

The BLURB

The Blurb #49: Voluntary Releases

Helping clients who are either experiencing difficulty getting verifications or would like you to talk to a third-party (such as an employer or advocate for example) is something staff does every single day. However, when a client requests contacting another party on their behalf, a [Voluntary Consent to Release Information \(VARI-OI\)](#) must be signed. A signed VARI-OI authorizes the Department to communicate with **only** the person or organization specified on the form. The form is typically used when:

- you need to establish collateral contact to verify information pertinent to the client's case; or
- the client has requested you to communicate with a third party about his/her case.

When a person or organization submits a release of information form to the Department, DTA is obligated to accept it, even if it is not the VARI-OI, if:

- the authorization is signed and dated; and
- the authorization specifies the name of the person or organization to receive the information.

In all cases, the client's signature on the form must be validated by comparing the signature on the submitted request with the signature of the client available on a Department form in Scanned Document.

It is important to remember that the authorization is valid for one year from the date the client signs the form and may be revoked by the client at any time. To revoke it, the client must call the DTA Assistance Line and speak with a DTA representative or write to DTA.