



HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

CLINICAL MANUAL

2026-2027

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Introduction

This clinical manual has been prepared for the use of Health Information Management students at Alvin College. The purpose is to provide:

1. an organized source of general information about the Professional Practice Experience (PPE).
2. the student with a source of reference for PPE rules and procedures.
3. Other helpful resources for the program.

CAHIIM Accreditation

The Health Information Management program Accreditor is the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). The College's accreditation for Associate Degree in Health Information Management has been reaffirmed through 2029-2030.



Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management (CAHIIM)

200 East Randolph Street, Suite 5100
Chicago, IL, 60601
(312) 235- 3255; info@cahiim.org.

Disclaimer

Clinical Orientation is mandatory every semester. This manual must be reviewed to address specific examples of the requirements that are included. Not every situation can be anticipated; students are required to use professional judgment and critical thinking when it comes to clinical rotations. If any infraction occurs that is deemed unprofessional, unsafe, unethical, immoral, insubordinate, or does not follow the code of ethics for HIM professionals, students will be held accountable. Each student will complete a Clinical Manual Acknowledgement during new student orientation.

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Clinical Orientation

An orientation between the student, the Clinical Coordinator and, if available, the Site Supervisor (preceptor), will be held at the beginning of each clinical course to discuss expectations of the PPE. Students are required to know the contents and adhere to all rules and procedures. Students should be able to provide preceptors with student expectations for the semester. Students will be evaluated at their clinical sites and participate in a weekly check-in meeting or submit weekly summary reports via the LMS system with the Clinical Coordinator to discuss their progress or concerns.

Professional Practice Experience (PPE)/ Clinical

Participating in PPEs is a way to strengthen the academic experience for students. The PPE is designed to provide students with HIM work experience that focuses on skill-building and practical application of theory at approved affiliation sites. Affiliation sites are organizations that agree to take HIM students for a **non-paid** extended period to aid the student in blending classroom theory with practical applications.

The AAS program offers one professional practice experience (PPE) for students admitted to the AAS degree program and the Level II Coding Certificate Program. This PPE is 128 hours and is offered during the fall semester before completion of the AAS degree or coding certification program. The completion of the hours worked is decided between the student and the facility. Before beginning any PPE, the Clinical Coordinator will meet with all students to discuss in detail the requirements and expectations.

Clinicals must be **unpaid** educational experiences; therefore, students cannot receive monetary compensation for duties performed. Clinical experiences can be completed at the student's place of employment, but the work should occur in a department other than the one employing the student. Examples include cancer registry, quality and risk management, admissions, patient financial services, compliance or privacy office, and so forth. This allows the student convenience while being exposed to new aspects of the HIM work environment. This is also dependent upon an affiliation agreement between the facility and Alvin College.

Alvin College and the PPE facility require students to undergo a physical examination before beginning the professional practice experience. The physical examination includes drug screening; a TB test; and hepatitis B, MMR, varicella, TDAP, and influenza immunization. Students are required to provide evidence of insurance coverage before the PPE. The costs associated with the criminal background check and/or physical examination are the student's responsibility.

PPE Objectives

1. Provide experiences for health information management students in technical functions of Health Information covered in 1st-year professional courses.
2. Provide an opportunity for students to transfer theory into practice under close supervision by experienced practitioners.
3. Provide students with an opportunity to work with health information professionals and hospital/facility personnel under professional supervision.
4. Provide health information students with an opportunity to observe the working relationships of health information practitioners and department staff of the hospital/facility administrators and medical staff.
5. Provide an opportunity for students to observe and participate in the total technical practices for health information management systems.
6. Provide experience of sufficient duration to provide students ample opportunity to gain an appreciation of the importance of continuity of care.

Clinical Responsibilities and Expectations

1. You are a student working to gain practical knowledge and you are a guest in the hospital/facility; show interest and accuracy. Demonstrate initiative and complete activities as assigned.
2. Show courtesy and respect to your department manager, physicians you may come in contact with, and fellow employees.
3. You are to follow all hospital/facility policies as if you were an employee.
4. Transportation to and from the PPE site is the responsibility of the student.
5. You are to adhere to the facility's dress code- dress in suitable business casual or office attire. This also includes an identification badge.

6. Students are to perform the tasks (if available) that are listed in the PPE syllabus specific for each course and semester.
7. Students are to document all PPE experiences in an activities log provided in the course syllabus.
8. Absenteeism, tardiness, or asking to leave early are considered unprofessional traits. If you are unable to work on a specific day, it is your responsibility to notify the PPE site manager and clinical coordinator and make up the missed time. If you are going to be late, contact the PPE site manager with an expected arrival time.
9. Texting and making personal phone calls should be reserved for breaks and lunchtime. Refrain from checking personal email and logging into social networking websites.
10. Utilize professional communication. You should contact the PPE site manager before the PPE start date to make introductions, obtain driving/parking information, and ask questions related to appropriate dress attire.
11. Students should act under the instruction of the site supervisor/mentor and understand that the student is not an employee of the host facility.

Clinical Failure

Students who do not pass clinical will NOT progress in the program. Once the clinical grade is checked and verified, it is final. If a student wishes to protest a grade they should follow the current process stated in the Alvin College Student Handbook. If a student wants to continue in the program, they must sit out until that course is offered again to successfully repeat that clinical course.

Course Syllabus

A HITT 2260 course syllabus is provided to each student enrolled in HITT 2260. The syllabus provides information about assignments and hour requirements associated with the PPE. The Clinical Coordinator will meet with the students to discuss these requirements before the start of the PPE. All students must submit their weekly work experience summary and work hours to their Blackboard course. Upon completion of the 128 hours, each student is required to submit a presentation of their PPE experience for grading. PPE grades are dependent upon completion of PPE hours, weekly summary submissions, site supervisor and clinical coordinator evaluation, and student PPE project presentation. The HIM Clinical Coordinator will review the syllabus with the students prior to the start of the PPE.

HIPAA Requirements and Confidentiality Statement

As a student in the Alvin College HIM program, you will have access to confidential information during your clinical experience. You may have access to some or all confidential information during your clinical rotation.

Confidential information is protected by federal and state laws. In particular, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) addresses issues of privacy and security of protected health information of patients. As a student, you are required to comply with the policies and laws governing the confidentiality of patient information. Any violation of the laws in place to protect patient information will subject the student to discipline, which might include, but are not limited to, dismissal from the clinical site, the program, and legal liability.

Background Information can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services website.

Purpose: To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the health care system, the [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 \(HIPAA\)](#), Public Law 104-191, included Administrative Simplification provisions that required HHS to adopt national standards for electronic health care transactions and code sets, unique health identifiers, and security. At the same time, Congress recognized that advances in electronic technology could erode the privacy of health information. Consequently,

Congress incorporated HIPAA provisions that mandated the adoption of Federal privacy protections for individually identifiable health information.

All students, staff, and faculty are trained, according to HIPAA privacy standards, on how to properly safeguard PHI (Protected Health Information).

What Information is protected?

Protected Health Information. The Privacy Rule protects all "*individually identifiable health information*" held or transmitted by a covered entity or its business associate, in any form or media, whether electronic, paper or oral. The Privacy Rule calls this information "protected health information (PHI)."¹² "Individually identifiable health information" is information, including demographic data, that relates to:

the individual's past, present or future physical or mental health or condition, the provision of health care to the individual, or the past, present, or future payment for the provision of health care to the individual, and that identifies the individual or for which there is a reasonable basis to believe it can be used to identify the individual.¹³ Individually identifiable health information includes many common identifiers (e.g., name, address, birth date, Social Security Number). Additional information could be medical record number, room number, name of the facility, physician name, caregiver information, date of exam, or dates of service. The NIH National Institute of Health has further defined demographic information in more detail, which is provided to students before clinical rotations.

Penalties by Law

Civil Money Penalties: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) may impose a penalty on a covered entity for a failure to comply with a requirement of the Privacy Rule. Penalties will vary significantly depending on factors such as the date of the violation, whether the covered entity knew or should have known of the failure to comply, or whether the covered entity's failure to comply was due to willful neglect. Penalties may not exceed a calendar year cap for multiple violations of the same requirement. Penalty amount \$100 to \$50,000 per violation or more or \$1,500,000 calendar year cap.

Criminal Penalties: A person who knowingly obtains or discloses individually identifiable health information in violation of the Privacy Rule may face a criminal penalty of up to \$50,000 and up to one-year imprisonment. The criminal penalties increase to \$100,000 and up to five years' imprisonment if the wrongful conduct involves false pretenses, and to \$250,000 and up to 10 years' imprisonment if the wrongful conduct involves the intent to sell, transfer, or use identifiable health information for commercial advantage, personal gain or malicious harm. The Department of Justice is responsible for criminal prosecutions.

For more information on HIPAA:

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/laws-regulations/index.html>

Training videos are available at the following site:

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/training/index.html>

Health and Illness

Students are responsible for their health and the expenses of healthcare. Personal health insurance is required before entering the PPE. Students must provide proof of health insurance coverage. Injuries incurred while on campus or in the clinical area are not covered by the College's or Hospital's insurance.

Students with potentially communicable conditions; i.e., upper respiratory diseases, infected wounds, etc., should notify their instructor before the PPE assignment.

Any student who has contracted a communicable disease or has required hospitalization must present a signed physician's release upon return to PPE assignment.

Should emergency care be necessary when the student is in the clinical setting, the student will be provided with emergency care at the clinical affiliate to which they are assigned. This care is provided by the agreement between Alvin College and the clinical affiliate. The student will be charged for this care and for any follow-up care that may be required.

Liability and Health Insurance

All students are required to purchase liability insurance. Arrangements for purchase will be provided by the College and the fee is included in the tuition statement. The liability insurance is a group policy and is renewed each fall. Alvin College will not cover students while working for compensation.

Alvin College does not participate in a group student insurance plan. However, student health insurance is available for purchase through private outside companies. Brochures are available in the Admissions and Registrar's Office and Advising areas or by emailing vpofstudentservices@alvincollege.edu.

Policy for Drug Screening

Definitions:

- **Positive Drug Test:** A positive drug test means a medically acceptable drug test, approved by Alvin College, the results of which indicate the use of illegal drugs.
- **Illegal Drugs:** Illegal drugs include those drugs made illegal to possess, consume, or sell by Texas and Federal statutes. An illegal drug also includes those drugs taken by an individual which **exceed the prescribed limits of a lawful prescription or the taking of a prescription drug without a valid prescription.**

Drug screening is conducted on all student applicants. A non-negative drug screen will bar acceptance to the program for a minimum of 12 months. The results of the drug screen are generally accepted for the duration of the student's uninterrupted enrollment in the program unless allegations are made to support a reasonable cause that the student is not free of illegal drug use; with reasonable cause, the student may be required to submit to further drug screening at his/her own expense. The student is required to complete a release directing the company/agency conducting the drug screen test to send the results directly to the Program Director.

The results reported by the company/agency conducting the drug screen are final unless the student with a non-negative drug screen, within ten days of learning of the non-negative drug screen, requests a review of the results from the company/agency who originally administered the drug screen. Once the company/agency reports its review finding, the results are final and not appealable. When the College determines that a student has a non-negative drug screen, the student is not allowed to attend any clinical facility/rotation for a minimum of twelve months, which may affect his/her readmission to the program. The student with a non-negative drug screen is required to withdraw from the clinical course and HIM. Before returning to the program, the student must re-apply and be accepted to the program (including re-testing), have a negative drug screen, and provide satisfactory documentation to the college of successful drug counseling and treatment, all at the expense of the student. When a student with a non-negative drug screen is accepted back into the program, he/she will be subjected to unannounced random drug screening at their expense.

Clinical Immunizations and Document Tracker

Document Tracker

In addition to the criminal background check, before the start of your PPE, all students are required to upload their personal clinical documentation to Complio. Students must be aware of expiring documentation (ie: yearly TB and Flu). Required Clinical Documents for clearance at most PPE sites include:

1. Completed physical form

2. Proof of immunizations
3. Criminal background check
4. Drug screen letter from HIM program – results are confidential but are available upon request
5. Current proof of personal medical insurance (renew insurance card and upload before expiration date)

Each of the items listed above will be maintained on the Complio Portal and are available upon request by any clinical site when proof of documentation is required. Failure to complete the document tracker on time and maintain updated clinical requirements may result in removal from the clinical site, thus incurring an unexcused clinical absence. The cost associated with Complio is the student's responsibility.

Immunizations

To enter and continue in the HIM program, immunizations and tests may be required by PPE affiliates and are recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC):

Hepatitis B

- Submit proof of Hepatitis B immunization **AND** positive titer.
- Make sure to get the correct Hep B titer drawn. It should be a “Hepatitis B surface antibody” test (abbreviated as “anti-HBs” or “HBsAb”). Do not get a “surface antigen” test or any other Hepatitis test.
- Clinical sites set a 5-year time limit on the Hep B titer, and they require that it remain current throughout the entire semester. If the titer expires before the end of the semester, you must turn in proof of a new titer.
- If you recently finished taking the Hep B series, you must wait at least 2 months after the last shot before getting the titer drawn; otherwise, it may be incorrect.
- If your Hep B titer is negative (meaning you are not immune), you must repeat the entire Hep B series. After that, you are done and you will not have to get another titer. It is recommended that you get the new “heplisav” type of Hep B immunization (two shots one month apart and you are done).

Varicella

- Either submit a report of a blood test that states whether you are immune to varicella (called “varicella IgG” titer); or submit proof of two varicella immunizations spaced at least 28 days apart.
- Childhood varicella immunizations are acceptable.
- If varicella titer is negative (meaning you are not immune), submit proof of two varicella immunizations spaced at least 28 days apart **after the titer**. You will not have to repeat the titer after immunization.

MMR (Measles, Mumps, rubella)

- Either submit a report of blood test that states whether you are immune to measles (rubeola)/mumps/rubella (called “MMR IgG” titer); or submit proof of two MMR immunizations spaced at least 28 days apart.
- Childhood MMR immunizations are acceptable.
- If any component of the MMR titer is negative (meaning you are not immune), submit proof of two MMR immunizations spaced at least 28 days apart **after the titer**. You will not have to repeat the titer after immunization.

TDaP (Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis)

- Submit proof of one TDaP immunization administered to you as an adult (on or after your 18th birthday)
- Childhood TDaP immunization is NOT acceptable.

- If your adult TDaP is more than 10 years old, submit proof of a booster in addition to the proof of immunization.
- There is a 10-year time limit on TDaP or booster. It must be current throughout the entire semester; if it expires before the end of the semester, you must turn in proof of booster before the beginning of the semester.

Flu

- Flu season is from Fall through Spring.
- Submit proof of flu shot
- All students will get the flu shot in September of their second year.
- Flu documentation must show the name of the facility or healthcare provider where it was obtained. This is required by clinical affiliates.

Tuberculosis Screen

- Either submit a report of a TB screen (PPD, quantiferon, or T-spot) stating negative results;
- Or if you have a history of positive TB screen, submit a report of chest x-ray showing no evidence of active lung disease.
- TB screen is valid for one year. A chest x-ray is good for 5 years.
- TB screen or CXR must be current throughout the entire semester; otherwise, it must be repeated before the beginning of the semester.
- **NOTE: CXR is ONLY for those with a history of positive TB screen or history of tuberculosis disease. ALL others must do a TB screen.**

Meningitis

- DO NOT turn in to HIM department.
- Submit to the Admissions office (it is an Alvin College requirement)
- Any questions regarding meningitis immunization should be directed to Admissions: 281-756-3531.

Social Networking Sites

The HIM Department at Alvin College recognizes that social networking websites are used as a means of communication. Future employers often review these network sites when considering potential candidates for employment. No privatization measure is perfect. Information can "live on" beyond its removal from the original website and continue to circulate in other venues. In your professional role do not:

- Present the personal health information of other individuals. Removing the individual's name does not constitute proper de-identification of protected health information. Including data such as age, gender, race, diagnosis, date of the evaluation, or type of treatment or using a highly specific medical photograph may still allow the reader to recognize the identity of a specific individual.
- Present yourself as an official representative or spokesperson for the Alvin College HIM Department.
- Utilize websites and/or applications in a manner that reflects your PPE commitments.

Discipline Plan

Alvin College HIM Program will abide by Board Policy regarding discipline. All Alvin College Board Policies can be found at <https://pol.tasb.org/home/index/214>. Discipline will be handled by the Dean of Student Services in conjunction with HIM faculty and directors after appropriate interviews, documentation, and investigations are reviewed.



HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Clinical Manual Acknowledgement
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I have received, read, understand, and agree to the rules and requirements within the Alvin College Health Information Management Program Student Clinical Manual. I understand all expenses associated with this PPE are fully my responsibility.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Time



HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Health Insurance Portability and Alvin Accountability Act (HIPAA) Confidentiality Statement

I understand that information about the Clinical Affiliations with Alvin College, including patients, employees, or suppliers is confidential, and that I will not discuss patient information with anyone other than my preceptor and/or the hospital staff directly involved in the patient's care. I understand that the results of HIV testing of patients and employees will be known to certain physicians and direct caregivers and I will keep this information in the strictest of confidence. When in doubt as to whether certain information is or is not confidential, prudence dictates that no disclosure be provided without first clearly establishing that such disclosure has been authorized by the department manager.

The medical record is a confidential, legal document and, as such, all information contained therein or disclosed to me shall be treated as confidential and not discussed or repeated without authorization from the patient or responsible party. I understand that violations of the confidential nature of the medical record, the Release of Information policy of the affiliate, or the security regulations of the Medical Records Department may result in either civil or criminal sanction(s). Civil penalties are fines of up to \$100 for each violation for each requirement per individual. Criminal penalties for "wrongful disclosure" can include not only large fines but also jail time. The criminal penalties increase as the seriousness of the offense increases. These penalties can be as high as \$250,000 and prison sentences of up to 10 years. Knowingly releasing patient information can result in a one-year jail sentence and up to a \$150,000 fine. Releasing patient information with harmful intent, or selling the information, can lead to a 10-year jail sentence and a \$250,000 fine.

My signature below indicates that I have been informed of the HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) regulations and acknowledge the consequences of violation of those regulations.

Print Student Name:

Student Signature:

Date:

Clinical Coordinator Signature:
