

Q

Do I have to tell anyone that I am HIV-positive?

A

In general, you do not have to share your status with anyone, except you **MUST** tell any sexual partners about your HIV-positive status.

An HIV-positive person's responsibilities:

If you are HIV-positive, it is your responsibility to not give the virus to others.

It is against the law to knowingly expose another person to HIV.

You must tell your HIV status to any sexual partners.

How to Get Help

If you need help because you think your privacy rights are being violated, call:

**Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Regional Office**

Voice Phone 404.562.7886

FAX 404.562.7881

TDD 404.562.7884

Mississippi Center for Justice

Jackson Office
601.352.2269

Indianola Office
662.887.6570

Biloxi Office
228.435.7284

Call as soon as you have a concern or question about your rights.

There are deadlines for taking legal action. Waiting too long could mean you lose your rights and are not able to get the help you need.

www.mscenterforjustice.org

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**MISSISSIPPI
CENTER
FOR JUSTICE**

Privacy Rights

For Persons Living with HIV/AIDS

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What kinds of health information does HIPAA protect?

A

Any information that identifies a person's past, present or future medical conditions. Your doctors' offices must also keep your name, address, birth date and social security number private.

Did You Know?

Examples of how doctors must keep your health information private:

Pharmacists must ask other customers in line to stand back a few feet so that they cannot hear what the pharmacist is saying to the customer in line ahead of them.

Doctor's secretaries cannot leave medical files out in the open on their desk where other patients could read them.

Doctors in emergency rooms must talk quietly to a patient so that other people cannot hear about a patient's medical information.

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Are there any laws that protect my privacy?

A

Yes. A federal law called the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) protects your medical information by making sure doctors and other health care providers keep your health information private.

You have the right to keep your HIV status private.

Q

Does my doctor's office have to keep my HIV status private?

A

Yes. In general, your doctor cannot tell your HIV status to anyone, unless you allow your doctor to tell someone else.

BUT –

the doctor does have to report your HIV-positive status to the Mississippi State Department of Health. The Department of Health must also keep your status private.

BUT –

the doctor can share your health information with your health insurance company.

BUT –

the doctor cannot tell your health information to your supervisor or your employer, even if your employer provides you with health insurance.