



Ohio Revised Code

Section 5101.27 Restricting disclosure of information regarding public assistance recipients.

Effective: April 12, 2021

Legislation: House Bill 210

(A) Except as permitted by this section, section 5101.273, 5101.28, or 5101.29 of the Revised Code, or rules adopted under section 5101.30 of the Revised Code, or when required by federal law, no person or government entity shall knowingly solicit, disclose, receive, use, permit the use of, or participate in the use of any information regarding a public assistance recipient for any purpose not directly connected with the administration of a public assistance program.

(B) To the extent permitted by federal law, the department of job and family services and county agencies shall do all of the following:

(1) Release information regarding a public assistance recipient for purposes directly connected to the administration of the program to a government entity responsible for administering that public assistance program;

(2) Provide information regarding a public assistance recipient to a law enforcement agency for the purpose of any investigation, prosecution, or criminal or civil proceeding relating to the administration of that public assistance program;

(3) Provide, for purposes directly connected to the administration of a program that assists needy individuals with the costs of public utility services, information regarding a recipient of financial assistance provided under a program administered by the department or a county agency pursuant to Chapter 5107. or 5108. of the Revised Code to an entity administering the public utility services program.

(C)(1) To the extent permitted by federal law and subject to division (C)(2) of this section, the department of job and family services shall release, for purposes directly connected to a public health investigation related to section 3301.531 or 5104.037 of the Revised Code, information regarding a public assistance recipient who receives publicly funded child care, so long as all of the following



conditions are met:

(a) The department of health or the tuberculosis control unit has initiated a public health investigation related to section 3301.531 or 5104.037 of the Revised Code and has assessed the investigation as an emergency.

(b) The department of health or the tuberculosis control unit has notified the department of job and family services about the investigation and has requested that the department of job and family services release the information for purposes of the investigation.

(c) The department of job and family services is unable to timely obtain voluntary, written authorization that complies with section 5101.272 of the Revised Code.

(2) If the conditions specified in division (C)(1) of this section are met, the department of job and family services shall release to the department of health or the tuberculosis control unit the minimum information necessary to fulfill the needs of the department of health or tuberculosis control unit related to the public health investigation.

(3) If the department of job and family services releases information pursuant to division (C) of this section, it shall immediately notify the public assistance recipient.

(D) To the extent permitted by federal law and section 1347.08 of the Revised Code, the department and county agencies shall provide access to information regarding a public assistance recipient to all of the following:

(1) The recipient;

(2) The authorized representative;

(3) The legal guardian of the recipient;

(4) The attorney of the recipient, if the attorney has written authorization that complies with section 5101.272 of the Revised Code from the recipient.



(E) To the extent permitted by federal law and subject to division (F) of this section, the department and county agencies may do both of the following:

(1) Release information about a public assistance recipient if the recipient gives voluntary, written authorization that complies with section 5101.272 of the Revised Code;

(2) Release information regarding a public assistance recipient to a state, federal, or federally assisted program that provides cash or in-kind assistance or services directly to individuals based on need or for the purpose of protecting children to a government entity responsible for administering a children's protective services program.

(F) Except when the release is required by division (B), (C), or (D) of this section or is authorized by division (E)(2) of this section, the department or county agency shall release the information only in accordance with the authorization. The department or county agency shall provide, at no cost, a copy of each written authorization to the individual who signed it.

(G) The department of job and family services may adopt rules defining "authorized representative" for purposes of division (D)(2) of this section.