

University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center  
HIPAA Policy

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I. Purpose, Reference, and Responsibility

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures for handling e-mail messages containing Protected Health Information (PHI) at UCDHSC.

B. Reference

45 C.F.R. § 164.312 (e)(1) and (e)(2)(ii).  
UCDHSC Electronic Mail Policy (see <http://www.uchsc.edu/is/email/>).

C. Responsibility

Anyone at UCDHSC who communicates PHI with recipients outside of UCDHSC using e-mail is responsible for the protection and integrity of the data. This includes faculty, staff, students, trainees, volunteers, etc.

II. Applicability and Definitions

A. Applicability

This policy applies to all members of the UCDHSC workforce who may transmit ePHI via e-mail.

B. Definitions

Affiliates  
Electronic Protected Health Information (ePHI)  
Encryption  
Integrity  
Protected Health Information (PHI)  
Transmission Security  
Workforce

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III. Policy

A. General

1. PHI may not be transmitted by e-mail unless the sender of the e-mail is using a secure e-mail system.
2. UCDHSC has implemented a secure messaging system (safemail) which is specifically designed for the transmission of e-mail messages containing PHI and other sensitive information.
  - a. Full documentation and instructions for the use of the UCDHSC secure e-mail system can be found at: <http://www.uchsc.edu/is/securemail>.
  - b. The UCDHSC secure e-mail system must be used when communicating PHI via e-mail outside of the private network belonging to UCDHSC and its major Affiliates.
  - c. E-mails sent within UCDHSC or from UCDHSC to a major Affiliate are already protected and do not need to be sent via the secure e-mail system.
3. Members of the UCDHSC workforce who wish to send PHI or other sensitive information via e-mail and are not on the UCDHSC network must use a secure e-mail system that has the following features:
  - a. *Transmission Security.* The message cannot be intercepted by someone other than the intended recipient while the message is in transmission. Transmission security can be accomplished by the use of encryption.
  - b. *Mechanism to Authenticate.* The recipient of the message must have the ability to know that the content of the message has not been altered during transmission. This must be built into the e-mail system in use.

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4. Updated anti-virus protection must be in place on any UCDHSC computing device either sending or receiving e-mail.

Updated anti-virus protection must also be in place on the e-mail servers and at the e-mail gateways.