

Cleveland Sight Center (CSC)

THINGS EVERY VOLUNTEER NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT HIPAA

What is HIPAA? HIPAA stands for the federal law entitled the **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act**, which was originally passed in 1996.

How does HIPAA affect volunteers in the blindness field? As volunteers you are asked to help us to protect the health information of our clients. Special laws mandate the ways in which we store and share this information. All CSC clients are given a **HIPAA Privacy Notice**, which explains how their health information will be used, and their rights under this new privacy law.

What information does HIPAA protect? The HIPAA regulations safeguard **Protected Health Information (PHI)**. Protected Health Information (PHI) includes an individual's (see the HIPAA Privacy Notice for more detail):

- Health (diagnosis)
- Provision of care (services received)
- Payment of services (how payment will be made)
- Information that identifies the individual (name, address, social security, etc.)

When can PHI be shared? Protected Health Information (PHI) may be shared in limited instances. Please see the HIPAA Privacy Notice for more detail.

What are the steps volunteers need to take to protect the client's PHI?

Discussion: Don't discuss information about clients in a public place where others can overhear.

Files: Make sure files are not kept where unauthorized people can see them and that they are locked away when not in use.

Fax: When sending a fax, make sure an authorized person is on the other end to receive it.

Computers: All computers should be password protected. Never share your computer password with anyone else. Your computer screen should face away from public area/viewing. When stepping away from a computer in use, you can protect client information by:

- Closing all applications
- Using a screen saver (if possible, with password protection)
- Do not send PHI by e-mail unless it is encrypted

How do I dispose of documents containing PHI? Anything containing PHI has to be disposed of in a way that makes the information unreadable.

If I don't know whether or not to give out information, whom do I talk to? You should speak to your supervisor or the Agency's designated privacy officer.

CODE OF ETHICS For the Cleveland Sight Center Volunteers

To hold in confidence any client information or privileged administrative information learned in the course of Cleveland Sight Center's activities

To treat everyone associated with the organization with respect and dignity be they trustees, fellow staff members, volunteers, clients, customers or anyone else with whom business is undertaken

To engage in no form of harassment or threatening behavior

To use the resources of Cleveland Sight Center in a responsible manner and not to use them for personal activities beyond what is allowed by the stated policies and procedures of the organization

To conduct oneself in an appropriate manner in all organizational business and whenever representing Cleveland Sight Center. Chief among good conduct attributes are honesty, timeliness, courtesy and sobriety

To recognize that a breach of this ethical code could lead to the dismissal of a volunteer from service to the organization

CLEVELAND SIGHT CENTER Ethics and Confidentiality Affirmation HIPAA requirements

I, _____ hereby affirm that I have read the Cleveland Sight Center Code of Ethics for my position as a volunteer with the organization and I agree to abide by the codes of ethics for that position. I understand that, should I have any questions regarding ethical practices in my position, I may ask for assistance from my supervisor or primary contact with the organization.

I also affirm that I have received a copy of "THINGS EVERY VOLUNTEER NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT HIPAA" as well as the "CSC - HIPAA Privacy Notice" (available on CSC's website).

Signed

Dated
