

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

<b>Use, Disclosure and Disposal of PHI</b>	<b>Policy 4.7</b>
<b>Disclosing Protected Health Information in Emergency Situations and Disaster Relief</b>	<b>Effective Date: July 5, 2016</b>
<b>References:</b> <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa">http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa</a> HSC HIPAA website <a href="http://www.ttuhscc.edu/hipaa/policies_procedures.aspx">http://www.ttuhscc.edu/hipaa/policies_procedures.aspx</a>	

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**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 request for patient information during emergencies and for disaster relief purposes.

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**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.

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**Definitions**

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

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

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**Procedure**

TTUHSC may, if required by law, use or disclose PHI to a public or private entity authorized by law or by its charter to assist in disaster relief efforts. The requirements of having the individual present or not to agree to the use or disclosure should be applied, to the extent that TTUHSC, in the exercise of professional judgment, determines that the requirements do not interfere with the ability to respond to the emergency circumstances.

If the individual is not present, or the opportunity to object cannot practicably be provided because of incapacity or emergency, TTUHSC, in the exercise of professional judgment, may determine whether the disclosure is in the best interest of the individual and, if so, shall disclose only the PHI that is directly relevant to the person's involvement with the individual's health care.

Attachment: [HHS Bulletin: HIPAA Privacy in Emergency Situations](#)

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](http://www.ethicspoint.com) under HSC.

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

### **Approval Authority**

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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**

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