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## U.S. Department of Education Changes Name of Office Responsible for FERPA

On January 19, 2017, the U.S. Department of Education issued new Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) regulations that change the name of office that administers and enforces FERPA from the Family Policy Compliance Office (“FPCO”) to the Office of the Chief Privacy Officer (“OCPO”). These amendments reflect an internal reorganization within the Department relating to oversight of issues related to records and student privacy, but they will not change student/parent rights or educational agencies’ or institutions’ obligations under FERPA.

In its commentary accompanying the new regulation published in the Federal Register, the Department explained that the change in name will be made: “1. To allow the Department to more effectively make use of new resources dedicated to student privacy; 2. To permit efficiencies relating to specialization of work; and 3. To clarify responsibilities within the Department.” 82 Fed. Reg. 6252 (Jan. 19, 2017).

Although the substantive provisions of FERPA and its regulations have not changed, educational agencies and institutions should review and revise their FERPA policies and notice of rights to reflect the change from FPCO to OCPO.

The new federal regulations are effective February 21, 2017.

### Questions or Assistance:

If you have questions, please contact Peter J. Maher at 860-251-5507 or [pmaher@goodwin.com](mailto:pmaher@goodwin.com).

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