

COMPLAINTS REGARDING VIOLATIONS OF PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY (HIPAA)

I. Policy Section

14.0 Risk Management

II. Policy Subsection

14.3 Complaints Regarding Violations of Privacy and Confidentiality

III. Policy Statement

Grand Rapids Community College shall comply with applicable law pertaining to complaints of violations of privacy and/or confidentiality. Grand Rapids Community College will promptly respond and appropriately document and investigate all complaints regarding the privacy and confidentiality of a health plan member's Protected Health Information and complaints regarding the privacy practices of our organization. Grand Rapids Community College will not require individuals to waive their right to file a complaint as a condition of the provision of treatment.

IV. Reason for the Policy

Compliance to HIPAA mandates

V. Entities Affected by this Policy

All employees
Business Associates

VI. Who Should Read this Policy

All employees

VII. Related Documents

All related documents located on HR website:
<http://grcc.edu/humanresources/healthbenefits/healthinsuranceportabilityandaccountabilityactof1996hipaa>

VIII. Contacts

Policy Owner: Executive Director Human Resources, Privacy Officer
Human Resource Department

IX. Definitions

HIPAA - Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act
PHI - Protected Health Information

X. Procedures

- A. Grand Rapids Community College will describe the process for filing a complaint in our Notice of Privacy Practices and will respond to all complaints of violations of privacy and confidentiality of PHI. Individuals who express a desire to complain about violations of privacy or confidentiality in the use or disclosure of their PHI will be instructed to obtain and complete a Privacy Complaint Form available from the Privacy Officer in the Human Resources Department (616) 234-3971.
- B. Upon receipt of a completed form, the Privacy Officer will investigate the specifics of the complaint and write a summary of the findings of the investigation. The investigation will be conducted at the earliest possible time. A written summary of the findings of the investigation will be communicated to the individual and the Human Resource Department.
- C. If it is determined that a violation has occurred, Human Resources will:
1. Implement any sanctions that may be warranted;
 2. Identify any changes or additions to existing policies and procedures that may help prevent future occurrences of a similar nature;
 3. Implement those changes or additions to the extent practicable;
 4. Identify any harm that may have been caused to the individual as a result of the violation;
 5. Mitigate such harm to the extent practicable;
 6. Provide a written summary to the complaining individual, and;
 7. Provide the individual with instructions on how to file a complaint with the Secretary of Health and Human Services if the individual should choose to do so.

D. Waiver of Rights

Grand Rapids Community College will not require individuals to waive their rights as a condition of the provision of treatment, payment, enrollment in a health plan, or eligibility for benefits.

XI. Forms

Complaint Form

https://www.grcc.edu/sites/default/files/docs/policies/complaint_form.pdf

XII. Effective Date

March 24, 2004

XIII. Policy History

Revised November 1, 2013: The HIPPA Sanctions policy (14.4) was eliminated as it is no longer necessary to have a separate policy solely for sanctions.

Reviewed November, 2017 - no changes

Reviewed November, 2021 - no changes

XIV. Next Review/Revision Date

November, 2025