**Policy Title:** Facsimile Transmission of PHI  
**Policy Number:** COM 22.0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsible Officer:</th>
<th>Compliance Officer</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsible Office:</td>
<td>Compliance Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origination Date:</td>
<td>07/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Revision:</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td><strong>Scope:</strong></td>
<td>It is the policy of UCR Health to maintain PHI in a protected and secure manner when faxing in response to patient/legal representative authorization or in compliance with Federal and State regulations and statutes covering mandatory reporting, treatment, payment and/or operations.</td>
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I. **Policy Summary:** N/A

II. **Definitions:** N/A

III. **Policy Text:**

A. It is the policy of UCR Health to maintain PHI in a protected and secure manner when faxing in response to patient/legal representative authorization or in compliance with Federal and State regulations and statutes covering mandatory reporting, treatment, payment and/or operations.

B. Faxing of PHI should be limited to urgent patient care and treatment purposes whenever possible. Routine requests for PHI should be processed through the U.S. Mail.

C. Although it is the primary responsibility of the Health Information Management Department to release protected health information (PHI), it is expected that any department or individual that may release patient protected health information follow this policy.

D. A "Fax Cover Sheet" must be used with all faxes containing PHI originated by UCR Health.

IV. **Responsibilities:** N/A

V. **Procedures:**

A. **Procedure for Outgoing Fax Transmissions**

1. Obtain a written authorization for any use or disclosure of patient information made via fax when not otherwise authorized by the individual or permitted for treatment, payment, and healthcare operations under federal/state laws and regulations. Faxing of patient medical records between health care providers to promote the continuity of care in urgent/acute situations is promoted to expedite exchange of critical information. If possible, refrain from faxing sensitive health information, such as that dealing with mental health, chemical dependency, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV or other highly personal information.

   a. Staff members faxing patient information shall take reasonable steps to ensure that the fax transmission is sent to the appropriate destination. When taking a request for information to be faxed, the following information should be collected:
1) Patient name, date of birth, medical record number (if possible)
2) Information Requested (provide minimum necessary to meet needs of requestor)
3) Reason for Request (i.e. Continuity of care)
4) Fax number of Requesting Party
5) Phone number of Requesting Party (for verification purposes)
   a) When requests are made by health care providers or parties that are unfamiliar to the staff, verification should be made by contacting the requestor via the contact phone number and determining legitimacy and identification of requestor.
   b) Staff members should always double check the recipient's fax number before pressing the "send" key. When using pre-programmed receiving fax numbers, the numbers should be tested immediately after the first programming to determine accuracy.

2. A fax cover sheet must accompany the transmission and include the following: Name of recipient, date, number of pages, name of sender, phone number and address of sender, and Confidentiality Notice. See Appendix A for the approved UCR Health fax cover sheet. The cover sheet must be filled out completely with the name and/or department of the "sender" clearly indicated as well as a description of what was sent.

3. If it has been determined that a fax has been sent in error, the sender should immediately contact the recipient and ask them to return or destroy the information. Steps should be taken immediately to correct the process (i.e. updating receiving fax number on speed dial, correct directory fax numbers) and the error should be reported to the immediate supervisor. The incident should also be reported immediately to the Compliance and Privacy Officer.

4. Fax machines should be placed in secure, non-public areas. Information faxed "out" shall be gathered immediately after faxing and routed to the appropriate location or destroyed in a confidential manner. The fax and the information should not be left unattended while the fax is in progress.

5. Regular fax recipients should be periodically reminded to notify Heath Information Management should their fax number change.

B. Procedure for Incoming Fax Transmissions
1. Fax machines that routinely receive transmissions of PHI should be placed in secure, non-public areas. Whenever possible, incoming faxes should be directed to the Health Information Management Department or the appropriate clinical department.
2. Staff members should routinely monitor incoming faxes and immediately collect the information and determine:
   a. Accuracy of routing as identified on the incoming fax cover sheet.
   b. Receipt of total number of pages as identified on the fax cover sheet.
   c. If the fax transmission is illegible, incomplete or received in error, the sender should be notified immediately. Documents received in error should be immediately destroyed in a confidential manner.
   d. Fax transmissions of PHI should be immediately routed to the intended recipient or the patient's medical record. As with other PHI that arrives by mail or other means, care should be taken to see that papers that contain PHI are placed in a secure confidential place when they are delivered, and not left unattended or in an in-box that is in full view of passers-by. Patient medical records received from other health care facilities should be filed in the "Correspondence Section" or
other portion of the record designated for documents from outside health care providers.

VI. Forms/Instructions:
Attachment A

VII. Contacts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>Compliance and Privacy Officer</td>
<td>(951) 827-4672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>Privacy Analyst</td>
<td>(951) 827-7672</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VIII. Related Information: N/A

IX. Revision History: N/A

Approval(s)

James R. Herron
Compliance and Privacy Officer
School of Medicine
Attachment “A”

Sending Department Contact Information

To: 
From: 
Phone: 
Fax: 
Date: 

Re: 

Pages: Including cover sheet

☐ URGENT ☐ As Requested ☐ For Review ☐ Please Reply

Comments: (Please advise if your fax number has changed)

Confidentiality notice: This fax message and its attachments are for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please report this occurrence to the Compliance & Privacy Office at 951-827-7672. Please attempt to contact the sender before destroying all copies of the fax message and its attachments.