

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

1 Confidentiality of Data and Information

1.1 Access to Data and Maintaining Confidentiality

- The database with patients' results and identification shall remain at all times locked in the computer with password protection.
- Only authorized users shall have access to patient database and information. Authorization is granted by the lab director.
- Authorized users must have signed the lab's Oath of Confidentiality.
- It is the responsibility of the staff to protect patient's confidentiality. This includes their identification, demographic data, diagnosis, name of test ordered as well as test results.
- Nothing that is learned in this laboratory about any individual's condition should be discussed outside or reported to third parties.

1.2 Release of Data/Results

- Results are mailed to referring physicians and hospital laboratories as indicated on testing requisitions. Results should only be sent on results sheets in a sealed envelope.
- Any phone-in requests for patients' results from physicians are faxed to the physicians' office.
- There is never to be any electronic or web-based release of data/results.
- Results are never to be released directly to patients and/or family members.

1.3 Secondary Use of Data

- Access of data for secondary use must be authorized by the lab director.
- Data used for secondary purposes must be de-identified by removing all patient identification, including name and personal health numbers (PHN). Each patient has a unique identifier.
- It is the responsibility of the lab manager to ensure all data used for secondary purposes has been anonymized, and is identified only with the lab unique ID.

2 Release and Destruction of Data

2.1. Sample Destruction

- Samples with patient identification should only be discarded in the authorized biohazard containers.

2.2. Destruction of Test Requisitions or Results

- All requisitions or results with patient information (including name, PHN, address) should be discarded by shredding.

2.3. Samples Referred to Outside Laboratories for Research Purposes

- Samples referred to external laboratories for research purposes should be anonymized and coded, and the code kept secure.

3 Policy Infringement

Any infringement to the above policies could be cause for immediate dismissal.