

Procedures for Policy 2003-23 Faxing Protected Health Information (PHI)

The following procedures apply when transmitting or receiving documents containing PHI via facsimile (fax). Staff will rely on reasonable judgment, care, and the guidelines in these procedures to safeguard the PHI from inadvertent disclosure to unauthorized recipients.

A. Outgoing Faxes Containing PHI

When faxing documents containing PHI:

1. Review all pages of the document to ensure that each page pertains to the correct patient.
2. Confirm that the intended recipient is authorized to receive the information being sent. If applicable:
 - a. Consider special rules applicable to minors. See UConn Health Policy [2012-05: Legal Representative for Health Care Decisions](#).
 - b. See UConn Health Policy [2003-20: Verification of Individuals Requesting Protected Health Information](#).
3. With each fax (including faxes sent to internal UConn Health recipients), include a UConn Health fax cover sheet that contains a UConn Health approved confidentiality statement.
4. When faxing from a fax machine (i.e. paper faxing), pre-program frequently used fax numbers. Test and audit periodically for accuracy.
5. When faxing PHI to an unknown recipient, first confirm the fax number with the recipient.
6. When manually entering a fax number, double check the recipient's number and verify that it has been entered correctly prior to sending.
7. Investigate and correct all fax transmissions that fail to complete.
8. Once transmission is complete, review the fax confirmation and verify that the fax was transmitted to the correct destination.
9. If a fax is sent to the wrong recipient:
 - a. Contact the recipient (if known).
 - i. For paper faxes, confirm that the recipient will destroy (e.g., shred) the fax. For electronic faxes, confirm that the recipient will delete the fax, including deleting it from their "Deleted Items" folder if applicable.
 - ii. Ask the recipient to confirm that they have not and will not print, copy or further use or disclose the document or any PHI contained therein.
 - b. Ensure that all recipients receive their correct documents. (For example, if a misdirected fax was intended for a patient, ensure that the patient ultimately receives the information (e.g., by re-faxing it to the patient at the correct number).
 - c. Notify your supervisor and immediately report the incident to the Privacy Office at 860-679-7226 or privacyoffice@uchc.edu.

B. Incoming Faxes Containing PHI

1. Promptly retrieve incoming faxes to avoid inadvertent disclosure of PHI to individuals who do not have a need to know the information.
2. Verify that all pages of the fax have been received and are retained together.
3. In the event a fax containing PHI is received in error, make reasonable efforts to promptly notify the sender of the misdirected fax. Do not further use or disclose the faxed document(s) or any PHI contained therein. If unable to reach the sender, shred or delete the misdirected fax, as applicable. For questions or concerns, contact the Privacy Office at 860-679-7226 or privacyoffice@uchc.edu.