

# Services for Students with Disabilities Confidentiality Statement

## For Documentation and Services

The Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office treats as confidential, any written material obtained to verify a disability, to plan for appropriate services, or to document services and contacts with this office. The following are guidelines used by the SSD office regarding disability related information:

All disability related information regarding students served by the SSD office is housed in the Services for Students with Disabilities office.

- All disability related information is kept in separate files for each student and housed in secure file cabinets.
- Only staff persons working at the SSD have access to the files.
- Students who request services/accommodations acknowledge that some level of disclosure to select faculty may be necessary to provide the requested accommodation(s). Disclosure will occur with the student's specific written permission with the understanding that only necessary information for the purposes of accommodation will be communicated.
- A student may request to review the contents of his/her own file. This must be done in the presence of a SSD staff member. All information in the file is the property of the SSD office. Students may receive copies of only disability related records verifying the disability and the need for services and accommodation(s). Students must sign a release for the copies and an inventory list of all materials copied will be kept in the folder.
- Five (5) years after the last date of enrollment, all materials in a student's folder in the SSD office will be destroyed.

## Information Disclosure

Periodically the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office is asked to provide information about students identified and served through the office. This data is reported in a manner that protects the identity of all students. *The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), also known as the Buckley Amendment, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990 (ADA), do not allow faculty access to disability related information.* The SSD office may, however, communicate to faculty, information that a student has a documented disability and a need for accommodation(s).

This Information Disclosure describes how disability information about a student who is registered with the SSD office may be used and disclosed and how students can obtain access to their information. Please review this information carefully.

The SSD office values the privacy of its students and the confidentiality of the personal, educational, and health information entrusted to us. In order to protect this privacy we have policies and procedures to limit disclosures of personal information to those which are minimally necessary for the delivery of services/accommodations of the student, those for which the student has given permission, and/or those required by law or public safety.

**1. Signed release.** Information related to disability accommodations may be disclosed to persons the student has designated in a signed Release of Information form. The student can add or delete names by completing a new Release of Information form at any time.

**2. Legal requirements.** Personal and/or documented disability information may be disclosed as required by court or administrative order, subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process. It may also be disclosed when legally requested by national security, intelligence, and other federal officials.

**3. Contacts.** The student may be contacted by SSD to provide appointment reminders or other information of disability-related benefits or services that may be of interest to the student.

**4. Other uses.** Disability information can be disclosed to the proper authorities to prevent/control injury or disability to the student or to others. Uses and disclosures of disability and personal information other than described above will be made only with the student's (your) written authorization. Such authorization when given may be revoked in writing by the student (you) at any time.

The student also has certain rights related to his/her information retained in the SSD office. These include:

**1. The right to inspect and obtain copies of personal disability information.** Any such requests must be made in writing by the student to give SSD permission to release the information. A cost-based fee may be charged for copying disability records. SSD may deny, in writing, the release or viewing of personal disability information if the SSD Administration determines that the release of the information may be harmful to the student or another person. When such a request is denied the student may request a review of the denial by a designated SSD and/or University reviewing official who did not participate in the decision to deny. Such requests must be made in writing to the SSD office: 250 S. Main Street, Suite 300, (0185), Blacksburg, VA 24060.

**2. The right to request limits on the amount or types of disability information released.** Such requests must be made in writing to the SSD office. SSD may not agree with this request when it is felt to be in the student's best interest to release the information and/or when such a release is mandated by the uses outlined above.

### **3. The right to request that communications between the student and SSD be kept confidential.**

Duties of Services for Students with Disabilities:

**Maintaining privacy.** The SSD office is required by law to maintain the privacy of protected disability information and to provide and abide by this notice of its legal duties and privacy practices.

Effective date and changes:

This notice is effective from July 15, 2004 and is posted in prominent locations throughout the SSD office. It is also posted on the SSD public web site at [www.ssd.vt.edu](http://www.ssd.vt.edu). Copies of the notice may be obtained by requesting them at the SSD office. Additionally, students may request to see the written SSD office procedure on student privacy. SSD reserves the right to make changes to this notice and/or its procedures without notification other than posting or making available copies of revised notices in locations as above. Such changes, if and when made, will become effective for all of the disability information that SSD maintains.

Information and complaint:

Students may file complaints regarding the security and/or privacy or discriminatory acts of their personal disability information with the Director for Services for Students with Disabilities, Susan P. Angle, PhD.

250 S. Main Street, Suite 300  
Mail Code (0185)  
Blacksburg, VA 24060  
Phone: (540) 231-0858  
TTY: (540) 231-0853  
FAX: (540) 231-0848  
e-mail: [spangle@vt.edu](mailto:spangle@vt.edu)

Additionally, students may file a request for investigation or an informal complaint about possible violations of the privacy rules or discriminatory acts with the Virginia Tech Office of Equal Opportunity at 366 Burruss Hall or call 231-7500. Information is also available on their website at: <http://www.eoaa.vt.edu> .

Or a formal complaint may be filed with:

Office of Civil Rights:

Office for Civil Rights  
200 Independence Avenue, S. W.  
Room 509F, HHH Building  
Washington, DC 20201

## **Internet Privacy Statement**

**Site:** Services for Students with Disabilities

**URL:** <http://www.ssd.vt.edu>

Virginia Tech has created this privacy statement in order demonstrate our firm commitment to privacy. The following discloses the information gathering and dissemination practices for this web site.

### **Personal Information**

The SSD web site only collects personal information entered by the user on various forms on the web site.

This information is used only for the purpose stated on the form, such as request for accommodation letters, registration for workshops, etc.

We do not share any personal information with any third parties nor do we use any personal information for any purposes beyond those stated here.

### **Links to Virginia Tech Sites**

The SSD web site contains links to other Virginia Tech pages. The privacy practices of other pages may vary with the purposes of the page. Consult the privacy statement on each page.

### **Links to External Sites**

The SSD web site contains links to other sites. Virginia Tech is not responsible for the privacy practices or the content of such web sites.

### **Security**

The SSD web site has security measures in place to protect the loss, misuse, and alteration of the information under our control. Log file access is restricted to system administrators while stored on the server. Log files are rotated regularly and archived in a secure location.

Users should also consult Virginia Tech's policy on Acceptable Use.

<http://www.vt.edu/admin/policies/acceptuseguide.html>

Virginia Tech complies with all statutory and legal requirements with respect to access to information.

### **Contact Information**

If you have any questions about this privacy statement, the practices of this site, or your dealings with this site, you can contact Dr. Susan Angle at (540) 231-0858 or [spangle@vt.edu](mailto:spangle@vt.edu).

This statement describes how Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at Virginia Tech will use data we collect from you when you visit our web site.

If you visit a page on SSD at Virginia Tech's web site...

**. . . to view or download information:** We may collect and store information for statistical purposes. For example, we may count the number of visitors to the different sections of our site to help us make them more useful to visitors. Similar information is gathered for streaming audio and video, visits to web pages that require users to log in, interactive forms or questionnaires, or for other comparable types of connections.

**. . . to send SSD staff an e-mail:** By sending us an electronic mail message, you may be sending us personal information (e.g., name, e-mail address, etc.). We may store your name and e-mail address and other information you may send us in order to respond to your message.

**. . . to fill out a form or to complete a questionnaire:** SSD web pages offer visitors opportunities to complete computer administered inventories. Data from on line inventories, and other information that we collect on our web pages through use of forms, questionnaires, or other means are used to help with the design of our web site and to help us improve delivery of services to Virginia Tech students.

SSD maintains the privacy of data collected from visitors to our web site subject to applicable laws. Personal information or other information that permits identification of visitors to our web site is not shared with or distributed to third parties.