

A Message from the Compliance Department: Anti-Snooping

How would you feel if someone snooped in your medical records? Most of us would agree that we might feel angry, upset, and or exposed. Accessing Protected Health Information without a legitimate business reason is a violation of HIPAA Privacy Rules.

All employees must follow [the HIPPA Privacy Rules](#)¹ and all other Howard University and Howard University Hospital privacy rules.



- **It is important that we uphold patient privacy at all times.** You should not access or disclose of patient information if it is not a part of your job.
- **The HIPAA Privacy Rule has made standards to protect all patient protected health information (PHI).** If you need a crash course on HIPAA, please review the yearly Health Stream Compliance training program.
- Keep in mind that we are able to see what you access within all Howard University Hospital medical records. You should make sure that you are using the Minimum Necessary standard also known as the **“Need to Know Rule.”**

Before accessing or disclosing PHI, ask yourself these questions:

- *Do I need to know this information to do my job?*
- *Does the person I’m speaking to need to know this information to do their job?*
- *If someone asked, would I be able to explain my access and actions without question?*



Violations of the University's HIPAA privacy and security rules may lead to **disciplinary action**². This may happen even if the violation does not lead to a privacy or security breach. Any violations of the HIPAA rules may be part of a person’s performance review.

¹ [The HIPAA Privacy Rule - HHS Webpage](#)

² [Howard University Policy, Clinical 900-002, HIPAA Privacy and Security Violations/Sanctions Policy](#)

Do you have a compliance or privacy concern?

Contact the Compliance Department by emailing HUH_Compliance@huhosp.org, or calling (202) 865-5266
If you would like to make anonymous report, please call the **Hotline at (800) 654-0323**