

Coral Springs Fire Academy Student Records Policy

The General Education Provisions Act, Section 438, as amended, and the regulations promulgated for the enforcement of the act, found at 45 Federal Register 30911, as amended at 45 Federal Register 86296, provide all students enrolled or previously enrolled at the Coral Springs Fire Academy (CSFA) have the following rights in relation to their educational records:

I. General Policy

No information from records, files, or other data directly related to a student, other than public information defined below, shall be disclosed to individuals or agencies outside the university without the written consent of the student, except those disclosures set forth in paragraph IX.

II. Definition of Educational Record

Student educational records are defined as those records, files, documents, and other material which contain information directly related to students and which are maintained by CSFA or a party acting for CSFA. Records of instructional, supervisory, and administrative personnel which are in the sole possession of the maker and accessible only to the maker or a substitute are specifically excluded from this definition of educational record. Records which are made or maintained by physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, or other professionals or paraprofessionals and which are maintained in connection with treatment and are not available to anyone else are also excluded from a student's educational record, but such records are available to another physician or appropriate professional of the student's choice if requested. Records which only contain information relating to a person after that person is no longer a student are not considered part of the student's educational record.

III. Definition of Student

For the purpose of this policy a student is defined as any individual currently or previously enrolled in any academic offering of the CSFA. It does not include prospective students.

IV. Public Information

The following is a list of public information which may be made available by the CSFA without prior consent of the student and which is considered part of the public record of the student's attendance: Name, address (local and permanent), telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, schedule of classes, and institution most recently previously attended. The information will not be made available if a student directs a written instruction to the appropriate records official prior to the end of the registration period for any given term.

V. Types and Location of Records

Each program maintains a file on each student enrolled, containing applications, grade reports or other performance evaluations, and correspondence. CSFA registrar's office may maintain similar files. The counseling service, placement service, and financial aid office maintain a file on students who use those services. The CSFA has designated the following officials as responsible for student records; Coral Springs Fire Department, Training and Public Education Division; Chief of Training. The above shall hereinafter be referred to as "records officials." The records official is responsible for maintaining a listing of student records within the records official's area of responsibility, indicating the location and general content of the records. Any student request concerning records or files, including requests that public information not be disclosed, requests for disclosure to third parties, and requests for access by the student should be directed to this official. Forms for all such requests may be obtained from these officials. These persons will also act as hearing officers when the content of a record is challenged as provided below.

VI. Disclosure of Student Records to the Student

The student is accorded the right to inspect, in the presence of a CSFA staff member, records, files, and data primarily and directly related to the student. To inspect a file a student should go to the office of the records official and initiate a request in writing. If a student desires to obtain copies of the items in the educational record rather than personally reviewing the record, the written request to the records official for copies must be signed and notarized to prevent disclosure to persons other than the student. A time for inspection shall be granted within 45 days of the date of the request, and copies will be mailed within the same time period. Copies shall be made and provided to the student at a cost to the student equal to actual cost of reproduction and payable in advance.

The right of inspection does not include financial statements of parents, confidential recommendations placed in the file prior to January 1, 1975, provided that such recommendations were solicited with a written assurance of confidentiality or sent or retained with a documented understanding of confidentiality and used only for the purpose solicited, and other confidential recommendations, access to which has been waived by the student in accordance with paragraph VIII.

VII. Challenging the Contents of the Record

CSFA will respond to any reasonable request for an explanation or interpretation of any item in a student's file. Requests for such explanation or interpretation should be addressed in writing to the appropriate records official.

If, after inspecting a record, a student believes that information contained in the educational record is inaccurate or misleading or violates his or her privacy, the student may request that the record be amended by presenting such request in writing to the appropriate records official. A request that the record be amended shall be answered by the records official within 15 days of its receipt with information that the record has been amended as requested or that the record has not been amended and that the student has a right to a hearing on the matter. A written request for a hearing should be addressed to the appropriate records official as listed in V, who will set a date and time

for hearing with reasonable notice of same to the student within 45 days of receiving the request.

The request for hearing should identify the item or items in the file to be challenged and state the grounds for the challenge, e.g., inaccuracy, misleading nature, inappropriateness. The records official shall examine the contested item, shall hear the person responsible for placing the item in the file if appropriate, and shall examine any documents or hear any testimony the student wishes to present. A student may be assisted or represented by individuals of his or her choice, including an attorney, at his or her own expense. The records official may decide that the item should be retained or that it should be deleted or altered. The records official shall issue a written decision, based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, within 10 days of the conclusion of the hearing. If the decision is adverse to the student, the notice of decision shall include a statement that the student has the right to place a statement in the record commenting on the information and/or setting forth reasons for disagreeing with the decision.

VIII. Waiver of Access

CSFA may request that a student waive the student's right to inspect confidential recommendations respecting that student's application for admission, provided that the student be notified, upon request, of the names of all those providing the recommendations, the recommendations are used only for the purpose solicited, and the waiver is not a condition of admission or any other benefit. Confidential recommendations respecting application for employment or the receipt of an honor or other recognition may also be waived.

A waiver may be revoked with respect to actions occurring after revocation by so notifying the records official in writing.

IX. Providing Records to Third Parties

The general policy of CSFA is to refuse access to or disclosure of information from student records to third parties without the written consent of the student. Should a student wish to have such records released, a signed and dated written request must be directed to the proper records official, specifying the records to be released, the reason for release, the party or class of parties to whom records are to be released, and a request for copies to the student, if desired. CSFA will then transfer or grant access to the information. The transferred information shall contain a statement that the information may be used by the receiving party or, if an organization, by its officers, agents, and employees for the purpose requested, but that the party shall not transfer the information to any other party except with the written consent of the student. A charge not to exceed the actual cost of reproduction will be assessed against the student when copies are made for the party or the student.

Student records are available to the following persons with the accompanying conditions without written consent of the student:

1. Instructional or administrative personnel whose duties include responsibilities to students which in the institution reasonably require access to student records.
2. Officials of other schools in which a student seeks to enroll. CSFA will make a reasonable attempt to notify the student of the transfer, as well as the student's right to a copy, upon request, and the right to a hearing to challenge the contents if desired.
3. Certain representatives of federal departments or agencies or state educational authorities as provided by the law. In absence of consent or specific authorization by federal law of the collection of personally identifiable data, data collected by excepted officials shall be protected in a manner which will not permit personal identification of students and parents by other than those officials, and personally identifiable data shall be destroyed when no longer needed.
4. Financial aid officers or their assistants in connection with the application for or receipt of financial aid, provided that personally identifiable information may only be disclosed for the purpose of determining eligibility, amount, and conditions and to enforce terms and conditions.
5. Organizations conducting studies for administrative evaluation, tests, etc., provided that studies are not conducted in a manner which will permit personal identification of students or their parents by other than representatives of the organization and that the information will be destroyed when no longer needed for the purposes collected.
6. Accrediting organizations.
7. Other appropriate persons in an emergency to protect health or safety of students or others. In determining appropriateness of disclosure, consideration will be given to the seriousness of the threat to health or safety of the student and others, the need for information to meet the emergency, whether the parties requesting information are in a position to deal with the emergency, and the extent to which time is of the essence.
8. In response to lawful subpoena or court order.

CSFA will keep a record, indicating the name and legitimate interest, of all disclosures except those made to a student, those made pursuant to written consent, those designated as public information, and those made to persons at CSFA with a legitimate educational interest.

This record of disclosure will become a part of the educational record, subject to inspection and review.

X. The CSFA Student Records Policy shall be published in the catalog of each school, and a copy shall be displayed prominently on a bulletin board in each school. In order to comply with the requirement that CSFA give annual notice of this policy to enrolled students, a short notice of the policy shall be included in the Class Schedule for each term.

XI. Any student who believes that CSFA has violated his or her right to access or privacy of educational records as established by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, the accompanying regulations published at 45 Federal Register 30911, as amended at 45 Federal Register 86296, and this policy may address a complaint to:

The Family Educational Rights and
Privacy Act Office
Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202