

New HIPAA Privacy Rule Finalized: Key Changes and Compliance Deadlines

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Authors:

Rhonda B. Schechter
Chad N. Eckhardt

On November 16, 2026, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Civil Rights announced changes to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and released a Fact Sheet, which is available here: HIPAA Privacy Rule: Changes to Support Coordinated Care and Individual Engagement and Reduce Regulatory Burdens Final Rule | HHS.gov. The Final Rule was officially published on November 19, 2026, and can be viewed here. As HHS acknowledges in its Executive Summary of the new rule, "regulated entities will need to revise and implement changes to their policies and procedures in response to the modifications in this final rule."

While the modifications to HIPAA are not extensive, they are significant. One of the most important changes is the reduction in the amount of time covered entities have to respond to requests for access to information — it is halved from 30 calendar days to just 15 (though a 30-day extension remains available). Additionally, the Final Rule will require updates to a covered entity's Notice of Privacy Practices and, in some cases, its business associate agreements. Fortunately for providers, many of the modifications will lighten the burden of compliance, such as the removal of the requirement to obtain written acknowledgement that a patient received the Notice of Privacy Practices.

The Final Rule becomes effective 60 days after its official publication in the Federal Register, and regulated entities then have 180 days to become compliant with its provisions. Thus, all HIPAA-covered entities must be compliant by July 17, 2027, absent additional extensions allowed for updating certain business associate agreements. FBT Gibbons' Health Care team is analyzing the new requirements in detail and developing efficient processes to be ready to help make sure HIPAA policies, business associate agreements, and Notices of Privacy Practices are updated appropriately.

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Please contact the authors if you have questions about how these changes to HIPAA may affect your organization or would like our help to ensure you have the right policies and processes in place well before the compliance deadline.

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