I. PURPOSE

This standard reflects East Carolina University’s commitment to appropriately dispose of healthcare computing systems and their associated electronic media containing EPHI when it is no longer needed.

II. AUTHORIZATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Health Care component management and/or administrator(s) are responsible for monitoring and enforcing this policy, in consultation with the ECU IT Security Officer, ECU HIPAA Security Officer, and ECU HIPAA Privacy Officer.

III. STANDARD

All ECU healthcare computing systems and their associated electronic media containing EPHI that is no longer required must be disposed of in a secure manner. Careless disposal of such information systems and media could result in EPHI being revealed to unauthorized persons. The destruction of any EPHI should be governed by the university’s Data Retention Policy or the applicable healthcare components’ Data Retention Policy. Questions concerning the destruction of EPHI should be directed to the University Privacy Officer.
IV. APPLICABILITY

This standard is applicable to all workforce members who are responsible for or otherwise administer a healthcare computing system. A healthcare computing system is defined as a device or group of devices that store EPHI which is shared across the network and accessed by healthcare workers.

V. PROCEDURE

1. All ECU healthcare computing systems and their associated electronic media containing EPHI must be disposed of properly when no longer needed for legitimate use. The destruction of any EPHI should be governed by the university’s Data Retention Policy or the applicable healthcare components’ Data Retention Policy. Questions concerning the destruction of EPHI should be directed to the University Privacy Officer. Healthcare computing systems and electronic media to which this policy applies include, but are not limited to: computers (desktops, laptops, PDAs, tablets, etc.), floppy disks, backup tapes, CDADVD-ROMs, zip drives, portable hard drives, and flash memory devices.

2. To dispose of a healthcare computing system or electronic medium containing EPHI, the data must be completely removed with data sanitization tool(s) that erase or overwrite media in a manner that prevents the data from being recovered. “Deleting” typically does not destroy data and may enable unauthorized persons to recover EPHI from the media.

3. An alternative to data sanitization of electronic media is physical destruction. The physical destruction of electronic media may be feasible where the media is inexpensive and the destruction methods are easy and safe. For example, floppy disks and CD-ROMs are relatively inexpensive and can be easily destroyed with a pair of scissors, if handled carefully.

VI. COORDINATING INSTRUCTIONS

1. All section policies and procedures will be reviewed annually. Every section policy and procedure revision/replacement will be maintained for a minimum of six years from the date of its creation or when it was last in effect, whichever is later. Other East Carolina University, University of North Carolina system, or state of North Carolina requirements may stipulate a longer retention period.