



HEALTHCARE FACILITY CLOSURE CHECKLIST

When preparing for the closure of a medical facility or any application where Protected Health Information (PHI) is stored, there are a number of steps you can take to reduce costs, minimize risk, and improve efficiency. Your basic goal is to understand the volume, nature, and retention requirements for your records – with this information, you can achieve a very efficient and cost-effective plan with a Custodial Records provider. Below we list four items to ensure you complete before finalizing the closure of your facility. If you have any questions on how to implement these steps, contact Cariend and one of our experts can walk you through the process.

.....

- **Take measure of all existing records, including any that may reside in offsite storage.**
This includes paper, film, electronic, medical, and non-medical records, and there are specific laws that apply differently to each record type. Obtain legal guidance from sources such as your healthcare attorney, malpractice insurer, or state medical board for the retention requirements of your records, as these vary from state to state. For example, while many states may have one basic retention figure for general medical records, there are often exceptions with different retention for records such as pediatric, mammography, and pathology. Retention for non-medical records will be determined by the business and financial laws at the Federal or State level.
-

- **Estimate the volume of each record type with different retention requirements, if available.**
The number of files alone does not provide enough information – you will need to have some idea of the physical space the records occupy. Measuring the linear feet of shelves or drawers occupied by the records is a great way to capture the space requirements. If the records are already in boxes, the dimensions and number of boxes is also an accurate measure. If possible, estimate the percentage of records that are adult, pediatric, and business to help Cariend create an accurate proposal.

***A special note about electronic records:** When any business is ceasing operations, any ties to proprietary systems should be cut. There are a variety of ways to achieve this. In some cases, your system vendor can perform a one-time export or conversion of the data to a generic format (PDF, CSV, HTML, etc.) This approach eliminates any ongoing costs for licensing, hosting, and support from the system vendor over the required retention period of the records. Risk is also minimized in this strategy, as an electronic system in use today could become disabled, if the provider goes out of business or is acquired before the retention period of your records is met. Cariend has the resources and expertise to work with your electronic system provider and ensure a smooth transition of your data. For system vendors unable to export or convert your data, Cariend has strategic partnerships with data conversion specialists that we seamlessly engage to support your needs.*

HEALTHCARE FACILITY **CLOSURE CHECKLIST**

○ Prepare your notification.

Every state has different requirements for the content and the methods of distribution for notification of closing healthcare facilities. Contact your healthcare attorney, malpractice insurer, or state medical board to understand the lead time required for notification, the information that must be included in the notice (which usually includes much more than just the location where records will be stored), and the valid methods for publishing the notice (mail, signage, phone numbers, social media, etc.) When you choose Cariend as your Custodial Records provider, we will supply you with the dedicated contact information of our ROI support team, so you can include that in your closing notifications. This will enable you to walk away immediately, as all records requests will be handled directly by Cariend.

○ Protect yourself and your patients.

Cariend will provide you with a Business Associate Agreement aligned with the current HIPAA laws to ensure your records and the ROI process will be handled completely within the HIPAA requirements. Cariend does not charge you or your patients for copies of records. This approach eliminates calls to you from angry former patients and protects you from fines and penalties that could arise from signing a contract with a vendor that violates the laws by charging patients incorrectly. Recent class-action litigation (see the US District Court Case: Ciox vs. Azar) and further guidance from the US Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) have made this a very important issue.

LEARN MORE ABOUT **CARIEND:**



Your moment begins now. To get started with the closure process, call Cariend today at **855.516.0611** or visit us online at **CARIEND.COM**.

CARIEND