

Notice of Privacy Practices

HIV/Hepatitis Laboratory and STD Bacteriology Laboratory Massachusetts State Public Health Laboratory

Effective: April 1, 2016

This notice describes how medical information may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. Please review it carefully. If you have any questions about this notice, please contact:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Massachusetts State Public Health Laboratory
HIV/Hepatitis Laboratory and STD Bacteriology Laboratory
305 South Street
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

The Massachusetts State Public Health Laboratory (SPHL) has always taken great care to protect your privacy rights and will continue to do so.

By law, the SPHL must make this notice available, which explains how it uses and discloses your health information, and that the SPHL must follow the terms of this notice.

SPHL reserves the right to change how it uses and shares your health information. These changes will apply to information the SPHL already holds, and any information SPHL receives in the future. The SPHL will post any changes on its website and provide them to anyone upon request.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has a Privacy Office to address privacy issues. If you would like to exercise any of the rights described in this notice, or if you feel that your rights have been violated, contact the DPH Privacy Office in writing at the following address:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Privacy Office
2nd Floor
250 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02108-4619

You may also file a complaint with the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services:

Department of Health and Human Services
Regional Manager, Office for Civil Rights
J.F. Kennedy Federal Building
Room 1875
Boston, MA 02203
Phone: 617-565-1340
FAX: 617-565-3809
TDD: 617-565-1343

The SPHL provides HIV, HCV and STD testing services.

The SPHL collects information about you to provide these services, including the kind of medical service you receive, and the date you receive treatment.

This notice explains:

- When SPHL may use and share your health information; and,
- What your individual rights are regarding your health information.

The SPHL may use or share your health information:

For treatment: the SPHL may share your health information with doctors, nurses and other health care personnel who are involved in providing your health care. For example, the SPHL shares your test result information with your physician or other authorized individual who requested the test, to create and carry out a plan for treatment.

For payment: the SPHL may use or share your health information in order to bill and collect payment for your health care services. For example, the SPHL may share information with other government agencies, with your healthcare provider, or with our billing agent to receive payment.

For health care operations: the SPHL may use or share information in order to better manage its program and activities. For example, the SPHL may use your health information to review the quality and effectiveness of services you receive.

For public health activities: the SPHL must disclose your health information to public health authorities, including other parts of DPH, to track sexually transmitted infections as required or authorized by law.

Other permitted uses and disclosures: the SPHL may use and disclose your health information for the following:

- Research studies that meet all privacy requirements;
- To state and federal health oversight agencies authorized by law to receive this information for necessary purposes, including fraud and abuse investigations and accreditation, or;
- To monitor the quality and effectiveness of the health services provided by the SPHL

Required disclosures: In addition, the SPHL must use and disclose your personal health information:

- When requested by the United States Department of Health and Human Services to make sure your privacy is being protected, and
- When required by law.

Some services, such as billing, are provided to the SPHL by business associates. When these services are contracted, SPHL may disclose your health information to our business associates so they can perform the job we are requesting them to do. To protect your health information, however, SPHL Laboratory requires that its business associates appropriately safeguard your information.

Pursuant changes to the Clinical Laboratory Improvements Amendments (CLIA) of 1988,42 U.S.C. §263a, SPHL has a written procedure associated with patient requests for laboratory results. Based on Massachusetts law, only individuals authorized to request laboratory tests are entitled to receive the results of these tests.

As an indirect treatment provider, we do not disclose test results based on individual authorizations.

The SPHL cannot use or share your health information, except as described above.

You Have the Right:

- To get a list of disclosures. You may ask the SPHL to provide you a list of when and with whom the SPHL has shared your health information with certain exceptions. Your request must be made in writing.
- To receive a paper copy of this notice. You have the right to ask for a paper copy of this notice at any time. To obtain a paper copy please send your written request to:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Massachusetts State Public Health Laboratory
Attention: Dina Caloggero
305 South Street
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130