

SAN MATEO COUNTY
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION

DATE: November 19, 2001

MENTAL HEALTH POLICY NO.: MH 01-09

SUBJECT: Shredding of Client Material--Confidentiality

AUTHORITY: Federal, State and Local Confidentiality Regulations

SUPERSEDES: New Policy

PURPOSE

To establish guidelines to protect the confidentiality of all written or printed material (clinical, clerical, financial, statistical) that contains client identifiers.

POLICY

This policy applies to all San Mateo County Mental Health Services' providers. The specific provisions of this policy are as follows:

- All written or printed material (clinical, clerical, financial, statistical etc.) that contains client identifiers must be disposed of in a manner that ensures client confidentiality.
- This policy also applies to personal material that contains client identifiers (i.e. notes, memos, phone messages etc.).
- The material must either be disposed of locally using a site based shredder or it must be collected and stored for subsequent shredding by a County contracted company.
- Care must be taken that material stored for shredding be properly labeled as such and not have the potential to be confused with material stored for recycling.
- On-site supervisors (clinical and administrative) share the responsibility of assuring that the above mechanisms for shredding written material are available to all staff.
- All other means of disposing material with client identifiers are not acceptable.

Approved: _____
Gale Bataille, Director
Mental Health Services Division