§1806. Information not public record

Disclosure of information and records in the possession of the commission is governed by this section. [PL 2011, c. 260, §1 (NEW).]

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Individual client information" means name; date of birth; social security number; gender; ethnicity; home, work, school or other address; home telephone number; fax number; e-mail address; cellular telephone number; pager number; and any information protected under the Maine Rules of Evidence, Rules 501 to 509 or the Maine Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 1.6 or otherwise protected by the attorney-client relationship. [PL 2023, c. 638, §17 (AMD).]

B. "Personal contact information" means home address, home telephone number, home fax number, home e-mail address, personal cellular telephone number, personal pager number, date of birth and social security number. [PL 2023, c. 638, §17 (AMD).]

C. "Request for funds for expert or investigative assistance" means a request submitted to the commission by or on behalf of a person eligible for indigent legal services seeking authorization to expend funds for expert or investigative assistance, which includes, but is not limited to, the assistance of a private investigator, interpreter or translator, psychiatrist, psychologist or other mental health expert, medical expert and scientific expert. [PL 2023, c. 638, §17 (AMD).]

D. "Case information" means:

(1) The court in which a case is brought;

(2) Any criminal charges or juvenile crime charges and the type, but not the contents, of any petition giving rise to a case;

(3) The docket number;

(4) The identity of assigned counsel and the date of assignment;

(5) The withdrawal of assigned counsel and the date of withdrawal; and

(6) Any order for reimbursement of assigned counsel fees. [PL 2011, c. 547, §1 (NEW).] [PL 2023, c. 638, §17 (AMD).]

2. Confidential information. The following information and records in the possession of the commission are not open to public inspection and do not constitute public records as defined in Title 1, section 402, subsection 3.

A. Individual client information is confidential, except that the names of criminal defendants and the names of juvenile defendants charged with offenses that if committed by an adult would constitute murder or a Class A, Class B or Class C crime are not confidential. [PL 2023, c. 638, §17 (AMD).]

B. [PL 2023, c. 638, §17 (RP).]

C. Personal contact information of a commission-rostered attorney is confidential. [PL 2011, c. 260, §1 (NEW).]

D. Personal contact information of a member of the commission or a commission employee, including employed counsel and public defenders, is confidential. [PL 2023, c. 638, §17 (AMD).]

E. A request for funds for expert or investigative assistance is confidential. The decision of the executive director of the commission hired pursuant to section 1804, subsection 1, or the executive director's designee, to grant or deny such a request is not confidential after a case has been

completed. A case is completed when the judgment is affirmed on appeal or the period for appeal has expired. [PL 2023, c. 638, §17 (AMD).]

F. Any information obtained or gathered by the commission through a formal or informal complaint or when performing an evaluation or investigation of an attorney is confidential, except:

(1) The commission may disclose the information to the attorney who is the subject of the formal or informal complaint, evaluation or investigation;

(2) The executive director of the commission hired pursuant to section 1804, subsection 1, or the executive director's designee, may disclose the information to the Maine Assistance Program for Lawyers described in Title 14, section 164-A;

(3) If the attorney who is subject to an evaluation or investigation appeals a decision of the executive director or the executive director's designee, in accordance with the process established under section 1804, subsection 3, paragraph J, the information may be disclosed at a public hearing conducted by the commission on the appeal, except that information that is protected by the attorney-client privilege or that is confidential under any provision of law, the Maine Rules of Evidence or the Maine Rules of Professional Conduct remains confidential; and

(4) As provided in subsection 4. [PL 2023, c. 638, §17 (AMD).]

G. Materials, handouts, recordings and other documents produced, obtained or otherwise acquired by the commission in connection with providing or preparing to provide training and evaluation programs for attorneys who are or may seek to become assigned counsel, employed counsel, public defenders or contract counsel. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the commission may disseminate materials governed by this paragraph to the extent necessary to comply with its duties under this chapter without waiving the confidentiality of the materials. [PL 2025, c. 415, §4 (NEW).]

[PL 2025, c. 415, §4 (AMD).]

3. Confidential information disclosed by Judicial Department. The Judicial Department may disclose to the commission confidential information necessary for the commission to carry out its functions, including, but not limited to, the collection of amounts owed to reimburse the State for the cost of assigned counsel, as follows:

A. Case information and individual client information with respect to court proceedings that are confidential by statute or court rule in which one or more parties are represented by assigned counsel; and [PL 2011, c. 547, §2 (NEW).]

B. The name, address, date of birth and social security number of any person ordered by the court to reimburse the State for some or all of the cost of assigned counsel. [PL 2011, c. 547, §2 (NEW).]

Information received by the commission from the Judicial Department under this subsection remains confidential in the possession of the commission and is not open to public inspection, except that the names of criminal defendants and the names of juvenile defendants charged with offenses that if committed by an adult would constitute murder or a Class A, Class B or Class C crime are not confidential.

[RR 2023, c. 2, Pt. A, §3 (COR).]

4. Rules of professional conduct. Nothing in this section prohibits the executive director of the commission hired pursuant to section 1804, subsection 1, or the executive director's designee, from reporting potential professional misconduct under the Maine Rules of Professional Conduct to the Board of Overseers of the Bar or from disclosing information and records related to potential professional misconduct to the board.

[PL 2023, c. 638, §17 (AMD).]

5. Confidential information possessed by employed counsel and public defenders. Records, information and materials created, received, obtained, maintained or stored by or on behalf of employed counsel and public defenders that are protected under the Maine Rules of Evidence, Rules 501 to 509 or the Maine Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 1.6 or otherwise protected by the attorney-client relationship are confidential.
[PL 2023, c. 638, §17 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2011, c. 260, §1 (NEW). PL 2011, c. 547, §§1, 2 (AMD). PL 2015, c. 290, §1 (AMD). PL 2023, c. 344, §6 (AMD). PL 2023, c. 638, §17 (AMD). RR 2023, c. 2, Pt. A, §3 (COR). PL 2025, c. 415, §4 (AMD).

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