

THE ADVISOR

MONTHLY COMPLIANCE COMMUNICATOR



A LETTER FROM BILL

So far, 2020 has been an extraordinary year, as we face historic challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic. Although we are practicing social distancing, we have not lost any ability to connect and serve those who need us. Total Medical Compliance remains dedicated to keeping you informed about the actions we are taking during this uncertain time.

We are committed to providing reliable and current information regarding this healthcare emergency. There is so much constantly changing information to sort through, and we know you need a trusted source to stay updated. To that end, we have resources on our website that we keep updated with the latest changes. It is available on our [homepage](#) or you can [click here](#) to jump directly to it.

We are committed to serving not only our clients, but the healthcare community as a whole. TMC will offer a series of live webinars on the COVID-19 crisis free of charge to anyone who wishes to attend. The webinars are recorded and continually refreshed with the latest information, so we encourage you to check back often. The recorded webinars are also available to everyone if your schedule prevents you attending the live webinars.

I want to express my sincere appreciation for the healthcare workers and first responders. Your selfless aid during this time is truly inspirational. These times are challenging for all of us, but we will get through this together. Let us know how TMC can help you.

As always, you can reach us: 888-862-6742 | Email: Service@TotalMedicalCompliance.com | <https://www.totalmedicalcompliance.com/>

Sincerely,
Bill Fivick
President & CEO

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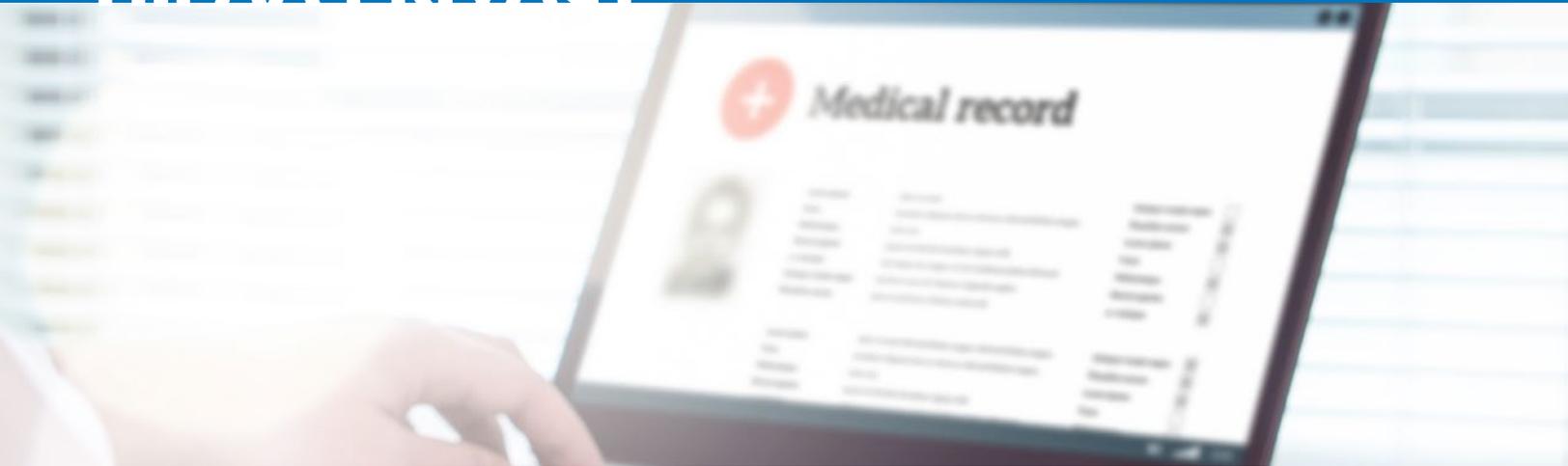
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HIPAA OSHA INFECTION CONTROL BUSINESS ASSOCIATES



HIPAA PRIVACY



COVID-19 Privacy Challenges

In times of crisis, processing the influx of information can be like drinking water from a firehose. It can be difficult to just take what you need and keep moving especially when important information is about topics on which you may not feel well oriented.

Over the past several weeks, the Office for Civil Rights, the part of The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that enforces HIPAA, has issued several notices about privacy and security flexibilities to help providers respond to COVID-19.

The first notice is a reminder about how a patient's protected health information (PHI) can be disclosed for public health purposes. PHI can be disclosed to a public health authority, such as a state or local health department or the CDC, to report cases of COVID-19. While it is unlikely, during an outbreak, health departments sometimes request information from providers. This is called active surveillance. If you receive a request from a public health authority about COVID-19, be sure to confirm the requestor's identity by asking for government identification or calling the department using the phone number on its official website to confirm a written request.

Other permitted disclosures for public health purposes can be made to those who may have been exposed to a communicable disease or may

be at risk of contracting or spreading a disease or condition to control the spread of the disease. It is very important to remember that only the minimum amount of PHI should be disclosed.

PHI can be disclosed to family members, friends, and others involved in a patient's care but only as it applies to the current treatment or authorization from the patient. Providers should exercise professional and ethical judgement in these situations.

The OCR released further clarification that, on a per case basis, emergency departments, 911 and EMS dispatch centers that are covered entities, and nursing homes can disclose a patient's COVID-19 status to first responders and officers so appropriate precautions can be taken to minimize exposure. In addition to this, business associates may now share PHI for public health purposes related to COVID-19 so that the CDC and other public health authorities can have quicker access to critical statistics.

All other disclosures that are not part of treatment, payment, or operations, remain restricted and require a patient's authorization. These exceptions will be in place until further notice from the OCR.



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HIPAA & COVID-19



COVID-19 Puts Telehealth and Security in the Spotlight

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) announced that it is relaxing enforcement on the use of certain telehealth solutions during the COVID-19 response in order to protect patients and providers from unnecessary exposure. Using telehealth during a public health emergency enables healthcare professionals to continue to provide routine care for patients like medication checks and also conduct pre-visit evaluations of patients who might be experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

Telehealth can be provided via audio, text message, or video conferencing.

This relaxed enforcement means that some popular means of communication that do not necessarily meet HIPAA privacy and security requirements can be used for a limited time. The OCR listed Zoom, FaceTime, Facebook Messenger video chat, Google Hangouts video, and Skype as examples of what is permitted but still advises that providers seriously consider using a solution that meets HIPAA requirements especially if they wish to continue to provide telehealth after the enforcement exception is over. The examples listed above do not meet HIPAA security requirements and those vendors do not sign business associate agreements with providers.

**...REMEMBER TO
CHECK LINKS,
ATTACHMENTS,
AND EMAIL
ADDRESSES
BEFORE YOU
CLICK...**

Patients should be notified in advance, verbally that these applications could have potential privacy risks. Ideally, a patient should sign a telehealth consent form, Security settings should be set to the highest option in these applications. Telehealth visits should be conducted in private just like any other patient encounter. Refer to your patient's payer for requirements about billing and visit documentation.

Message and video applications like Facebook Live, Slack, Tik Tok, and Twitch should never be used because they are not a direct one on one communication and can be accessed by the public.

Your EHR or practice management vendor may have available options for telehealth that already meet HIPAA requirements. You can also visit TMC's [COVID-19 resource page](#) for more information that can help you navigate continued care for your patients during this time.

Unfortunately, some of these security vulnerabilities have been taken advantage of by cyber criminals. In addition, COVID-19 themed fraud and other schemes have skyrocketed.

To keep yourself and your patient's information safe, remember to check links, attachments, and email addresses before you click on them or reply with sensitive information. Some meeting website addresses have been spoofed so that when a victim clicks on the link to join, malware is installed or the criminal gains access to the victim's data.

Fake emails with malicious attachments pretending to be invoices or FAQ documents about COVID-19 have been circulating and fraudulent emails containing links to order PPE or to solicit charitable donations for COVID-19 research have impacted thousands.

Stress levels are high, and it can be easier than usual to get distracted while keeping up with increased personal and professional activity and by the high volume of information coming from so many angles. Let's help each other stay a little safer. Think before you click and remember your trusted sources.



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ONLINE TRAINING

TMC Online Training

We hope you are enjoying our new state of the art online training platform! It is smoother, faster, and a better user experience. If you haven't checked out the new Online Training platform yet, let's take a walk through the login process together. First, let's review the login for the Client Portal on the TMC website. After that, we'll go to the Online Training Platform.

TMC Client Portal

CLIENT LOGIN

Start on the www.totalmedicalcompliance.com homepage.

Click the **CLIENT LOGIN** button on the navigation bar at the top.

Type in your username and password. These credentials were given to you when you became a TMC Client.

Use the TMC Client Portal to download electronic OSHA & HIPAA compliance forms, see officer webinars, see your eSDS online, take advantage of TMC Client discounts in our online store, and more.

 <p>Online Training For Employees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• HIPAA Training for Employees• OSHA Training for Employees• Business Associates Online Training• Infection Control (SPICE) Training Webinars	 <p>Officer Webinars Officer Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• HIPAA Privacy/Security Officer• OSHA Safety Officer	 <p>Complimentary Webinars</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recorded Webinars
 <p>Compliance Information & Forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business Associate Agreement for Covered Entities• Dental Radiation FAQ's• Dental Radiation Forms• Business Associate Forms• HIPAA Forms• State Privacy & Security Regulations• Infection Control FAQ's• OSHA Exposure Tool Box• OSHA Forms & Resources• OSHA State Regulations	 <p>Manual Information Update</p> <p>eManual Instructions</p> <p>Click here for instructions to fill out your electronic manual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2016 Dental Radiation Manual Updates	 <p>TMC Web Badges Endorsement</p> <p>TMC OSHA WEB BADGE</p> <p>TMC HIPAA WEB BADGE</p> <p>TMC Logo Resources</p>

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ONLINE TRAINING

TMC Online Training

Your new login credentials, instructions, and link for the new platform have been sent via email. Each one of your employees should have received an email. If they do not see it, please have them check their junk mail.

Once you click the new link in the email, this is what you will see. Login with the credentials provided in the email.



TMC
TOTAL MEDICAL COMPLIANCE

ONLINE TRAINING

Email/Username

••••••••

Remember Me [Forgot Password?](#)

LOGIN

If you do not want to keep referring back to your email for the online training link, you can save it in your Favorites in your browser or you can access it from the TMC website homepage.

Click the **LOGIN TO ONLINE TRAINING** button on the navigation bar at the top.

LOGIN TO ONLINE TRAINING

New Courses

Are you ready for more online training courses? We have just added six new courses to help you through this time of social distancing and working from home. To see all course titles, click [courses](#).



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DID YOU KNOW?

People have been wearing face coverings since the black plague. Of course, then it was because they thought the plague was caused by bad air. It was actually spread through flea bites. NOW it's caused by bad air! But this explains by whom, and how, the N95 was developed and also how mask technology is ever changing.

[Click here for more.](#)



IT'S YOUR CALL

OSHA:

How many COVID19 tests has the FDA granted?

HIPAA:

COVID19 scams: What you should know.

[CLICK FOR ANSWERS](#)

[CLICK HERE TO](#)
START YOUR TRAINING TODAY!

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INSTRUCTIONS

Print and post newsletter in office for staff review. Each member should sign this form when completed. Keep on file as proof of training on these topics.

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