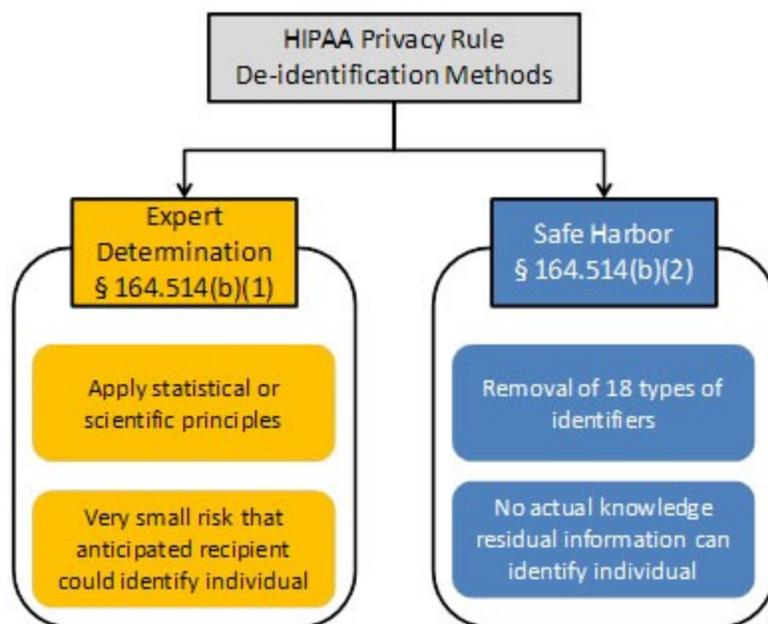


§164.514. Other requirements relating to uses and disclosures of protected health information

Health information that does not identify an individual and with respect to which there is no reasonable basis to believe that the information can be used to identify an individual is not individually identifiable health information.

Sections 164.514(b) and (c) of the Privacy Rule contain the implementation specifications that a covered entity must follow to meet the de-identification standard. As summarized in the figure below, the Privacy Rule provides two methods by which health information can be designated as de-identified:



Two methods to [achieve de-identification \(link is external\)](#) in accordance with the HIPAA Privacy Rule

Satisfying either method will demonstrate that a covered entity has met the standard in Section 164.514(a). De-identified health information created following these methods is no longer protected by the Privacy Rule because it does not fall within the definition of PHI.

Expert Determination

A covered entity may determine that health information is not individually identifiable health information only if:

A person with appropriate knowledge of and experience with generally accepted statistical and scientific principles and methods for rendering information not individually identifiable:

(i) Applying such principles and methods, determines that the risk is very small that the information could be used, alone or in combination with other reasonably available information, by an anticipated recipient to identify an individual who is a subject of the information; and

(ii) Documents the methods and results of the analysis that justify such determination

Safe Harbor

The following identifiers of the individual or of relatives, employers or household members of the individual are removed:

1. Names

2. All geographic subdivisions smaller than a state, including street address, city, county, precinct, ZIP code, and their equivalent geocodes, except for the initial three digits of the ZIP code if, according to the current publicly available data from the Bureau of the Census:

(a) The geographic unit formed by combining all ZIP codes with the same three initial digits contains more than 20,000 people; and

(b) The initial three digits of a ZIP code for all such geographic units containing 20,000 or fewer people is changed to 000

3. All elements of dates (except year) for dates that are directly related to an individual, including birth date, admission date, discharge date, death date, and all ages over 89 and all elements of dates (including year) indicative of such age, except that such ages and elements may be aggregated into a single category of age 90 or older

4. Telephone numbers

5. Vehicle identifiers and serial numbers, including license plate numbers

6. Fax numbers

7. Device identifiers and serial numbers

8. Email addresses

9. Web Universal Resource Locators (URLs)

10. Social Security numbers

11. Internet Protocol (IP) addresses

12. Medical record numbers

13. Biometric identifiers, including finger and voice prints
14. Health plan beneficiary numbers
15. Full-face photographs and any comparable images
16. Account numbers
17. Any other unique identifying number, characteristic or code
18. Certificate/license numbers