

HIPAA Guidelines for Business Associates

The West Penn Allegheny Health System (WPAHS) is required to adhere to rules established by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996. HIPAA is a federal law that governs:

- The privacy of identifiable health information, referred to as protected health information (PHI), regardless of the format in which it exists. This includes electronic, written, and verbal information;
- Electronic data interchange and code set standards; and
- Security of PHI.

HIPAA requires that Covered Entities enter into an agreement with third parties that perform services involving PHI or exchange electronic data on behalf of the Covered Entity. Such third parties are referred to as Business Associates of the Covered Entity. The agreement obligates the Business Associate to appropriately safeguard the PHI. Attached is the [WPAHS model Business Associate Agreement](#). Please work with the management of a WPAHS entity to tailor the agreement to your specific services and execute this agreement before using or disclosing PHI on behalf of WPAHS.

Detailed information about the Privacy Rule may be found on the website of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/>.