

# Confidentiality

**Confidentiality:** The act of limiting disclosure of private matters appropriately; maintaining the trust that an individual has placed in one which has been entrusted with private matters.

Arizona is a "closed record" state. That means that vital records are not public record. To protect the confidentiality rights, Arizona Administrative Code [R9-19-405](#) specifies that only those with "legal or other vital interest" may receive a certified copy of a death certificate.

Section 2 of the ANA Code of Ethics: The nurse safeguards the client's right to privacy by judiciously protecting information of a confidential nature. Nursing has always supported the duty of confidentiality which requires the respect of patient's privacy. This is a portion of the trusting relationship that the advanced practice nurse maintains with each patient. This duty prohibits the disclosure of information about the patient to only those with authorized access and includes information regarding the patient's death.

There are two primary exceptions to the duty of confidentiality: concern for the safety of other specific persons and concern for public welfare. The concern for safety of other involves a serious threat of harm to a specific person. An example would be homicidal ideation to a named person; the APN would be expected to report this to appropriate law authorities. The concern for public welfare indicates that protecting the public outweighs individual liberties. The reporting of reportable infectious diseases, suspected child or elder abuse are examples of this exception.

## References:

ADHS: [http://www.sos.state.az.us/public\\_services/Title\\_09/9-19.htm](http://www.sos.state.az.us/public_services/Title_09/9-19.htm)

ANA code of Ethics: <http://nursingworld.org/index.htm>

AMA Code of Ethics: <http://www.ama-assn.org/>