

**Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center
HIPAA Privacy Policies**

Authorizations for Use of PHI	Policy 3.4
Miscellaneous Uses and Disclosures for Which an Authorization or Opportunity to Agree or Object Is Not Required	Effective Date: July 5, 2016 Revised Date: March 19, 2018 (revisions highlighted)
References: http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa HSC HIPAA website http://www.ttuhscc.edu/hipaa/policies_procedures.aspx	

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) to secure confidentiality of protected health information released (PHI) regarding uses and disclosures of patient information which do not require an authorization or opportunity to agree or object.

Scope and Distribution

This policy applies to all PHI maintained by TTUHSC. It does not apply to health care information of inmates seen or treated by TTUHSC providers.

Definitions

Refer to [HPP 1.1 for Glossary of HIPAA Terms](#)

See [Old/New HIPAA Policy Number Cross Reference Chart](#)

Procedure

Circumstances may allow the use and disclosure of Protected Health Information (PHI) without an individual's Authorization or opportunity to agree or object. They include but are not limited to the following:

1. **Public Health Activities.** TUHSC may disclose PHI for the public health activities and for the purposes described in 45 CFR Part 164.512 (b) and Texas Health and Safety Code § 181.103.

Examples:

- TTUHSC may disclose PHI in certain instances to a public health authority authorized by law to receive reports for the purpose of controlling or preventing disease, injury or disability 45 CFR Part 164.512 (b)(1)i).
- TTUHSC may disclose PHI in certain instances to a public health authority authorized by law to receive reports of child exploitation, abuse or neglect 45 CFR Part 164.512 (b)(1)(ii) and Texas Family Code § 261.001, et seq.

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- TTUHSC may disclose PHI in certain instances to the Food and Drug Administration. 45 CFR Part 164.512 (b)(1)(iii).
- TTUHSC may disclose PHI in situations where a person may have been exposed to a communicable disease or otherwise may be at risk of contracting or spreading a disease or condition. 45 CFR Part 164.512 (b)(1)(iv) and Texas Health and Safety Code § 81.001, et seq.

2. Abuse, Neglect or Domestic Violence. 45 CFR § 164.512(c); Texas Health and Safety Code § 181.001, et seq.; and Texas Family Code § 91.001, et seq. TTUHSC will disclose PHI regarding an individual about whom TTUHSC reasonably believes to be a victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence to a government authority authorized by law to receive such reports (including a social service or protective services agency, e.g., Child Protective Services (CPS), Adult Protective Service (APS), Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)) pursuant to the following:
- a) When required by law;
 - b) When the individual agrees to the disclosure; or
 - c) When expressly authorized by statute or regulation; and
 - 1) The TTUHSC health professional, in the exercise of professional judgment, believes the disclosure is necessary to prevent serious harm to the individual or potential victims; or
 - 2) If the individual is unable to agree because of incapacity, a law enforcement or other public official authorized to receive the report represents that the PHI is not intended to be used against the individual and that an immediate enforcement activity would be materially and adversely affected by waiting until the individual agrees.

The appropriate government authority must present by fax, email, US mail or other means evidence of an active investigation, e.g., official letter with patient's name and case number, subpoena, court order, other official document. Information should not be released over the phone. Contact the Office of Institutional Compliance or Office of General Counsel if need assistance.

Informing the Individual. If such disclosure is made, except in the case of reports of child abuse, TTUHSC will promptly inform the individual that such report has been or will be made, unless informing the individual would place the individual in serious harm or the person being informed would be a personal representative who is responsible for the abuse, neglect or other injury and informing that person would not be in the best interest of the individual as determined by the licensed health care provider.

Refer to OP 52.12 *Governmental Investigations*.

3. Health Oversight Activities. 45 CFR Part 164.512 (d)
TTUHSC may disclose PHI to a health oversight agency for oversight activities

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authorized by law¹ including, but not limited to, audits; civil, administrative or criminal investigations; and licensure or disciplinary actions. A health oversight activity does not include an activity, such as an investigation, in which the individual is the subject of the activity and such activity does not arise out of and is not directly related to the following: receipt of health care; claim for public benefits related to health; or qualification for, or receipt of, public benefits or services when a patient's health is integral to the claim for public benefits or services.

4. Judicial and Administrative Proceedings. 45 CFR Part 164.512(e)
TTUHSC may disclose PHI pursuant to a court or administrative order; subpoena or discovery request; or other lawful process if TTUHSC receives satisfactory assurances as required by 45 CFR Part 164.512(e).
Refer to OP 52.12 *Governmental Investigations*.
5. Law Enforcement. 45 CFR Part 164.512 (f) (See HPP 1.6 Accounting of Disclosures of PHI). TTUHSC may disclose PHI for a law enforcement purpose to a law enforcement official if the conditions in 45 CFR Part 164.512 (t) and the Texas Occupations Code § 159.004 are met.
Refer to OP 52.12 *Governmental Investigations*.
6. Decedents. 45 CFR Part 164.512(g). TTUHSC may disclose PHI to a coroner or medical examiner as authorized by law.
7. Organ, Eye and Tissue Donation. 45 CFR Part 164.512(h). Consistent with applicable law, TTUHSC may disclose PHI to people involved with obtaining, storing or transporting organs, eyes or tissues of cadavers for the purpose of tissue donation and transplant.
8. Specialized Government Functions. 45 CFR Part 164.512(k)(1-6).
TTUHSC may use and disclose PHI in certain instances for:
 - a) Military (domestic and foreign), veteran, national security, intelligence and protective service activities (for President or other authorized federal officials); and
 - b) Correctional institutions and other law enforcement custodial situations.
 - c) Refer to OP 52.12 *Governmental Investigations*.
9. Workers Compensation. TTUHSC may disclose PHI to the extent authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws and regulations related to workers' compensation, including, but not limited to¹ laws of the State of Texas, or other similar programs established by law. Texas Workers Compensation Rules § 133.100, et seq.
10. De-Identified Information. 45 CFR Part 164.514(a-c). TTUHSC may use or disclose PHI that has been de-identified in accordance with 45 CFR Part 64.514 (a-c). In

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general, de-identification means that the individual is not identified and there is no reasonable basis to believe that the information can be used to identify the individual. In order for PHI to be de-identified, the PHI must meet the criteria set forth in 45 CFR Part 164.514 (a-c).

11. Limited Data Sets. 45 CFR Part 164.514(e). For purposes of research, public health or health care operations, TTUHSC may use or disclose PHI using a limited data set that meets the criteria established in 45 CFR Part 164.514(e), including, but not limited to, entering into a data use agreement.

Knowledge of a violation or potential violation of this policy must be reported directly to a Regional Privacy Officer, the Institutional Privacy Officer or to the employee Compliance Hotline at (866) 294-9352 or www.ethicspoint.com under HSC.

Approval Authority

Questions regarding this policy may be addressed to the Regional Privacy Officer ([Amarillo](#), [Permian Basin](#), [Lubbock](#)), the [Institutional Privacy Officer](#), or the [Institutional Compliance Officer](#).

Responsibility and Revisions

This policy may be amended or terminated at any time to reflect changes in TTUHSC operating policies or applicable laws and regulations.