

## What is HIPAA?

In 1996, Congress passed the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, commonly referred to as HIPAA. HIPAA provides for:

- Enhanced new laws that protect the *privacy* of individually identifiable health information (protected health information, or PHI) in any form (oral, paper, and electronic) and enhanced patient rights with respect to their PHI.
- New *security* laws that require measures to ensure confidentiality, integrity, and availability of health-related data.

HIPAA affects each health care entity differently. At the University of Minnesota, HIPAA applies to faculty, staff, and students in the following areas:

- Medical School, School of Nursing, College of Pharmacy, School of Public Health, and School of Dentistry
- Academic Health Center interdisciplinary research and education centers
- Boynton Health Services
- Community-University Health Care Clinic
- University of Minnesota Medical Center, Fairview and University of Minnesota Children's Hospital, Fairview
- University of Minnesota Physicians
- Other University units systemwide that may provide health care or perform support functions for the health care components

## I don't work in a clinic. Does HIPAA still apply to me?

Yes. As a University of Minnesota employee in a designated health care component, you might not be directly involved in patient care or a clinical practice, but you may come across protected health information. As a result, you are responsible for understanding and complying with the rules and protecting the privacy and confidentiality of PHI.

## What does compliance mean?

Following policies and procedures, on which you must receive training and on which we will periodically audit, or be subject to organizational sanctions, civil or criminal penalties, and potentially termination.

## What do I need to do to be in compliance?

Compliance with University policies and HIPAA regulations at the University of Minnesota is an ongoing process. Following are two steps you can take immediately.

### *1. HIPAA Training*

Every University of Minnesota student, faculty member, researcher, and staff person who may have access to or come into contact with protected health information must complete one or more online training courses about privacy and data security. This training is designed to introduce you to HIPAA and University policies established to ensure HIPAA compliance.

Members of the University community who are required to complete training will receive an e-mail with specific information regarding the training schedule (*training requirements will depend on your departmental job duties*). Your designated departmental Privacy Coordinator will be able to assist you through the training process as needed. Locate your Privacy Coordinator on [www.privacysecurity.umn.edu](http://www.privacysecurity.umn.edu).

### *2. Employee Identification Badge*

An employee identification badge is your official authorization to access HIPAA-covered information systems and related equipment and facilities, and you are required to wear it. Plus, it identifies you as a University employee to visitors and patients who may need your help finding their way around.

Employee identification badges are issued through designated departmental Badge Coordinators. Information on how to contact your Badge Coordinator and how your identification badge works is found online at [www.privacysecurity.umn.edu](http://www.privacysecurity.umn.edu) in the HIPAA section.



## Who do I go to if I have any questions?

Contact your immediate supervisor with any questions related to HIPAA training or your employee identification badge. If you don't know who your supervisor is, contact the Privacy and Security Office at 612-624-7447 or [privacy@umn.edu](mailto:privacy@umn.edu).

[www.privacysecurity.umn.edu](http://www.privacysecurity.umn.edu).

Your University source for HIPAA information and resources.