LifeSize Healthcare Solutions and HIPAA Compliance

"Are LifeSize video conference solutions HIPAA compliant?"

It's a common question. The short answer is: Products and technology are not HIPAA compliant, organizations are. However, LifeSize video conference solutions can help healthcare organizations maintain HIPAA compliance. Read on to discover how.

What is HIPAA?

HIPAA stands for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act and governs the documentation and dissemination of all patients' healthcare information by medical providers, insurance companies, and certain third parties such as billing companies and clearing houses (Covered Entities). HIPAA rules require that Covered Entities and their Business Associates apply appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to ensure the privacy of Protected Health Information (PHI). PHI is information that identifies who the health-related information belongs to.

HIPAA includes both the Privacy Rule and the Security Rule. The Privacy Rule, a Federal law, gives individuals rights over their health information and sets rules and limits on who can look at and receive it. The Privacy Rule applies to all forms of individuals' PHI, whether electronic, written, or oral. The Security Rule, a Federal law that protects health information in electronic form, requires entities covered by HIPAA to ensure that ***electronic*** PHI (ePHI) is secure.

The Privacy and Security Rules focus on information safeguards and require Covered Entities to implement the reasonable and appropriate means to secure and protect health data.

HIPAA compliance

There is no governing agency, commission or standards body that certifies HIPAA compliance. It is up to the Covered Entity or Business Associate to determine and maintain its own compliance with the HIPAA Privacy and Security rules. One way Covered Entities can maintain HIPAA compliance is by purchasing and implementing products and technologies that don't compromise compliance with their own internal policies.

LifeSize and HIPAA compliance

The technical safeguards designed into LifeSize video conferencing products are where LifeSize can aid Covered Entities in maintaining HIPAA compliance. For example, LifeSize video conferencing products ***support AES encryption*** of data streams (both video and audio). This is standards-based H.235 encryption so it is interoperable with systems that follow this standard. Our products also include ***password protection*** in the user preference and administrator preference menus. In addition, we provide a mechanism to ***disable system auto answer***, thus thwarting attempts at hijacking the system and calling via the directory another system where a patient exam is taking place.

LifeSize is pleased to provide you this HIPAA compliance explanation. Please contact your LifeSize sales representative if you have any questions.

NOTE: The efficacy of some safeguards is dependent on human behavior; meaning, a user in a Covered Entity must invoke the protections and prevent overrides. A user must also not share passwords or write passwords down and leave the paper where someone else might find it.

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