

Re: Support for County Child Fatality Review Teams' Access to Medical Records

Dear Medical Records Custodian,

We are writing to request your help with county child fatality reviews.

In Oregon, every county is required by law, Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 418.785, to have a team to investigate the deaths of children. County teams are critical because they work to understand the circumstances and use the information to work towards making our communities safer for children across the state.

Medical records are essential for this work. We encourage you to work closely with the county teams to support quick and effective reviews. This will make a real difference in saving children's lives.

Oregon law authorizes child fatality review teams to access medical records without patient approval. We have included more information about this law below.

ORS 418.795 allows for the sharing of medical records for the purpose of conducting child fatality reviews. Important sections include:

- **ORS 418.795(3):** Child fatality review teams shall have access to obtain all medical and hospital records, as well as other relevant records, necessary to complete investigations or reviews.
- **ORS 418.795(2):** Protected health information may be used or disclosed without authorization if necessary for public health purposes, including prevention, investigation, and treatment of child abuse.
- **ORS 418.795(1):** All information and records acquired by county child abuse multidisciplinary teams or child fatality review teams in the exercise of their duties are confidential but may be disclosed when necessary to carry out the purposes of the investigation or review process.

If you have questions regarding this letter or ORS 418.795, contact Oregon Department of Human Services at 503.779.5177 or deborah.carnaghi@odhs.oregon.gov.

Thank you for your attention and help with this important public health issue.

Sincerely,

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