifying the director of admissions and records in writing. Students with directory holds are noted in the AHC computer system, and their record is marked confidential. Release of confidential records to third parties or acknowledging that such students are in attendance or have previously attended Allan Hancock College is prohibited without the student's written permission to do so.



In most instances all other student educational record information may not be released without written consent of the student, other than to AHC representatives with a “need to know”. This includes: grades, social security numbers, ethnicity, ID number, academic progress, or any other non-directory information. For more information regarding FERPA guidelines, see <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html> .

Students who wish to authorize a third party access to their records must submit a Student Authorization to Release Information, along with a copy of their government issued photo ID, to the AHC Admissions and Records office.

Third parties include parents, spouses, other students, references, other schools (basically anyone other than the specific student), regardless of the student’s age.

GUIDELINES FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION

To the student in person: no signature required; if in the presence of third parties, only release information specifically requested by the student, do not elaborate or provide additional information. Student must submit a photo ID and provide their AHC ID number.

To AHC representatives: No signature required if requestor has “need to know” in order to carry out college responsibilities.

If releasing information OTHER THAN DIRECTORY INFORMATION, a staff member must have a signature of release from the student and may only release specific information designated by the student.

Note: A staff member is not obligated by FERPA to release information to third parties; therefore, if the request eliminates important information, staff may deny the request.

Examples:

- a. A student only wants part of their transcript sent
- b. Providing a reference, but the student does not want you to mention unsatisfactory work, or performance

If an office is in an open area:

- Close all files when not in use or when third parties are present
- Position computer screen so that third parties cannot see information; lock computer whenever leaving work area and verify office printers, copiers and fax machines are in secure areas
- If discussing education record information with a student, if at all possible, go to a private office or area so that conversations are not overheard

For questions contact the Admissions & Records office at 805 922 6966 ext 3248