

§ 8-2001. Examination of records.

In this Section, "health care facility" or "facility" means a public or private hospital, ambulatory surgical treatment center, nursing home, independent practice association, or physician hospital organization, or any other entity where health care services are provided to any person. The term does not include an organizational structure whose records are subject to Section 8- 2003.

Every private and public health care facility shall, upon the request of any patient who has been treated in such health care facility, or any person, entity, or organization presenting a valid authorization for the release of records signed by the patient or the patient's legally authorized representative, permit the patient, his or her physician, authorized attorney, or any person, entity, or organization presenting a valid authorization for the release of records signed by the patient or the patient's legally authorized representative to examine the health care facility patient care records, including but not limited to the history, bedside notes, charts, pictures and plates, kept in connection with the treatment of such patient, and permit copies of such records to be made by him or her or his or her physician or authorized attorney. A request for copies of the records shall be in writing and shall be delivered to the administrator or manager of such health care facility. The health care facility shall be reimbursed by the person requesting copies of records at the time of such copying for all reasonable expenses, including the costs of independent copy service companies, incurred by the health care facility in connection with such copying not to exceed a \$20 handling charge for processing the request for copies, and 75 cents per page for the first through 25th pages, 50 cents per page for the 26th through 50th pages, and 25 cents per page for all pages in excess of 50 (except that the charge shall not exceed \$1.25 per page for any copies made from microfiche or microfilm), and actual shipping costs. These rates shall be automatically adjusted as set forth in Section 8-2006. The health care facility may, however, charge for the reasonable cost of all duplication of record material or information that cannot routinely be copied or duplicated on a standard commercial photocopy machine such as x-ray films or pictures.

The requirements of this Section shall be satisfied within 30 days of the receipt of a written request by a patient or by his or her legally authorized representative, physician, authorized attorney, or any person, entity, or organization presenting a valid authorization for the release of records signed by the patient or the patient's legally authorized representative. If the health care facility needs more time to comply with the request, then within 30 days after receiving the request, the facility must provide the requesting party with a written statement of the reasons for the delay and the date by which the requested information will be provided. In any event, the facility must provide the requested information no later than 60 days after receiving the request.

A health care facility must provide the public with at least 30 days prior notice of the closure of the facility. The notice must include an explanation of how copies of the facility's records may be accessed by patients. The notice may be given by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the area in which the health care facility is located.

Failure to comply with the time limit requirement of this Section shall subject the denying party to expenses and reasonable attorneys' fees incurred in connection with any court ordered enforcement of the provisions of this Section.