

**Q: When working in the Isolation Unit, we can bring paper into the Unit, but we cannot bring it back out. Instead, we place it in a bio-hazard bag to be destroyed, is it OK to do this?**

A: Yes. Although the paper is not going through the shredding process (per our Shred-All policy), it is going through a destruction process. All bio medical waste, which would include any papers placed in a bio-hazard bag/bin is incinerated by our biomedical waste vendor.

**Q: Sometimes when we're working on the clinic floor, bodily fluids (usually blood) may end up on pieces of paper that contain PHI. Should we put these in the Shred-All bin, or should we put them in the bio-hazard bag/bin?**

A: Documents (with or without PHI) that are contaminated with bodily fluids should be disposed of in a bio-hazard bag/bin.

**Q: What should I do when I see that a patient has thrown paper into the trash, especially if it contains PHI?**

A: When you see that a patient has disposed of documents (with or without PHI) in the trashcan, remove them and dispose of them according to the Shred-All or Bio-hazard disposal protocol. Take the time to help the patient understand the risks involved with throwing PHI away rather than destroying it.

**Q: Sometimes in the office I see claims and billing documents that contain Protected Health Information ("PHI"), laying on desks. What is the best practice to protect patient information in the office?**

A: Per NKC's PHI Access, Use, and Disclosure Policy, only workforce members who have a legitimate business need are allowed to access or view PHI. When working with PHI, whether on paper or on a computer, every effort should be made to make sure that the information is secured and not seen or accessible by anyone who doesn't have a business reason for doing so. For electronic PHI, this means locking your screens when you leave your work area; making sure your screens aren't easily visible to others walking by your work area; and, minimizing or changing screen images when someone approaches your work area. For paper PHI, this means not leaving documents containing PHI exposed on your desk and storing all documents in a secured, locked space when not in use.

**Q: I work from home and sometimes need to print documents that may contain PHI. What is our policy on documents and protecting PHI when I'm not in the office? Should I even be printing or bringing any sensitive billing documents home?**

A: It is always preferable to access documents containing PHI, electronically, via NKC's secured network. When that is not possible, paper records may be removed from NKC premises, if it is required for a workforce member's job function. The paper documents should only contain the minimum necessary PHI for the task(s) to be done. The documents should always be secured and accessible only by the employee; and not by individuals who are not NKC workforce members. Documents containing PHI should always remain in the custody of the workforce member and may never be left in a vehicle, flex office, or other temporary location. Once the task(s) are completed, the documents should be securely stored or shredded per our Shred-All policy.

**Q: I walked away from my desk for a few minutes the other day, and my manager commented that I didn't "lock" my computer screen. I was gone for less than 5 minutes; did I really need to lock it?**

A: Yes, you need to lock your screen. Whenever you leave your desk, even for a few seconds, you are required to lock your computer screen. This helps ensure that while you are away from your work area, no one else can access information stored on or accessible from the computer.

How to lock your PC screen:

- Press the Windows button and the L key on your keyboard at the same time
- Or press and hold Ctrl+Alt+Del and then choose "Lock This Computer."
- You can also tap your badge, the Imprivata Reader, to lock the computer.

How to lock your Mac screen:

- Click the account name (which is usually your name) on the right side of the menu bar across the top of the Mac. Then, click Login Window to lock the Mac.
- Press Control + Command + Q to lock the Mac.

To unlock your screen on either device, press any key and then enter your password.

**Q: I sometimes leave my laptop in the office overnight or over the weekend. Is that OK?**

A: You should take your laptop home with you each night and over the weekend. We do understand that sometimes that's not possible. If you must leave your laptop in the office overnight or over the weekend, it should never be left sitting out on your desk or in another unsecured area. It must be stored in a locked, secured area, such as a locking desk or file drawer. Laptops should never be left unattended in public areas and should not be left inside a vehicle at any time.

**Q: I have some confidential NKC documents that I would like to work on using a program I have on my home computer. Am I allowed to email those to my personal email?**

A: No. Workforce members are not allowed to forward NKC email to a third-party email address, including their personal email, or to save email on external servers such as Google, Yahoo, Hotmail, Dropbox, Comcast, etc. All NKC confidential information is the property of NKC, and all employees are expected to safeguard that confidentiality.

**Q: Where can I find information on policies?**

A: Great question! Policy Manager is our policy source. You can access it by clicking on the "Policy Manager" link on the home page of K-Net. If you need help finding something, please reach out to the Legal & Compliance department, we're happy to help. Please remember, all employees are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with all applicable NKC policies and procedures.