



Workstation Security (For HIPAA) Policy

Free Use Disclaimer: *This policy was created by or for the SANS Institute for the Internet community. All or parts of this policy can be freely used for your organization. There is no prior approval required. If you would like to contribute a new policy or updated version of this policy, please send email to policy-resources@sans.org.*

Things to Consider: *Please consult the Things to Consider FAQ for additional guidelines and suggestions for personalizing the SANS policies for your organization.*

Last Update Status: *Updated June 2014*

1. Overview

See Purpose.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for workstation security for <Company Name> workstations in order to ensure the security of information on the workstation and information the workstation may have access to. Additionally, the policy provides guidance to ensure the requirements of the HIPAA Security Rule “Workstation Security” Standard 164.310(c) are met.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all <Company Name> employees, contractors, workforce members, vendors and agents with a <Company Name>-owned or personal-workstation connected to the <Company Name> network.

4. Policy

Appropriate measures must be taken when using workstations to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of sensitive information, including protected health information (PHI) and that access to sensitive information is restricted to authorized users.

3.1 Workforce members using workstations shall consider the sensitivity of the information, including protected health information (PHI) that may be accessed and minimize the possibility of unauthorized access.

3.2 <Company Name> will implement physical and technical safeguards for all workstations that access electronic protected health information to restrict access to authorized users.

3.3 Appropriate measures include:

- Restricting physical access to workstations to only authorized personnel.
- Securing workstations (screen lock or logout) prior to leaving area to prevent unauthorized access.



- Enabling a password-protected screen saver with a short timeout period to ensure that workstations that were left unsecured will be protected. The password must comply with <Company Name> *Password Policy*.
- Complying with all applicable password policies and procedures. See <Company Name> *Password Policy*.
- Ensuring workstations are used for authorized business purposes only.
- Never installing unauthorized software on workstations.
- Storing all sensitive information, including protected health information (PHI) on network servers
- Keeping food and drink away from workstations in order to avoid accidental spills.
- Securing laptops that contain sensitive information by using cable locks or locking laptops up in drawers or cabinets.
- Complying with the *Portable Workstation Encryption Policy*
- Complying with the *Baseline Workstation Configuration Standard*
- Installing privacy screen filters or using other physical barriers to alleviate exposing data.
- Ensuring workstations are left on but logged off in order to facilitate after-hours updates.
- Exit running applications and close open documents
- Ensuring that all workstations use a surge protector (not just a power strip) or a UPS (battery backup).
- If wireless network access is used, ensure access is secure by following the *Wireless Communication policy*

5. Policy Compliance

5.1 Compliance Measurement

The Infosec team will verify compliance to this policy through various methods, including but not limited to, periodic walk-thrus, video monitoring, business tool reports, internal and external audits, and feedback to the policy owner.

5.2 Exceptions

Any exception to the policy must be approved by the Infosec team in advance.

5.3 Non-Compliance

An employee found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

6 Related Standards, Policies and Processes

- Password Policy
- Portable Workstation Encryption Policy



- Wireless Communication policy
- Workstation Configuration Standard

HIPPA 164.210

<http://www.hipaasurvivalguide.com/hipaa-regulations/164-310.php>

About HIPPA

<http://abouthipaa.com/about-hipaa/hipaa-hitech-resources/hipaa-security-final-rule/164-308a1i-administrative-safeguards-standard-security-management-process-5-3-2-2/>

7 Definitions and Terms

None.

8 Revision History

Date of Change	Responsible	Summary of Change
June 2014	SANS Policy Team	Updated and converted to new format.