

Publication Summary

Forum Guide to Staff Records



For state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs), staff records are an essential component of daily and yearly operations. Staff records contain data that affect every aspect of how an agency manages its workforce at every point in the employment cycle, from recruitment and hiring to evaluation and development, as well as retirement and separation. Staff records data inform decisions about payroll, program funding, allocation of classroom resources, and other factors that shape the experiences of teachers, students, and the agency as a whole. Agencies must therefore manage these records with great attention to security, accuracy, and access.

The National Forum on Education Statistics (Forum) developed the *Forum Guide to Staff Records* for education agency staff members who are responsible for managing employee data, as well as for other interested stakeholders. This guide is designed to help education agencies effectively collect, manage, use, and dispose of staff data. It also aims to help data managers protect the privacy of these data and properly manage requests to access and release them.

To illustrate these best practices, the guide offers a set of case studies and appendices, which examine the experiences of SEAs and LEAs around the country in managing staff records and describe two important federal laws governing the records maintained by federal agencies. Although this publication does not include legal guidelines, it encourages readers to familiarize themselves with laws governing public records in their states.

The resource includes the following chapters and appendices:

- **Chapter 1: Overview of Staff Records** defines staff records, describes types of staff records and the levels of data contained in them, and distinguishes between official and secondary records.
- **Chapter 2: Staff Records Collection and Management** discusses the ways in which staff and student data intersect, as well as best practices related to data governance, data quality, data standards, and disposal of staff records.
- **Chapter 3: Access to and Release of Staff Records** provides information about managing access to staff records within the agency, as well as evaluating and responding to external requests for staff records, including public records and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.
- **Chapter 4: Case Studies** provides real-world information about practices that SEAs and LEAs use to manage staff records effectively.
- The **Appendices** offer information about relevant laws and examples of an LEA's acceptable use forms.

The *Forum Guide to Staff Records* is a product of the National Forum on Education Statistics and is available on the Forum website at https://nces.ed.gov/forum/pub_2021094.asp. The information and opinions published in the guide do not necessarily represent the policies or views of the U.S. Department of Education, the Institute of Education Sciences, or the National Center for Education Statistics.