



05-Social Media

Approved by: William Voss

Review: Annual

Renewed By:

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Revised:

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Social Media

Policy Statement

River City TMS, PLLC recognizes that participating in social networking and other similar Internet opportunities can support workforce members' personal expression, enable providers to have a professional presence online, foster collegiality and camaraderie within the profession, and provide an opportunity to widely disseminate public health messages and other health communication. However, social networks, blogs, and other forms of communication online also create new challenges to the privacy and confidentiality of patient protected health information (PHI).

River City TMS, PLLC will provide workplace standards to reduce risks of breaking the HIPAA Privacy Rule through social media use by its workforce.

Procedure

- **Patient Privacy and Confidentiality** [§164.502](#)

River City TMS, PLLC encourages all workforce members to be cognizant of patient privacy and confidentiality standards that must be maintained in all environments, including online, and to refrain from posting any identifiable patient information online. The following guidelines must be observed:

- Use broad terms only that do not allude to specific medical cases, nor offer information that may be used to infer the identity of an individual.
- Posts should not contain any information that is, or can be interpreted as, PHI, or discloses that an individual received or intends to receive services.
- Responses to individuals' posts in a manner that suggests they sought or received services from you, or your organization, or that seeks to diagnose or describe prognoses, symptoms, or treatment plans publicly is prohibited.
- Prior to making any post two members must evaluate the content, one of which must be a supervisor or compliance officer, to ensure that no inappropriate disclosures are being made.

- **Work-Related and/or Supervisor-Approved**

Social media websites may only be visited for work-related or supervisor-approved purposes. Personal accounts should be kept separate from company accounts.

- **Privacy Settings**

When using the Internet for social networking, workforce members must use privacy settings to safeguard personal information and content to the greatest extent possible. Workforce member are reminded that privacy settings are not absolute and that once on the Internet, content is there permanently.

- **Physician/Patient Relationship Responsibilities** [§164.506](#)

Physicians who interact with patients on the Internet must maintain patient/physician relationship boundaries in accordance with professional ethical guidelines.

- **Training and Enforcement**

River City TMS, PLLC's workforce members will be trained on the established social media guidelines within this policy in an annual training and will be reminded through posted guidelines in the office. Violations involving inappropriate use and disclosure on social media, according to the HIPAA Privacy rule, may result in individual sanctions and penalties for the organization in violation.