



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Columbus, Ohio 43215

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John R. Kasich / Governor

Theodore E. Wymyslo, M.D. / Director of Health

August 12, 2011

Re: AFIX Project for Ohio and the Health Insurance Portability and a
Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)

Dear HIPAA Privacy Officer:

The Assessment, Feedback, Incentives, and Exchange (AFIX) Project for Ohio is a continuous quality improvement process designed specifically for immunizations. The AFIX Project is sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and administered by the Ohio Department of Health and its local health partners. Medical practices may use the AFIX process as a means of quality improvement for their immunization policies, procedures, and practices; thereby improving immunization rates and outcomes. Accordingly, the AFIX Project (its nature and purpose) meets the definition of "health care operations" as set out in 45 C.F.R. 164.501 and does not require the prior authorization from patients or their parents or guardians for the medical practice to participate. See 45 C.F.R. 164.502 and 164.506.

The AFIX Project for Ohio personnel and representatives are trained to avoid being unnecessarily exposed to protected health information; however, successful utilization of the AFIX process will involve some minimal disclosure of such information. Thus, the AFIX Agreement is a "business associate agreement" designed specifically for the AFIX Project by the Ohio Department of Health to be in compliance with HIPAA. The AFIX Agreement does not, in fact, address all aspects of the HIPAA Privacy Regulations since not all aspects are implicated by the process. After careful review and consideration, the AFIX Project for Ohio believes that its agreement and procedures are compliant with the relevant provisions of HIPAA and other federal and state laws.

If you have any questions or need further information on the AFIX Project for Ohio, please feel free to contact Alexandra Thornton, AFIX Coordinator at (614)466-0249.

Sincerely,

Soerates H. Fuch
Senior Legal Counsel/HIPAA Privacy Officer
Office of the General Counsel