



HOMETOWN
Health Center

HIPAA

HIPAA stands for the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. The original idea was to force the healthcare industry to save money by computerizing paper records. That led to concerns over privacy -- and new privacy regulations from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Here's the bottom line: HIPAA rules give you new rights to know about -- and to control -- how your health information gets used.

- Your healthcare provider and your insurance company have to explain how they'll use and disclose health information.
- You can ask for copies of all this information, and make appropriate changes to it. You can also ask for a history of any unusual disclosures.
- If someone wants to share your health information, you have to give your formal consent.
- You have the right to complain to DHHS about violations of HIPAA rules.
- Health information is to be used only for health purposes. Without your consent, it can't be used to help banks decide whether to give you a loan, or by potential employers to decide whether to give you a job.
- When your health information gets shared, only the minimum necessary amount of information should be disclosed.
- Psychotherapy records get an extra level of protection

The intent is to protect the privacy of your health information. HIPAA puts some very specific rules in place about when, how, and what kind of information can be shared.

Name: (Print) _____ Date of Birth: _____

Signature: _____