



ANNUAL NOTICE OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA (FERPA)

2026-2027

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
20 U.S.C. § 1232g | 34 CFR Part 99 | Title IV Consumer Information

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Annual Notification of Rights Under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99, is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. It applies to schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

At George Stone Technical College (GSTC), FERPA rights belong to the eligible student. A student becomes an eligible student upon reaching age 18 or attending a postsecondary institution at any age. Because GSTC is a postsecondary technical college, FERPA rights generally transfer to the student upon attendance, regardless of the student's age.

Rights of Eligible Students

FERPA affords eligible students the following rights:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after GSTC receives a request for access. The student should submit a written or authenticated electronic request to Student Services identifying the records to be inspected. GSTC will arrange access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be reviewed.
- The right to request amendment of education records the student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. The written request must clearly identify the record and explain the requested change. If GSTC declines to amend the record, the student will be notified of the decision and the right to a formal FERPA hearing. If the record remains unchanged after the hearing, the student may place a statement with the contested portion of the record.
- The right to provide written consent before GSTC discloses personally identifiable information from education records, except to the extent FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning an alleged failure by GSTC to comply with FERPA.

Written Consent to Disclose Records

Except when FERPA permits disclosure without consent, GSTC must obtain a signed and dated authorization from the eligible student before releasing personally identifiable information from education records. The authorization must specify the records to be disclosed, state the purpose of the disclosure, and identify the party or class of parties to whom disclosure may be made. An electronic consent is acceptable only when it identifies and authenticates the student as the source and indicates the student's approval.

Disclosures Permitted Without Consent

FERPA permits—but does not generally require—GSTC to disclose education records without the student's consent when all conditions of an applicable exception are satisfied. Common exceptions include disclosures:

- to school officials who have a legitimate educational interest;
- to officials of another school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled, when the disclosure relates to enrollment or transfer;
- to authorized federal, state, or local officials for qualifying audit, evaluation, enforcement, or compliance purposes;
- in connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or received, for purposes authorized by FERPA;
- to organizations conducting qualifying studies for or on behalf of GSTC under a FERPA-compliant written agreement;

- to accrediting organizations carrying out accrediting functions;
- to a parent of a student who is a dependent for federal income-tax purposes, after appropriate documentation;
- to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, subject to required notice and other FERPA conditions;
- to appropriate parties in connection with a health or safety emergency, when the regulatory standard is met;
- of properly designated directory information after required public notice and subject to any timely opt-out;
- of certain final disciplinary results involving a crime of violence or nonforcible sex offense;
- to a parent concerning a student under age 21 who has violated law or institutional rules governing alcohol or controlled substances; and
- of information concerning registered sex offenders and other individuals when provided under applicable federal law.

GSTC records disclosures when required by 34 CFR § 99.32 and limits use and redisclosure as required by 34 CFR § 99.33. FERPA exceptions do not independently authorize access to or disclosure of FAFSA data or federal tax information; those records are subject to additional federal restrictions.

Information a Student May Not Inspect

FERPA does not require GSTC to permit a student to inspect and review:

- the financial records of the student's parents or information contained in those records;
- confidential letters and statements of recommendation for which the student has validly waived the right of access, subject to FERPA's conditions; or
- information about another student. When a record contains information about more than one student, the requesting student may inspect and review, or be informed of, only the portion that relates specifically to that student.

Directory Information

FERPA permits an institution to disclose information it has formally designated as "directory information" without prior written consent, provided the institution has given the required public notice and the student has not submitted a timely written request restricting disclosure.

For purposes of this annual notice, GSTC proposes to designate the following limited categories as directory information:

- student name;
- GSTC Student Number
- program of study;
- dates of attendance;
- enrollment status (full-time or part-time);
- credential or certificate earned; and
- most recent educational institution attended.

GSTC does not designate a Social Security number, date of birth, home or mailing address, personal telephone number, or personal email address as directory information under this notice. Certain contact, birth, and enrollment information may nevertheless be subject to a qualifying military-recruiter request under the separate Solomon Amendment requirements described below.

A student who does not want GSTC to disclose any or all designated directory information must submit a signed written request to GSTC Student Services on or before October 15 of the applicable school year. A student who initially enrolls after October 15 must submit the request within three weeks of the student's initial enrollment date. A restriction remains effective for the applicable school year unless the

student revokes it in writing. GSTC may require disclosure of information displayed on a student identification card or badge when permitted by 34 CFR § 99.37(c).

Directory information will not be released for commercial solicitation or mailing-list purposes. GSTC may further limit disclosures to particular parties or purposes when stated in its public notice. A directory-information designation does not require GSTC to disclose the information.

Military Recruiter Access and the Solomon Amendment

The Solomon Amendment, 10 U.S.C. § 983 and 32 CFR Part 216, applies separate requirements to covered institutions of higher education. GSTC must provide military recruiters access to its campus and students that is at least equal in quality and scope to the most favorable access provided to other employers. When GSTC distributes notices of recruiting visits or provides other recruiting assistance to nonmilitary employers, it will provide comparable support for military recruiters.

Upon a qualifying written request for military recruiting purposes, GSTC may be required to provide student-recruiting information concerning currently enrolled students who are 17 years of age or older. Under 32 CFR § 216.3, student-recruiting information includes:

- student name;
- address;
- telephone listing;
- age or year of birth;
- place of birth;
- level of education, including a credential awarded to a recent graduate;
- most recent educational institution attended; and
- current program or major.

The Solomon Amendment uses its own definition of student-recruiting information. Therefore, the information subject to a qualifying military-recruiter request is not limited to the categories GSTC designates as directory information under FERPA.

GSTC may withhold student-recruiting information for a particular student when the student has formally requested in writing that the information be withheld from all third parties. A student who wishes to invoke this restriction should submit a signed written request to GSTC Student Services within the directory-information opt-out period stated in this notice and must clearly request that the information be withheld from all third parties. A request that restricts only selected directory-information categories or selected recipients may not satisfy the Solomon Amendment standard.

GSTC may require military-recruiter requests for student-recruiting information to be submitted in writing. Student Services will verify the requester and the request's recruiting purpose, document the response, and release only the information authorized by the Solomon Amendment. The Solomon Amendment does not authorize disclosure of Social Security numbers, student identification numbers, grades, disability information, financial-aid records, federal tax information, or other education-record information outside its defined scope.

School Officials and Legitimate Educational Interest

GSTC may disclose education-record information to a school official who has a legitimate educational interest. A school official may include:

- a GSTC or Escambia County Public Schools (ECPS) employee serving in an administrative, supervisory, instructional, academic-support, student-services, health, safety, law-enforcement-unit, technology, records, financial, or other authorized role;
- a member of the Escambia County School Board or another authorized governing or oversight body;

- a contractor, consultant, volunteer, or other outside party performing an institutional service or function for which GSTC or ECPS would otherwise use employees, when the party is under institutional control regarding the use and maintenance of education records and is subject to FERPA's use and redisclosure requirements; or
- a student or other authorized individual serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary, grievance, safety, or accreditation committee, or assisting another school official in performing assigned responsibilities.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest when access to an education record is necessary to fulfill the official's professional responsibility for GSTC or ECPS. Access is limited to records needed for the assigned function; status as an employee or contractor does not by itself authorize unrestricted access.

Subpoenas and Judicial Orders

GSTC may disclose education records in response to a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena only after the request has been reviewed through the Principal or designee and the appropriate ECPS legal or records office. Unless an exception applies, GSTC will make a reasonable effort to notify the eligible student in advance of compliance so the student may seek protective action. Advance notice is not provided when a qualifying federal grand-jury subpoena, law-enforcement subpoena, or court order prohibits disclosure of the subpoena or order, or when another FERPA exception applies. GSTC will maintain the required record of the request and disclosure.

How to Exercise FERPA Rights

Request	Contact / Procedure
Inspect or amend records	Submit a signed written request to GSTC Student Services, 2400 Longleaf Drive, Pensacola, FL 32526. Identify the specific records and the action requested.
Restrict directory information	Submit a signed written request to GSTC Student Services by the deadline stated in this notice and identify the categories to be restricted.
Authorize release to another party	Complete GSTC's FERPA authorization form or another signed and dated consent containing all elements required by 34 CFR § 99.30.
Ask a FERPA question or request a paper copy	Contact GSTC Student Services at 850-941-6200 or visit the College at 2400 Longleaf Drive, Pensacola, FL 32526.

Filing a FERPA Complaint

A student may file a complaint concerning an alleged failure to comply with FERPA with:

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-8520
<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint>

A complaint generally must be submitted within 180 days of the alleged violation or of the date the student knew or reasonably should have known of the alleged violation, unless the Department extends the filing period for good cause.

Annual Distribution and Availability

GSTC provides this notice annually to each eligible student currently in attendance by a method reasonably likely to inform the student of FERPA rights. The notice is also made available through the College website and Student Services. Posting the notice online does not replace annual direct notification. An accessible format and a paper copy will be provided upon request.

Authorities and Source Note

- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g.
- 34 CFR Part 99, including §§ 99.7, 99.10–99.12, 99.20–99.22, and 99.30–99.39.
- Solomon Amendment, 10 U.S.C. § 983, and 32 CFR Part 216.
- U.S. Department of Education, Student Privacy Policy Office, FERPA Model Notification for Postsecondary Officials.