

Overview

The Oakland Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Act (Measure Z) funds an evaluation to see if programs supported by the Act are making a difference and how they can be improved. As part of the evaluation, Oakland Unite Violence Prevention and Intervention Programs are responsible for securing a consent-to-participate in evaluation activities from participants they enroll in Measure Z-funded programs. Participants are also asked to consent to sharing of their personal data within the Oakland Unite network order to assist with referrals and coordination of services.

Participant consent is gained through the administration of the “Voluntary Consent to Use of Personal Data for Evaluation Research and Program Coordination” form.

Consent Administration

Each Oakland Unite Program is responsible for assigning an individual to ensure correct administration of consent forms at participant intake. This individual (usually the Program Manager) will inform program staff that consent is voluntary and that each participant's decision is confidential. The agency will provide the form in English or the participant's primary language for limited English-proficient participants. Conversations regarding consent will be conducted in private to preserve confidentiality.

Staff will be responsible for communicating and explaining the following points orally to ensure that participants understand how their personal information may be used:

- Cityspan, a database firm, collects participant information and stores it in a secure, password-protected database designed to protect individual client information.
- By signing the “Voluntary Consent to Use of Personal Data,” the participant agrees:
 - To let Oakland Unite staff and evaluation firm(s) working with the City access identifying information in Cityspan including participation in the program;
 - To allow the Program to choose to share individual data with other agencies in the Oakland Unite network for referral and coordination of services; and
 - To authorize the evaluation firm(s) to collect information from Oakland Unified School District and law enforcement entities to help evaluate the program.
- Great care will be taken to protect the confidentiality of all the information collected about participants – participants' names or other identifying information will never be published in a report or other publicly available document.
- Signing the consent form is completely voluntary. If a participant declines to sign it, his/her information will not be used. A participant's decision does not affect his/her ability to participate in programming.
- A participant can change their mind about providing consent by contacting the Human Services Department in writing.¹

¹ Note: if assistance is needed to prepare the written request, the agency can contact their assigned Program Officer.

Who Can Consent to Use of Personal Data?

Oakland Unite participants who are legally able to choose to participate in the program may also choose to volunteer their consent regarding the use of their data.

For minors, services that require parental permission in order for the minor to participate in the program also require a signature of consent from parent/guardian (or legal designee if they are a ward of the Court) in order for data to be shared.

If the participant from whom you are obtaining consent is under 18 and you required parental permission to participate, you **MUST ALSO** obtain parent or guardian consent for participation in data sharing and evaluation. If you are uncertain whether your participants can consent to use of their data, please contact your Program Officer to discuss.

Documenting Consent Status

Consent status for each participant should be updated on the Cityspan information management system upon intake, on the participant's "Baseline" tab.

Each agency must keep the signed consent forms on file with the other eligibility documentation required by Oakland Unite, as specified in the grantee's Scope of Work.