

# HIPAA FAQs

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/index.html>

**May a covered entity use or disclose a patient's entire medical record based on the patient's signed authorization?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/471/may-a-covered-entity-use-or-disclose-a-patients-entire-medical-record-based-on-the-patients-authorized-signature/index.html>

**Must an authorization include an expiration date?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/476/must-an-authorization-include-an-expiration-date/index.html>

**Does the HIPAA Privacy Rule permit doctors, nurses, and other health care providers to share patient health information for treatment purposes without the patient's authorization?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/481/does-hipaa-permit-doctors-to-share-patient-information-for-treatment-without-authorization/index.html>

**How can family members of a deceased individual obtain the deceased individual's protected health information that is relevant to their own health care?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/222/how-can-i-obtain-a-deceased-relative-medical-record/index.html>

**Do the HIPAA Privacy Rule protections apply to the health information of deceased individuals?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/1500/do-hipaa-protections-apply-to-the-health-information-of-individuals/index.html>

**Does the HIPAA Privacy Rule permit a covered entity to disclose protected health information about a decedent to family members or other persons involved in the care of the decedent?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/1503/does-hipaa-permit-a-covered-entity-to-disclose-information-about-a-decedent/index.html>

**May physician's offices or pharmacists leave messages for patients at their homes, either on an answering machine or with a family member, to remind them of appointments or to inform them that a prescription is ready? May providers continue to mail appointment or prescription refill reminders to patients' homes?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/198/may-health-care-providers-leave-messages/index.html>

**Does the HIPAA Privacy Rule permit a doctor to discuss a patient's health status, treatment, or payment arrangements with the patient's family and friends?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/488/does-hipaa-permit-a-doctor-to-discuss-a-patients-health-status-with-the-patients-family-and-friends/index.html>

**If I am unconscious or not around, can my health care provider still share or discuss my health information with my family, friends, or others involved in my care or payment for my care?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-individuals/faq/524/if-i-am-unconscious-can-my-health-care-provider-still-share-my-health-information-with-family/index.html>

**If a patient's family member, friend, or other person involved in the patient's care or payment for care calls a health care provider to ask about the patient's condition, does HIPAA require the health care provider to obtain proof of who the person is before speaking with them?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/534/if-a-patients-family-member-calls-a-health-care-provider-does-hipaa-require-proof-of-identify/index.html>

**What do the HIPAA Privacy and Security Rules require of covered entities when they dispose of protected health information?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/575/what-does-hipaa-require-of-covered-entities-when-they-dispose-information/index.html>

**May a covered entity hire a business associate to dispose of protected health information?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/577/may-a-covered-entity-hire-a-business-associate-to-dispose-of-information/index.html>

**May a covered entity reuse or dispose of computers or other electronic media that store electronic protected health information?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/578/may-a-covered-entity-reuse-computers-that-store-protected-information/index.html>

**May physician's offices or pharmacists leave messages for patients at their homes, either on an answering machine or with a family member, to remind them of appointments or to inform them that a prescription is ready? May providers continue to mail appointment or prescription refill reminders to patients' homes?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/198/may-health-care-providers-leave-messages/index.html>

**May physician's offices use patient sign-in sheets or call out the names of their patients in their waiting rooms?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/199/may-health-care-providers-use-sign-in-sheets/index.html>

**If someone has a health care power of attorney for an individual, can they obtain access to that individual's medical record?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/220/can-i-access-medical-record-with-power-of-attorney/index.html>

**Can the personal representative of an adult or emancipated minor obtain access to the individual's medical record?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/221/can-adult-or-emancipated-minor-personal-rep-access-record/index.html>

**May personal representatives access health information based on a non-health care power of attorney?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/224/may-personal-rep-access-health-information-based-on-non-healthcare-attorney/index.html>

**May a covered entity charge individuals a fee for providing the individuals with a copy of their PHI?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/2024/may-a-covered-entity-charge-individuals-a-fee/index.html>

**What labor costs may a covered entity include in the fee that may be charged to individuals to provide them with a copy of their PHI?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/2025/what-labor-costs-may-a-covered-entity-include/index.html>

**Do individuals have a right under HIPAA to have their PHI downloaded on portable media that they provide?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/2062/do-individuals-have-a-right-under-hipaa-to-have/index.html>

**Under HIPAA, may an individual request that a covered entity restrict how it uses or discloses that individual's protected health information (PHI)?**

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/3026/under-hipaa-may-an-individual-request-that-a-covered-entity-restrict-how-it-uses-or-discloses-that-individuals-protect-health-information/index.html>