

What is FERPA?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) sets forth requirements regarding the privacy of student records. FERPA protects the education records of any student who has **ever** enrolled at Portland Community College. FERPA requires us to keep student records confidential by ensuring that student information is **only** released with a consent form signed by the student or when the student submits consent via MyPCC. While FERPA does provide parents and guardians with rights in the K-12 setting, in a college setting like PCC all privacy rights belong to the student, **regardless of the student's age.**

What does FERPA mean for Parents and Families?

Can I have access to my student's grades?

Grades are part of the student's educational record that is protected under FERPA. PCC cannot provide a parent or family member access to a student's grades without the student's formal consent submitted to the college.

Can you tell me if my student is admitted, registered, or if they have graduated?

No, we cannot share that information with you. Unless your student has submitted formal consent to release that information, the information can be shared.

What can and can't you tell me?

Without consent on file, PCC can only share general information that is not specific to any student. If you are able to describe a situation, we are happy to provide information that pertains to the situation without referencing or sharing information that is specific to your student or obtained from their student records.

What if my student is under 18?

While FERPA does provide parents and guardians with rights in the K-12 setting, in a college setting like PCC, all privacy rights belong to the student, regardless of the student's age.

What about "directory" information?

Unlike most other colleges and universities, PCC has no directory information. This means that no information about a student can be shared without that student's formal consent on file at the college.

How does my student submit consent for PCC to share their information with me?

Students can submit consent information via the Home tab on MyPCC ("Consent to Release") or by submitting a PDF "Consent to Release" form found at pcc.edu/records.

What is a confidential code?

A confidential code is a code that your student determines and lists on their consent form and also shares with you. When you call in to ask about your student, you will need to provide their name, your name, and your confidential code. If you are not able to provide all three pieces of information, we will not be able to find a match among our release forms and will not be able to share information with you.

If my student has consent on file, can I register for them or perform other actions on their behalf?

No. Having consent to release information on file means that PCC can share their information with you. It does not mean that you can act on their behalf. Students are responsible for engaging with their education, including with enrollment functions such as registering, dropping, changing their address, etc.

What if I claim my student as a dependent on my taxes? Can I get information without them filing a consent form?

No. In order to utilize this exception to consent under FERPA, institutions must make this known through its annual or quarterly notification. PCC does not utilize this exception because we encourage students to share information directly with their families. Because PCC does not state in its notification that this is permissible, the college is not able to share information based on tax status.

Where can I see the content of the law?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act can be found on the United States Department of Education's website (ed.gov).