

R&R Quick Guide to FERPA

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What is FERPA?

The *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act* ([FERPA](#)) is a federal law that protects student privacy by regulating access to educational records. Student rights and protections under FERPA include:

- Personally identifiable, non-directory information may not be disclosed to unauthorized parties without written consent
 - Directory information may be released without the student's prior consent, however
 - Students may request to withhold *all* educational information (directory and non-directory)
 - Students receive an annual FERPA notification (TCNJ sends this early each Fall)
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Who is an authorized party?

TCNJ school officials are considered authorized parties, and may access students' educational information as required to fulfill their professional responsibilities. Student information may be shared with and among TCNJ school officials with a legitimate educational interest. School officials include TCNJ employees, contractors, Board members, and committee members.

- School officials do *not* include employees of other educational institutions
 - TCNJ student workers may be considered authorized school officials if their duties require access to educational information. Student workers with access to personal information should complete R&R's FERPA tutorial.
 - Other students, including student organization leaders, are *not* considered school officials
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What is Directory and Non-Directory Information?

Directory Information

May be released without prior consent, unless specifically withheld by the student.

Includes:

Name
Hometown (City/State/Postal Code)
Degrees and Dates Awarded
Honors and Awards (e.g. Dean's List)
Majors, minors, or other fields of study
Class Level (freshman, sophomore, etc)
Semesters in attendance
Previous educational institutions
Participation in officially recognized activities/sports
Enrollment status (full/part-time)

Non-Directory Information

May not be released without consent.

Includes but is not limited to:

Contact Information
Date of Birth or SSN
Demographic Information (citizenship, ethnicity, gender, marital status, etc)
Class Schedule or enrollment in specific classes
Official grades or GPA
Progress reports, assignment grades, or exam scores
Disciplinary Status

What happens when a student authorizes disclosure of information?

Students may authorize disclosure of non-directory information to a specified party by:

- 1) Using the [Auxiliary Access](#) functionality in PAWS, which grants continued access to specified types of records. Typically this is granted to a parent or family member. Students may select to release only billing information, only academic information, or both.
- 2) Signing the [Authorization to Disclose Education Information](#) form - typically used for a one-time release or event such as a meeting with parents or a letter of recommendation. Other forms of written authorization can serve the same function.

The screenshot shows the Oracle PAWS interface for 'TCNJ Aux Access Admin'. It displays a 'COMMON ID' field and a 'Scroll Area' with the following details:

- User ID: [Redacted]
- Aux User Name: [Redacted]
- Relation: Parent 1
- PIN: [Redacted]
- Email ID: [Redacted]
- Last Upd OprId: [Redacted]
- Last Upd DtTm: 01/08/20 12:40:51AM


The 'Aux Access Codes' table is as follows:

Description	Email Bill
1 View and disclose education records.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 To view Financial Aid award.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 View and pay the student bill.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4 View the To Do List of outstanding documents.	<input type="checkbox"/>

To check if a student has set up auxiliary access:

PAWS Main Menu > Campus Community > TCNJ Aux Access Admin Enter student's PAWS ID

What happens when a student requests to withhold all information?

- They will appear on the Enrollment Database (R Drive) highlighted in yellow with red text. In PAWS, a window shade icon () will appear at the top of their record
- None of this student's personal information may be released without written authorization.
- Students who elect to withhold directory information will not appear on the Dean's List, Commencement book, or other similar listings

General guidance:

- Rule of thumb for school officials: need-to-know basis. Do they need this information to fulfill their professional responsibilities?
- Err on the side of caution: directory information *may* be released, but that does not mean it *must* be released.
- You may discuss TCNJ policies and procedures, as well as departmental practices, in a general context with non-authorized parties.
- When in doubt, ask! Please contact R&R if you have any questions or concerns.

Resources:

TCNJ's Student Privacy Rights webpage
(<https://recreg.tcnj.edu/student-privacy-rights/>)

R&R FERPA Tutorial
(<https://recreg.tcnj.edu/ferpa-tutorial/>)

US Department of Education
(<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>)