ALAMEDA COUNTY
HEALTH CARE SERVICES
AGENCY
COLLEEN CHAWLA, Director

March 2020
COVID-19 Remote Work and HIPAA Privacy & Security Guidelines for HCSA Staff

During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, Alameda County Health Care Services Agency staff authorized to work remotely who access Protected Health Information (PHI) or electronic PHI (ePHI) must remain compliant with health privacy regulations by following these best practices:

Personal Devices (Computers, Phones, Tablets, etc.)
- ❑ Your computer / tablet / other electronic device must be either:
  - o Issued by your department **OR**
  - o A personal device with approved VPN access for PHI.
- ❑ Your Department Information Systems has configured the device for optimum security.
- ❑ Do not use file sharing applications or download unfamiliar software.
- ❑ Auto-time out your screen, "lock" your device if you step away from your computer or mobile device, and logout of your account when you are not using it.
- ❑ Do not download or save any PHI to your personal devices, including hard drives, flash drives (i.e., USB, thumb drives), etc.
- ❑ Do not store your work account username or password in your internet browser.
- ❑ Do not share your work account username or password.

Internet Connection & Electronic Transmission of ePHI
- ❑ Only use secured (i.e., password protected) WiFi network.
- ❑ Use your work Virtual Private Network (VPN) to access ePHI.
- ❑ Encrypt email with ePHI (in the email subject line, write "Encrypt").
- ❑ Do not use your personal email/social media accounts to send ePHI.

Physical Work Setting
- ❑ Ensure only you can view PHI/ePHI (i.e. shield your screen from secondary viewers).
- ❑ Ensure you are in a private place where no one can overhear your conversations regarding PHI.

Paper Protected Health Information (PHI)
- ❑ Do not print out any document with PHI.
- ❑ If you bring any PHI home, ensure that it is in a locked location when not in use.
- ❑ Do not leave PHI (including devices with PHI) in a vehicle unattended at any time.
- ❑ If you need to discard PHI, use a shredder or discard in a locked shredded bin.

Please report any unauthorized access, use, or disclosure of PHI/ePHI immediately to your Privacy Officer:
- • Administration/OAD/HCSA: Ravi Mehta (Ravi.Mehta@acgov.org)
- • Behavioral Health: Sophia Lai (Sophia.Lai@acgov.org)
- • Environmental Health: Cynthia Bartus (Cynthia.Bartus@acgov.org)
- • Public Health: Anaa Reese (Anaa.Reese@acgov.org)