



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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Director

Los Angeles County Department of Health Services

<b>Policy &amp; Procedure Title:</b>		Confidentiality of Patient Records	
<b>Category:</b>	300-399 Operation Policy	<b>Policy No.:</b>	361
<b>Originally Issued:</b>	11/24/1975	<b>Update (U)/Revised (R):</b>	09/01/2019
<b>DHS Division/Unit of Origin:</b>	Patient Safety, Risk Management and Compliance		
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<b>Distribution: DHS-wide</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>If not DHS-wide, other distribution:</b>	

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to state the Department's position regarding the confidentiality of patient records and information.

**POLICY:**

The Department considers patient records and information confidential and private in nature. Release of patient records, or other disclosure of patient information shall be made only as permitted by law.

**PROCEDURE:**

A "custodian of records" shall be designated in writing for each County medical facility. The custodian of records shall be directly responsible for the filing, maintenance, and utilization of patient records of the facility. All subpoenas and other requests for release or review of patient records maintained by the facility shall be referred to the custodian of records for appropriate response.

All other requests for disclosure of patient information shall be referred either to the custodian of records or to other facility personnel appointed to respond to such requests.

Custodians of records and other appointed Department personnel charged with responding to such requests shall become familiar with and shall adhere to the procedures and guidelines for lawful disclosure of patient records and information.

Questions concerning the application or interpretation of these procedures or guidelines in a particular case, or concerning a situation not covered by such procedures or

*The mission of the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services is to ensure access to high-quality, patient-centered, cost-effective health care to Los Angeles County residents through direct services at DHS facilities and through collaboration with community and university partners.*

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Department Head/Designee Approval:

guidelines, shall be directed to the County Counsel's office according to established procedures.

**REFERENCE(S)/AUTHORITY:**

California Code, Evidence Code, Section 1561  
Confidentiality of Medical Information Act, California Civil Code Sections 55, et seq.