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Resource Elizabeth Savage:  
CHIEF HUMAN  
RESOURCES  
OFFICER  
Policy Area Human  
Resources  
Applicability Valley Health  
System - System  
Wide

## Confidentiality, HR504

### PURPOSE

To ensure confidentiality of all medical, personal and financial information of the persons served by Valley Health System (VHS), including both external and internal customers

### POLICY

- A. Employees of VHS may have access to what is referred to as confidential information which includes, but is not limited to, individually identifiable information concerning patients, families, employees, volunteers, and physicians. It may also include financial, medical, personal, human resources documentation and other information relating to VHS. Employees may learn of or have access to some or all of this confidential information through a computer system or through their employment activities.
- B. Confidential information is valuable, sensitive and is protected by federal and state laws and regulations as well as strict VHS policies. Employees of VHS must understand and comply with these laws and policies governing protected health information and other confidential information. Employees must also understand that violations of these laws and policies will subject them to discipline, which might include but is not limited to termination of employment, and potential legal liability.
- C. Accordingly, as a condition of and in consideration of employees' access to confidential information, the following must be adhered to:
- D. Employees will use confidential information only as needed to perform their authorized duties as employees of VHS. This includes the following:
  - 1. Employees will only access confidential information for which they have a need to

- know based on their authorized job duties;
2. Employees will only disclose confidential information to employees, volunteers, physicians, and other persons who have a right and need to know;
  3. Employees will only access and disclose confidential information in a manner which provides for privacy and security;
  4. Employees will not in any way divulge, copy, release, sell, loan, review, alter or destroy any confidential information except as properly authorized within the scope of their authorized job duties;
  5. Employees will not misuse or be careless with confidential information.
- E. Employees will not access the following without a business need to do so:
1. The personal medical record of the employee or the medical record of family members, or the financial record of the employee or the financial record of family members;
  2. To receive test results, a copy of their medical record, or the record of a family member the employee must provide the appropriate authorization to Health Information Management and they will provide the employee with the requested information. Employees are encouraged to utilize My Chart for their own and their family members medical records. Employees must have authorization to access the medical record of family members.
  3. To receive financial information or a copy of their medical bill or that of a family member the employee must provide the appropriate authorization to the VHS Billing office and they will provide the employee with the requested information.
- F. Employees will safeguard and not disclose their security codes, passwords, identification badges, or any other authorizations which allow them to access confidential information. In addition, employees will accept responsibility for **all activities** undertaken using their security codes, passwords, identification badges, or other authorizations.
- G. Employees must understand that their obligation under this policy will continue after they leave the employment of VHS. Employees also understand that their privileges are subject to periodic reviews, and that VHS may at any time revoke their security codes, identification badges, or access to confidential information.
- H. Employees must understand that their continued employment is contingent upon their adherence to the information stated in this policy. Employees further understand that their failure to comply with applicable laws and this policy may result in their loss of employment with VHS.
- I. A matrix is attached describing the disciplinary action associated with intentional and unintentional violations of this policy; the IS policy, System Security; and the Compliance policy, Privacy of Protected Health Information.

## REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Employees are to refer any requests for information from the news and media to the VHS Director of Marketing and Public Relations. Please refer to [Release of Information to the News Media, HR 512](#)

[policy](#) for more information.

## All Revision Dates

10/2021, 09/2019, 05/2013, 12/2012, 04/2005, 11/2002, 10/2001, 10/1997

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## Attachments

[Disciplinary Form.9.2019.pdf](#)

[Risk Impact Score Worksheet.9.2019pdf](#)

## Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
	Elizabeth Savage: CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER	10/2021
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