

# Know Your HIPAA Identifiers

Stay in Compliance — Use this infographic as an ongoing reference to protect a patient's Private Health Information (PHI) and achieve de-identification in accordance with the HIPAA Privacy Rule.



## 1. Names



## 2. Postal Address

All geographical subdivisions smaller than a state, including street address, city, county, precinct, ZIP code, and their equivalent geocodes, except for the initial three digits of a ZIP code, if according to the current publicly available data from the Bureau of the Census: (1) The geographic unit formed by combining all ZIP codes with the same three initial digits contains more than 20,000 people; and (2) The initial three digits of a zip code for all such geographic units containing 20,000 or fewer people is changed to 000



## 3. Dates

All elements of dates (except year) for dates directly related to an individual, including birthdate, admission date, discharge date, date of death; and all ages over 89 and all elements of dates (including year) indicative of such age, except that such ages and elements may be aggregated into a single category of age 90 or older



## 4. Phone Numbers



## 5. Fax Numbers



## 6. E-Mail Addresses

## 7. Social Security Numbers



## 8. Medical Record Numbers



## 9. Health Plan Beneficiary Numbers



## 10. Account Numbers

## 11. Certificate/License Numbers

## 12. Vehicle Identifiers & Serial Numbers

Including license plate numbers

## 13. Device Identifiers & Serial Numbers



## 14. Web URLs (Universal Resource Locators)

## 15. Internet Protocol (IP) Address Numbers



## 16. Biometric Identifiers

Including finger and voice prints



## 17. Full Face Photographic Images & Any Comparable Images

## 18. Any Other Unique Identifying Number, Characteristic, Or Code

Note: This does not mean the unique code assigned by the investigator to code the data.

There are also additional standards and criteria to protect individual's privacy from re-identification. Any code used to replace the identifiers in datasets cannot be derived from any information related to the individual and the master codes, nor can the method to derive the codes be disclosed. For example, a subject's initials cannot be used to code their data because the initials are derived from their name.

Additionally, the researcher must not have actual knowledge that the research subject could be re-identified from the remaining identifiers in the PHI used in the research study. In other words, the information would still be considered identifiable if there was a way to identify the individual even though all of the 18 identifiers were removed.

Visit [HHS.org](https://www.hhs.gov) for more HIPAA information.



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