

# CLIENT ALERT

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## **Just a reminder to all of our clients regarding the safekeeping of your employees' protected health information (PHI).**

PHI is ANY identifiable information on an employee which includes but is **not** limited to name, address, date of birth, SS#, claim problems etc...

The Privacy Act – stipulates that you must take precautions so that PHI does not fall into the wrong hands. This means locking your file cabinets and desk drawers or if you have an office with a lock, locking your door EVERY time you leave it (even for just a minute). Depending on the type of material that your employees fax to you, you may want to have a fax at your desk or in your office or have faxes go directly to your computer. Be aware of what you might have lying open on your desk when an employee comes in to see you. Turning over papers or closing drawers is advisable. Employees should not discuss claim problems with you unless they have completed a HIPAA disclosure form.

The Security Act – stipulates that you must take precautions so that PHI that you send or save electronically does not fall into the wrong hands. This means password protecting your computer, flash drives and/or documents that include PHI. When corresponding with us via e-mail, if you do not have 128 bit encryption software, please do not include the person's name and SS# in the same e-mail. We recommend that your e-mails include the first initial, last name and only the last 4 digits of the SS#. (i.e. J Smith XXX-XX-2365) If we need additional information we will call you or send a separate e-mail. When preparing the census for renewal marketing, please delete the SS# and Street Address as a way of protecting your employees. When discarding or giving away computers, make sure the hard drive is completely erased.

This e-mail is not meant to advise you of your entire obligations under the Privacy and Security Acts under HIPAA. It is merely meant as a reminder of the bigger concerns of these two laws. If you would like more complete information, please do not hesitate to contact our office.