



NORTHAMPTON COUNTY

Department of EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES



STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

TOPIC: Protected Health Information	SOG #: 2.22.3
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PURPOSE

To define "Protected Health Information (PHI)

SCOPE

All EMS Provider

CONTENT

HIPAA regulations define health information as "any information, whether oral or recorded in any form or medium" that

- "Is created or received by a health care provider, health plan, public health authority, employer, life insurer, school or university, or health care clearinghouse"; and
- "Relates to the past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition of an individual; the provision of health care to an individual; or the past, present, or future payment for the provision of health care to an individual."

It is worth emphasizing that while HIPAA's primary privacy concern is health information exchanged or stored electronically, the Privacy Rule also reaches to data "transmitted or maintained in any other form or medium." That includes paper records, fax documents and oral communications.

Protected health information (PHI) under HIPAA includes any *individually identifiable* health information. *Identifiable* refers not only to data that is explicitly linked to a particular individual (that's *identified* information). It also includes health information with data items which reasonably could be expected to allow individual identification.