



Safeguarding Privacy and Confidentiality

Protecting everyone's privacy and maintaining confidentiality is a non-negotiable standard of MLT practice.

Healthcare professionals are **responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of patient's personal health information (PHI)**. Failure to do so, intentionally or not, diminishes trust, harms patients, and is considered a **privacy breach**. Understanding what a privacy breach is, its consequences, and how to prevent them is **essential to safe and ethical practice**.



What is a
**Circle of
Care?**

The **Circle of Care** consists of various professionals who provide a service to a patient and may require access to PHI to do so. MLTs access PHI as part of the patient's care team and need the information to perform duties such as conducting lab tests, verifying results, or sharing findings with an authorized healthcare professional.

MLTs must only access PHI necessary to carry out their professional duties. There is no tolerance for Registrants who commit privacy breaches.

Key Terms: Stay Informed



Privacy: an individual's right to control the collection, use, and disclosure of their PHI.



Confidentiality: the protection and prevention of sharing PHI without consent.



Breach: any instance of unauthorized access, use, or disclosure of PHI.



Examples of Privacy Breaches:

- **Accessing or Discussing** health records or PHI of an individual when you are outside of their circle of care.
- **Viewing** a coworker's email or other PHI without authorization.
- **Taking photos** in the lab where PHI is visible.
- **Updating or editing** your own patient records or PHI through improper channels.

What Are The Consequences?



Breaching privacy is an act of Professional Misconduct

The consequences of a breach may include remediation, mandatory training, a formal caution, or even suspension. The Registrant may also be responsible for paying for fees associated with investigating or remediation related to a privacy breach.

What Should You Do?

Report breaches promptly to your **organization** and **the CMLTO**.

Reporting these occurrences protects patients and coworkers, allows quick correction, and demonstrates professionalism and accountability.

Privacy Resources

Mandatory Report form for
Employers

Submit an **Online Complaint Form**
about a potential privacy breach

CMLTO
Privacy Policy

CMLTO
Practice Resources