

AHIMA CONSUMER HEALTH INFORMATION **BILL OF RIGHTS**

A Model for Protecting Health Information Principles



You have the right to:

- 1.** Look at your health information and/or get a paper or electronic copy of it
- 2.** Accurate and complete health information
- 3.** Ask for changes to your health information
- 4.** Know how your health information is used or shared and who has received it
- 5.** Ask for limitations on the use and release of your health information
- 6.** Expect your health information is private and secure
- 7.** Be informed about privacy and security breaches of your health information
- 8.** File a complaint or report a violation regarding your health information

BACKGROUND

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) is committed to supporting and protecting the rights of all people with regard to their health information. AHIMA recognizes that the public has a right to accurate, secure, and confidential personal health information.

Every consumer expects our nation's healthcare system to respect his or her right to privacy—a right deeply rooted in both tradition and law. Guided by the principle that confidentiality is necessary in building trust, consumers should know how their information is used, and not be harmed by its release, disclosure, or collection.

AHIMA has created the Consumer Health Information Bill of Rights for the purpose of educating all people about the protections related to their personal health information. This Bill of Rights validates and explains every individual's right to access their personal health information; expect protection of their information; ensure accuracy; and expect appropriate actions are taken when these rights are violated. Failure to reach an agreement and understanding about privacy rights threatens the delivery of quality and timely healthcare.

As the nation's leading authority on the proper management of health information, we set forth this Bill of Rights. We stand beside the individuals whose rights we seek to defend.

AHIMA CONSUMER HEALTH INFORMATION BILL OF RIGHTS

A Model for Protecting Americans' Health Information Principles

1. The right to look at your health information and/or get a paper or electronic copy of it.

You have the right to read and review your health information. Access can be requested at any time. You have the right to get a paper or electronic copy of your health information in a timely manner according to your state and/or federal laws.

2. The right to accurate and complete health information.

You have the right to expect that your health information is accurate and complete. The quality of the healthcare you receive depends upon accurate and complete health information. Incorrect or incomplete health information can prevent you from understanding your overall health and can keep you from receiving the care you need.

3. The right to ask for changes to your health information.

You have the right to ask for changes to your health information when you think it is incorrect or incomplete. It is up to your doctor, hospital, or other healthcare provider whether or not the requested change will be made to the health record. The provider must notify you of the decision in writing. Your written or electronic request for changes will be kept with your health record.

4. The right to know how your health information is used or shared and who has received it.

You have the right to a written explanation of how your health information is used. Your healthcare provider must give you a Notice of Privacy Practices that describes the possible uses and releases of your health information. You have a right to ask your provider for a list (an accounting) of those who have received your information. That list will not include information you agreed to be shared or used by those involved in the treatment, payment, or healthcare operations for your care.

5. The right to ask for limitations on the use and release of your health information.

You have a right to ask for a limit on the health information your provider shares with others involved in your care or for the payment of your care. Your provider has the right to deny the request, but must provide you with a reason why. You may also ask to keep certain information hidden from your healthcare insurance company, but you must pay for that care out of your own pocket at the time of your visit.

6. The right to expect your health information is private and secure.

You have the right to expect that your health information will be protected and kept secure from people who should not have it. You have the right to expect that your health information is kept secure when it is shared between your healthcare providers. You also have the right to ask that your provider contact you in the way you prefer, such as e-mail or phone.

7. The right to be informed about privacy and security breaches to your health information.

You have the right to expect that organizations will hold staff responsible for any illegal access, use, or release of your health information. As required by law, you have the right to expect that any illegal use of your health information will be investigated and that you will be notified and given instructions on what to do next.

8. The right to file a complaint or report a violation regarding your health information.

You have the right to file a complaint if you think your health information is not being handled correctly. You have a right to expect a timely response. The Notice of Privacy Practices must tell you how to file a complaint with the organization and with the United States Department of Health and Human Services.