



**Office of Research and Sponsored Programs**  
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## **Application Definitions**

**Identifiable data or records** contain information that reveals or can likely be associated with the identity of the person or persons to whom the data or records pertain. Research data or records with direct identifiers removed, but which retain indirect identifiers, are still considered identifiable.

**Protected Health Information (PHI)** means individually identifiable health information created or received by a health care provider, health plan, or health care clearinghouse that is transmitted or maintained in any form or medium.

**Direct identifiers** in research data or records include names; postal address information (other than town or city, state and zip code); telephone numbers; fax numbers; electronic mail addresses; social security numbers; medical record numbers; health plan beneficiary numbers; account numbers; certificate/license numbers; vehicle identifiers and serial numbers, including license plate numbers; device identifiers and serial numbers; web universal resource locators (URLs); internet protocol (IP) address numbers; biometric identifiers, including finger and voice prints; and full face photographic images and any comparable images.

**Indirect identifiers** in research data or records include all geographic identifiers smaller than a State, including street address, city, county, precinct, zip code, and their equivalent geocodes, except for the initial three digits of a zip code; all elements of dates (except year) for dates directly related to an individual, including birth date, admission date, discharge date, date of death; and all ages over 89 and all elements of dates (including year) indicative of such age, except that such age and elements may be aggregated into a single category of age 90 or older.

**De-identified records** mean that all direct and indirect identifiers have been removed from individual level records. De-identified records are not considered PHI or identifiable personal information. Public use data sets are comprised of de-identified records.

**Minimal Risk** means that the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the IRB office at (936) 294-4875.

Sincerely,

Donna Desforjes  
IRB Chair, PHSC  
PHSC-IRB