



# SAFE AT HOME

WISCONSIN ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM

## GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
OFFICE OF CRIME VICTIM SERVICES

This document is intended to provide information and guidance to Wisconsin schools regarding Safe at Home. District administrators are encouraged to establish and adopt procedures that work best for their district. Information contained in this guide does not constitute legal advice.

## Overview

Safe at Home is a statewide address confidentiality program and mail-forwarding service that provides victims of actual or threatened abuse, stalking, and/or human trafficking with a legal substitute address to be used for both public and private purposes. The intent of Safe at Home is for those who fear for their safety to be able to maintain a private, confidential home, work, or school address and prevent future harm. To be eligible for the program, participants must reside at a location that is unknown to their abuser and create a safety plan with a victim advocate.

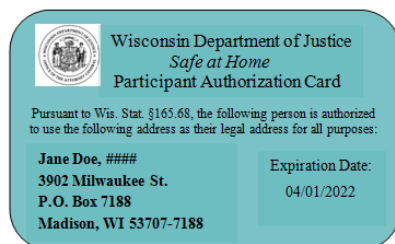
Safe at Home participants are responsible for notifying entities that they are enrolled in the program and updating their records to reflect the substitute assigned address. All entities, including public and private schools, must accept the substitute assigned address as a program participant's legal address. See Wis. Stat. §165.68 (b) and (c). School districts may verify an individual's participation in the program by requesting to view their Safe at Home provided authorization card, or if necessary, contacting Safe at Home directly.

School districts may encounter Safe at Home participants that are:

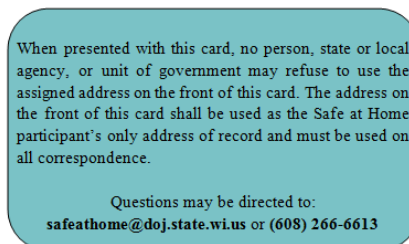
- Students
- Parents or guardians of students
- District employees

## Program Authorization Card

FRONT:



BACK:



When a Safe at Home participant presents their program authorization card, their actual address becomes confidential and the Safe at Home assigned address listed on the authorization card should be used for all purposes.

The following information is not considered confidential under Wis. Stat. §165.68, but may still be confidential under FERPA and/or Wis. Stat. §118.125:

- Participation in Safe at Home
- Date of enrollment in Safe at Home
- A participant's assigned address
- State of residence

***What to do when a parent or student says, "I am a Safe at Home participant."***

1. Verify the status of the program participant by requesting to see their Safe at Home Authorization Card. All Safe at Home program participants are issued an authorization card and are prepared to present it upon request. A parent or legal guardian may present their authorization card on behalf of their minor child or ward. School employees may photocopy this card for school records, if necessary. School employees may also verify a participant's status by contacting Safe at Home directly by phone at (608) 266-6613. To verify a participant's status by phone, please provide the participant's full name and participant ID number (listed on the authorization card). Calls will be returned within 1 business day.
2. If enrolling a student, begin the enrollment process. Do not ask the participant for their actual address or require them to provide proof of residency before starting the enrollment process.
3. Safe at Home encourages districts to adopt one of the following methods to verify a student's enrollment eligibility:
  - a. Complete the "School and District Eligibility Verification" form and submit it directly to Safe at Home. Safe at Home will check the student's enrollment eligibility based on the actual address contained in our records. Please note that this verification method is dependent upon limited district and school boundary information made available to Safe at Home and may not always result in verification of the correct school. A copy of the "School and District Eligibility Verification" form may be found at the end of this guide.
  - b. Designate an administrator within the district that can facilitate a conversation with the enrolling parent or guardian to identify the correct school in which to enroll the student and available transportation options. The parent or guardian may orally disclose an actual address during this conversation for the purpose of identifying a proper school and establishing a correct bus route. The

administrator may not make record of the actual address or disclose the actual address in any way. The enrolling parent or guardian may then complete an "Affidavit of Student Enrollment" after being provided the proper school and busing information from the administrator. The "Affidavit of Student Enrollment" may be kept as a part of the student record because it does not contain the student's actual address.

A copy of the "Affidavit of Student Enrollment" may be found at the end of this guide.

4. Do not request a transfer of pupil records from the student's previous school. To ensure protection of the Safe at Home participant's actual address, all transfers of pupil records should be facilitated directly by Safe at Home. Parents or guardians should complete the Safe at Home "Release of Information: School Records" form and provide it directly to Safe at Home, not the school. Safe at Home may then request student records from the previous school and forward them to the enrolling school.
5. Use the Safe at Home assigned address listed on the participant's authorization card for all internal and external pupil records.

### **Other Considerations:**

*Emergency Contact Information* - Students that are Safe at Home participants may still provide the school with emergency contact information. Parents should not provide the contact number for Safe at Home as an emergency contact.

*School Directory* – For safety concerns, it is recommended that Safe at Home participants opt-out of any type of school directory. Please work with Safe at Home participants to identify any directories or public listings that your district publishes. A Safe at Home participant's actual address should never be listed in a school directory.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

*Q: How does a school district provide the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction with confirmation of enrollment and attendance for students enrolled in Safe at Home?*

*A: Use of a Safe at Home assigned address will not impact any data collection done by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Districts should provide information for students participating in Safe at Home the same way that they do for other students.*

*Q: I have attendance or welfare concerns about a student that is a Safe at Home participant. What should I do?*

A: Attendance concerns should be handled in the same manner as any other student. If law enforcement is contacted, inform them that the student is a Safe at Home participant and that any release of information pertaining to the student's actual address should come from Safe at Home directly.

Enrollment in Safe at Home does not exempt anyone from existing mandatory reporting laws. Child welfare reports should be made during school hours, if possible. Inform human services that the student is a Safe at Home participant and that you are prohibited from releasing any actual address information. Human services can ask law enforcement to request a release of participant information directly from Safe at Home.

*Q: If the alleged abuser is the other parent, can that person access information about the child?*

A: Safe at Home participation does not prevent lawful disclosure of information to parents. Therefore, all school records should reflect only the Safe at Home assigned address.

*Q: Can Safe at Home disclose a participant's actual address?*

A: Safe at Home may only release actual address information if requested by law enforcement for official purposes or pursuant to court orders. Any other type of request for disclosure of participant's actual address will be denied.

*Q: What happens if a Safe at Home participant student moves during the school year?*

A: Schools may request verification of enrollment eligibility at any time. If your district would like Safe at Home to re-verify a student's enrollment eligibility, complete and submit the "School and District Eligibility Verification Form" at any time.

*Q: Can pictures of Safe at Home participant students be posted on the school website?*

A: The law that governs Safe at Home does not pertain to photographic records. Parents or students participating in Safe at Home may request that photographic images not be posted publicly as part of a safety plan. It is recommended that schools consult directly with parents

and legal counsel before posting or releasing any kind of photographic information pertaining to students enrolled in Safe at Home.

### **Statutory Reference**

Safe at Home is governed by Wis. Stat. §165.68 and administered by the Department of Justice Office of Crime Victim Services.

### **Contact Information**

By Mail:

Safe at Home  
Wisconsin Department of Justice  
P.O. Box 7035  
Madison, WI 53707-7035

Phone: (608) 266-6613

Email: [safeathome@doj.state.wi.us](mailto:safeathome@doj.state.wi.us)

Website: [www.doj.state.wi.us/ocvs/safe-home](http://www.doj.state.wi.us/ocvs/safe-home)

**SCHOOL AND DISTRICT ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION FORM**  
(For Safe at Home Participants)

Date of Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title (of person making the request):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Requesting School: \_\_\_\_\_

Requesting District: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax or email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's (or Parent's) Safe at Home Authorization Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE EMAIL OR MAIL THE COMPLETED FORM DIRECTLY TO SAFE AT HOME.**

**SAFE AT HOME WILL CHECK THE STUDENT'S ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY BASED ON THE ACTUAL ADDRESS CONTAINED IN OUR RECORDS. SAFE AT HOME WILL PROVIDE WRITTEN CONFIRMATION OR DENIAL OF ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY DIRECTLY TO THE SCHOOL.**

# AFFIDAVIT OF STUDENT ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

(For Safe at Home Participants)

1. \_\_\_\_\_, (hereinafter referred to as “the student”) seeks admission as a student to the \_\_\_\_\_ School District (hereinafter referred to as “the district”).
2. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. My relationship to the student is \_\_\_\_\_. The name(s) of the student’s parent(s) or legal guardian(s) residing within the boundaries of the district are: \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The student is [an adult who is enrolled in] [a minor residing with an adult who is enrolled in] Safe at Home, Wisconsin’s address confidentiality program administered by the Wisconsin Department of Justice. As a participant in this program, the student’s actual address will not be provided in writing to the district. However, proof of participation in Safe at Home, including the Safe at Home assigned address for all official district correspondence concerning the student, will be provided to the district.
4. After consulting with an appropriate district administrator or designee regarding enrollment eligibility, I certify that the student is eligible for enrollment in the district.
5. After consultation with an appropriate district administrator or designee and reviewing enrollment policies and district boundaries, the appropriate district administrator or designee and I have agreed on an appropriate school campus for placement of the student. I certify that the student is eligible for placement at the following school: \_\_\_\_\_, (hereinafter referred to as “designated school”).
6. After reviewing policies and procedures regarding student transportation with an appropriate district administrator or designee, I certify that the student is eligible for ridership on a district bus route for the designated school. I acknowledge and consent to an appropriate district administrator or designee verbally instructing the student’s bus driver as to the appropriate bus stop for the student.
7. The student [is] [is not] currently under an order for placement in an alternative education program or under an expulsion order. (Attach a copy of the order. If a copy is not available, provide information regarding the basis for the order and the terms of the order.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



8. I will notify the appropriate district administrator or designee if the student needs to change schools due to any reason, including change of actual address or grade level advancement.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Type or Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_

Subscribed and sworn before me on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

Notary Public, State of Wisconsin: \_\_\_\_\_

My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_.

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To be initialed and signed by the district administrator or designee after consultation with the person enrolling the student:

\_\_\_\_\_ The student is eligible for enrollment in the district.

\_\_\_\_\_ The student has been assigned to the appropriate school.

\_\_\_\_\_ The district administration has authorized bus ridership.

Signature of District Administrator or Designee:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type or Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_