



USM Office Policy on the Protection of Sociological Information from Inspection and Disclosure

Approved by Chancellor or Chancellor's Designee January 9, 2023

I. POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy on the Protection of Sociological Information is intended to define the conditions under which Sociological Information shall be excluded from inspection and disclosure as part of a public record under Maryland's Public Information Act. The establishment of such a policy is referenced in BOR VI-5.00 - Policy on Inspection of Public Records.

II. PURPOSE

Maryland's Public Information Act grants the public a broad right of access to government records. The General Provisions Article, §4-330, however, of the Annotated Code of Maryland, provides, "If the official custodian has adopted rules or regulations that define sociological information . . . a custodian shall deny inspection of the part of a public record which contains sociological information . . ."

In accordance with the statute, the University System of Maryland Office (USMO) adopts this Policy and defines data that constitutes Sociological Information under the General Provision Article § 4-330 of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Consequently, the USMO shall deny inspection of any and all records containing sociological information.

The exclusion of Sociological Information from public disclosure will serve to preserve the privacy of personal information and combat identity theft victimization of the USMO community.

III. APPLICABILITY

This Policy applies to all USMO community members including, but not limited to, students, employees, job applicants, vendors, donors, or other individuals and entities participating in a USMO program or event or using USMO facilities.

IV. REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES

Under the Maryland Public Information Act, the USMO shall deny access to a public record, or portion thereof, containing Sociological Information.

In accordance with the Maryland Public Information Act, the USMO adopts the following definition of Sociological Information shielding such information from inspection or disclosure as part of a public record. Sociological Information of a USMO community member shall include:

1. Scholarship, stipend and financial aid records of individuals or their families (to the extent that this information is in the custody or control of the USMO);
2. Records about an individual's personal history, age, family, race, national origin, creed, color, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, ethnic background, ancestry, physiology, religion,

academic achievement, attendance in classes or employment, gender identity or expression, genetic information, veteran status, or physical or mental ability;

3. Family history; identity of relatives, emergency contacts or representatives;
4. Medical or psychiatric history;
5. Social security numbers;
6. Date of birth;
7. Credit card and other banking information;
8. Personal addresses, personal phone numbers, personal electronic mail address and personal social media account information;
9. Information regarding marital status, domestic partnership, dependents, or relatives, to include related employment benefits elections;
10. Information regarding employment status, including disciplinary records and records related to an application for employment;
11. Applicant information for admission, scholarships, employment or awards, including those of applicants who were either not selected/admitted or chose not to matriculate (to the extent that this information is in the custody or control of the USMO);
12. Class or employment attendance information;
13. Military service;
14. Driver's license number;
15. State residency classification;
16. Immigration status, passport and visa numbers;
17. Religious preference, membership and attendance;
18. Personal relationships, beliefs and values;
19. Any information obtained through employment coaching or surveys;
20. Financial information, including income (excluding state salary), assets, and liabilities;
21. Donation and donor information, such as gift agreements, communications, contact information, for individuals who have made charitable donations of goods, services, money or anything else to the USMO or a USM institution;
22. Student education records of a deceased student (to the extent that this information is in the custody or control of the USMO);
23. Program participation and community experiences and activities (to the extent that this information is in the custody or control of the USMO);
24. Records not related to the transaction of State business;

25. Records which contain political opinions, philosophical beliefs, and club/union membership;
26. Unique biometric data or biometric information including an individual's physiological, biological, or behavioral characteristics, including an individual's deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA), that can be used, singly or in combination with each other or with other identifying data, to establish individual identity;
27. Internet or other electronic network activity information, including browsing history, search history, wireless network location data and information regarding an individual's interaction with an internet website or application; and
28. Institutional identification number assigned to each applicant, student or employee (e.g. Workday ID, Employee ID, UID number) and photograph.

The USMO shall deny access to the public record, or portion thereof, containing sociological information.



January 9, 2023

Ellen Herbst, Designee of the Chancellor

Date