

HIPAA FAQ's For Employers

Who can we contact regarding NVA's HIPAA compliance efforts?

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Who can our members contact when they have questions regarding their Personal Health Information (PHI)?

Members may contact NVA's toll-free customer service line at 800.672.7723 for assistance.

What is the current status of NVA implementation of transaction set standards?

NVA fully supports 834 and 837 standard electronic transactions.

Will NVA support encryption protection for e-mail?

Yes. NVA currently supports a solution for encryption of email containing PHI.

What is a covered entity?

A covered entity is a company or business that is required to comply with the administrative simplification provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 and its regulations (HIPAA). Covered entities include providers, health plans, and health care clearing houses.

Is NVA a covered entity?

No. NVA is not a covered entity. It is a business associate of insurance companies and group health plans.

What is a business associate?

A business associate is an entity that performs functions or activities, or provides services, involving the use and/or disclosure of individually identifiable health information (protected health information or PHI) on behalf of a covered entity.

Is NVA a business associate of our vision plan?

If your plan is self-funded, NVA is a business associate of your group health plan because NVA administers the vision plan and pays claims on behalf of the plan. NVA has access and uses the PHI of your employees and their dependents to perform its duties under an administrative services agreement with the plan.

If your plan is insured, NVA is NOT a business associate of your group health plan. Instead, NVA is a business associate of the insurance carrier for your plan because we have access to the PHI of your employees and their dependents on behalf of the insurer. NVA pays claims and administers the plans through a contract that it has entered into with the insurer.

Will NVA be sending a Privacy Notice to our employees?

If your plan is self-funded, NVA can provide you with a sample Privacy Notice to send to your employees. As an employer sponsor of a group health plan, you will probably want to include your other group health plans, such as your medical and dental plans, in the privacy notice. However, if you would like to provide the plan participants with a separate notice for their vision coverage, we would be happy to work with you to develop an appropriate notice.

If your vision plan is an insured plan, the insurance company has provided each of your employees with a copy of their privacy notice. NVA has also received a copy of that notice and will comply with the obligations described in the notice.

What does PHI mean?

PHI means protected health information. PHI is any individually identifiable health information that is created or received by a covered entity. Individually identifiable health information is information that relates to the past, present, or future mental or physical condition of an individual, the provision of services to the individual or the payment for those services. In order to be individually identifiable, the information either must identify the person or be used to identify the person.

How will NVA protect PHI of our employees?

NVA is strongly committed to protecting the private information of your employees and their dependents. We will train our employees, we will implement safeguards to protect the information, we will track certain disclosures of your information, and we will follow all of the requirements of the HIPAA privacy and security regulations.