



STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF  
**PUBLIC HEALTH**

Thomas M. Miller, M.D.  
Acting State Health Officer

November 3, 2015

Dear Health Care Providers/Notifiable Disease Reporters/Business Owners and Managers:

Subject: HIPAA and Notifiable Disease Reports and Investigations

Pursuant to the Alabama Notifiable Disease Act, each physician, dentist, nurse, medical examiner, hospital administrator, nursing home administrator, laboratory director, school principal, and day care center director is required to report cases or suspected cases of notifiable diseases and health conditions to the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH). *See § 22-11A-2, Ala. Code 1975.* ADPH is required to investigate reports of notifiable diseases or health conditions, a public health activity as described by 45 CFR §164.512(b), by Title 22, Chapter 10 and § 22-2-2(2), *Ala. Code 1975.* Under 22-2-2(2), *Ala. Code 1975,* ADPH is authorized "to inspect public places such as schools, hospitals, jails, churches, public halls, prisons, markets, or houses, railroad depots, railroad, industrial and manufacturing establishments, offices, stores, banks, club houses, hotels, residences and other places of like character, and whenever insanitary conditions in any of these places, institutions or establishments or conditions prejudicial to health, or likely to become so, are found, proper steps shall be taken by the proper authorities to have such conditions corrected or abated."

ADPH is a public health authority as defined by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), *Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information; Final Rule (Privacy Rule).* 45 CFR §164.501. The Federal HIPAA Privacy Rule provides that covered entities (notifiable disease reporters) may disclose, without individual authorization, protected health information (PHI) to public health authorities for certain public health activities. 45 CFR §164.512(b). Because ADPH is a public health authority authorized by law to collect or receive PHI for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease, including, but not limited to, public health surveillance, investigations, and interventions, **PHI may be disclosed to ADPH without authorization of the individual.**

Please contact me with any questions regarding HIPAA privacy regulations by calling me at (334) 206-2648 or emailing me at [Samarria.Dunson@adph.state.al.us](mailto:Samarria.Dunson@adph.state.al.us).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samarria Dunson".

Samarria M. Dunson  
Director, Office of Compliance and Ethics  
Privacy Officer