

MENDOCINO COUNTY POLICY #49	ADOPTION OF COUNTY OF MENDOCINO HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT (HIPAA) CERTIFICATION POLICY
ADOPTED: November 05, 2013	ADOPTED BY: MINUTE ORDER

### **Purpose of this policy**

This policy is intended to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of electronic protected health information, and protected health information. This policy is in full effect for all aspects of the County of Mendocino’s Self-Insured Employee Benefits Plan, including its administration, any member participation, and all directly related health plan activities. This policy will also include all Business Associates that work with the Mendocino County Self-Insured Employee Benefits Plan.

The HIPAA Privacy Rule provides federal protections for individually identifiable health information held by covered entities and their business associates and gives patients an array of rights with respect to that information. At the same time, the Privacy Rule is balanced so that it permits the disclosure of health information needed for patient care and other important purposes.

The Security Rule specifies a series of administrative, physical, and technical safeguards for covered entities and their business associates to use to assure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of electronic protected health information.

The HIPAA Rules apply to **covered entities and business associates**.

Individuals, organizations, and agencies that meet the definition of a **covered entity** under HIPAA must comply with the Rules' requirements to protect the privacy and security of health information and must provide individuals with certain rights with respect to their health information. (**The County of Mendocino is a covered entity**) If a covered entity engages a **business associate** to help it carry out its health care activities and functions, the covered entity must have a written business associate contract or other arrangement with the business associate that establishes specifically what the business associate has been engaged to do and requires the business associate to comply with the Rules’ requirements to protect the privacy and security of protected health information. In addition to these contractual obligations, business associates are directly liable for compliance with certain provisions of the HIPAA Rules.

The certification outlines how the Plan will comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in regards to the Privacy Rule and in accordance with the Patient and Protection Act and Affordable Care Act.

The HIPAA Privacy and Security Policy Training and Compliance Procedures was prepared to ensure that the County of Mendocino Self-Insured Health Plan complies with all current regulations required by the current HIPAA Rules that were amended as part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.