



STATE OF IOWA

THOMAS J. VILSACK
GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
MARY MINCER HANSEN, RN, PhD
DIRECTOR

SALLY J. PEDERSON
LT. GOVERNOR

HIPAA Privacy Rule and the Release of Medical Information to the Iowa Birth Defects Registry

Recently, the Privacy Rule for the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 became effective. The purpose of this letter is to assure you and your staff that the Privacy Rule permits the release of birth defect and genetic disorder medical information to the Iowa Birth Defects Registry.

Birth defects are reportable conditions in Iowa. The Iowa Birth Defects Registry performs active birth defect surveillance statewide pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 136A and 641 Iowa Administrative Code sections 1.3 and 4.7 and is authorized to review hospital records, clinical charts, physician records, prenatal records and any other information that the Registry deems necessary and appropriate. These provisions of law are not preempted by HIPAA. A hospital, clinic, or health care provider is not required to obtain consent or authorization from a patient or parent prior to releasing this information to the Registry. Enclosed is the Attorney General Office's statement on HIPAA Privacy Rules and the Iowa Birth Defects Registry.

The Registry will continue to observe all applicable federal and state laws on privacy. The program is diligent in upholding the highest confidentiality practices. The Iowa Department of Public Health and the Iowa Birth Defects Registry appreciates your cooperation and ongoing partnership in our efforts to determine the risk factors and causes of birth defects.

If you have any questions, please contact Tonya Diehn at 281-7584 or tdiehn@idph.state.ia.us.

Sincerely,

Mary Mincer Hansen, R.N., PhD
Director

LUCAS STATE OFFICE BUILDING / 321 E. 12TH ST. / DES MOINES, IOWA 50319-0075
DEAF RELAY (HEARING OR SPEECH IMPAIRED) 1-800-735-2942 / INTERNET: [HTTP://WWW.IDPH.STATE.IA.US/](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/)

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE
515-281-5605
FAX/515-281-4958

DIV. OF ADMINISTRATION
515-281-5604
FAX/515-281-4958

DIV. OF COMMUNITY HEALTH
515-281-6535
FAX/515-242-6384

DIV. OF HEALTH PROTECTION & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
515-281-7726
FAX/515-281-4529

DIV. OF HEALTH PROMOTION, PREVENTION & ADDICTIVE BEHAVIORS
515-281-3641
FAX/515-281-4535

DIV. OF TOBACCO USE PREVENTION & CONTROL
515-281-6225
FAX/515-281-6475