

# Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

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**Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act** (HIPAA) a US law designed to provide privacy standards to protect patients' medical records and other health information provided to health plans, doctors, hospitals and other health care providers. Developed by the Department of Health and Human Services, these new standards provide patients with access to their medical records and more control over how their personal health information is used and disclosed. They represent a uniform, federal floor of privacy protections for consumers across the country. State laws providing additional protections to consumers are not affected by this new rule. HIPAA took effect on April 14, 2003.

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Last update: **2019/06/01 15:47**

