

Trafficking Medical Records

How It Happens, in General

Organized criminals buy or steal protected health information because it is very valuable and can be reused for fraud and identity theft. Records are commonly monetized after data breaches at hospitals or clinics, when insiders sell access, or when stolen files are packaged and listed on dark web markets.

The HIPAA Journal

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PubMed Central

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How Criminals Monetize the Data, Without Giving Tips or Instructions

Typical uses include selling full patient records to other criminals, creating identity packages that support fake IDs and insurance fraud, filing fraudulent claims, or using records to target victims for social engineering. Healthcare data fetches far higher prices than many other types of stolen data, which is why it is a frequent target. I will not provide any instructions on how to commit or conceal wrongdoing.

IBM

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If You Suspect Veteran Records Were Trafficked, Who to Contact Right Away

Report suspected VA privacy or identity theft issues to your VA patient advocate at your local medical center. They can help you escalate concerns within the VA. File a HIPAA privacy complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights, which handles investigations involving covered entities. For criminal trafficking or large-scale theft, contact local law enforcement and, if appropriate, the FBI.

Veterans Affairs

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HHS

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Steps to Protect Yourself and Build Evidence, Without Operational Detail for Criminals

Request and save your medical records and billing statements so that you have a record of what was accessed. Ask the VA or your provider for an access log or audit trail, and keep copies of any suspicious communications. Place fraud alerts or credit monitoring measures in effect if identity data was exposed. Change online passwords and enable multi-factor authentication on accounts that access health portals. If you want, I can help draft a HIPAA complaint, a report to the VA patient advocate, or a timeline of suspected events for investigators.

HHS

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Veterans are victims of identity theft and fraud more than any other group. How come? Be safe.

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