

## Best Practices for Faxing Communication

Faculty and Staff are reminded of the critical importance to protect sensitive data, including protected health information (PHI). Faxing remains an important method for transferring information in support of healthcare operations, treatment and payment. However, the institution continues to experience incidents related to misdirected faxes. Misdirected faxes are communications intended for one party and inadvertently faxed to another. It is important that all individuals exercise reasonable care when faxing PHI and other sensitive information.

Below are guidelines that **MUST** be followed when faxing PHI and other sensitive information:

- Confirm and verify the fax number with the intended recipient before faxing.
- Faxes which include PHI must use fax cover sheets that include the following information:
  - Sender's name, facility, telephone and fax number
  - Date and time of transmission
  - Number of pages being faxed including cover sheet
  - Intended recipient's name, facility, telephone and fax number
  - Name and number to call to report a transmittal problem or to inform of a misdirected fax
  - The following **Confidentiality Notice MUST** be included on ALL fax cover sheets:

Notice of disclosure: This information has been disclosed to you from records whose confidentiality is protected by Florida State Statutes and Federal law. These laws prohibit you from making any further disclosure of such information without the specific written consent of the person to whom such information pertains, or as otherwise permitted by State/Federal law.

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS FACSIMILE MESSAGE IS INTENDED ONLY FOR THE PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL USE OF THE DESIGNATED RECIPIENT NAMED ABOVE. This message is confidential. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient or an agent responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this document in error, and that any review, disclosure, dissemination, distribution or copying of this message, or the taking of any action in reliance on its contents, is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately and destroy the documents.

Thank you.

- Avoid placing PHI on the fax cover sheet
- Some areas may use fax machines with pre-programmed fax numbers for regular recipients. There should be a process to review all such pre-programmed fax numbers on a regular basis (recommended at a minimum every 2 months).

- If notified of a misdirected fax, the unintended recipient should be instructed to return the information by mail or destroy the information by shredding.

For specific policies with regard to electronic protected health information (EPHI), please see <http://privacyoffice.med.miami.edu/employees/policies-forms/security-policies-procedures> (Medical domain username and password required).

For information security best practices, please see the CBL entitled “HIPAA Security Guide for IT Administrators and Business Unit Leaders” available in ULearn at <http://ulearn.miami.edu>.