



BENEFIT NEWS BRIEFS

OCR Posts HIPAA Audit Protocols on Website

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) recently posted *HIPAA Audit Protocols* on its website. This will be a useful tool for covered entities and Business Associates to use in self-compliance checks. The Audit protocols are available at <http://ocrnotifications.hhs.gov/hipaa.html>. OCR is the enforcement arm of the Department of Health and Human Services for Health Information Privacy, including the requirements of the *HIPAA Privacy and Security Rules*. For more information on OCR, go to <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/index.html>.

As an aid to using the *HIPAA Audit Protocols* as a tool, the Research Department has turned the somewhat user-unfriendly charts into full-length documents as no downloadable or printable copies are available online. The 88 *HIPAA Privacy and Breach Audit Protocols* are available in a printable file by "[clicking here](#)." The 77 *HIPAA Security Audit Protocols* are available in a printable file by "[clicking here](#)."

The *HIPAA Audit Protocols* cover:

- (A) the *HIPAA Privacy Rule* requirements for (1) notice of privacy practices for PHI, (2) rights to request privacy protection for PHI, (3) access of individuals to PHI, (4) administrative requirements, (5) uses and disclosures of PHI, (6) amendment of PHI and (7) accounting of disclosures,
- (B) the *HIPAA Security Rule* requirements for administrative, physical and technical safeguards, and
- (C) the requirements for the *Breach Notification Rule*.

As part of OCR's enforcement of these *HIPAA* rules, the agency has been undertaking *HIPAA Privacy and Security* audits of covered entities (health care plans, health care clearinghouses and health care providers using electronic health transactions) and will soon be auditing Business Associates. See [Client Bulletin 2011-74](#) and [Benefit News Briefs 2012-29](#). In light of these new rules and enforcement activities, the new *HIPAA Audit Protocols* should be a useful self-compliance tool.

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