

How the Office of Privacy Supports You

The [Office of Privacy](#) is your first point of contact for help with privacy-related questions, requests for guidance and reporting incidents of inappropriate access, use or disclosure of [protected health information](#) (PHI).

As employees with access to PHI—like patient names, account numbers and social security numbers—we all have a duty of care to safeguard our patients' information. But sometimes patient information is mishandled, unintentionally or intentionally. Contacting the Office of Privacy is your first step in determining



What are some examples of violations of HIPAA?

- Sending PHI via fax, email or mail to unintended recipients
- Uploading patient information to the wrong chart
- Improperly disposing of PHI
- Having a patient sign another patient's documents by mistake
- Misplacing patient paperwork or leaving it in public areas
- Peeking at patient records without a justifiable reason for doing so



If PHI was mishandled, how do I ask for help to make it right?

We are here to support you. Contact us any time with questions and requests for guidance at HIPAA@cuanschutz.edu.

To report potential and actual incidents of the mishandling of PHI, please complete the [HIPAA Incident Notification Form](#) available on our [website](#).

Report the incident as soon as possible and provide specific details and relevant material. Please refrain from including speculation in your report.



What happens after I report an incident?

We review the reported details and begin our investigation, which includes interviewing supervisor(s), the individual(s) involved and other applicable departments.

In adherence with the [HIPAA Breach Notification Rule](#), we assess the impact on the patient and determine whether we must formally notify them about the access, use or disclosure of their PHI.

As we close out an incident, we assist with recommendations for corrective actions to help prevent future



What are the repercussions of violating HIPAA?

We take great strides to educate employees about appropriate handling of PHI through regular, required employee trainings.

When incidents are reported, our focus is to make the situation right for our patients and to ensure that anyone who has violated HIPAA understands the nature of the error and receives the tools and education to avoid future HIPAA violations.

Severe and intentional HIPAA violations are addressed on a case-by-case basis.