Field Guide: HIPAA, FERPA, and Trade-Secret Privacy Rules During Commercial & Clinic Pack-Outs

Canonical Web Version: https://restorationintel.com/field-guide-hipaa-ferpa-trade-secret-privacy-pack-outs/

Direct Answer: On medical, educational, legal, or proprietary R&D pack-outs, crews must treat patient charts, student files, diagnostic drives, and trade-secret binders as restricted custody assets—never opening folders, never photographing readable records, and requiring written Business Associate or NDA governance before touching regulated storage.

Field Benchmark & Decision Matrix

Regulated Asset Class	Typical Loss-Site Locations	Immediate Containment Action	Inventory & Photo Boundary	Custody & Processing Path
1. Clinical & Patient Health Records (HIPAA Practice)	Front-desk sign-in sheets, exam room folders, billing cabinets, film jackets	Close folders immediately; assign site Privacy Officer escort	Log 'Sealed Chart Carton # + Tamper Seal #' ONLY; zero readable text in photos	Sealed opaque bins -> locked vault cage or client-directed HIPAA document recovery vendor
2. Medical Servers, Drives & Imaging Devices	Server closets, X-ray/ultrasound workstations, reception PCs, backup NAS	Disconnect power safely per IT lead; never boot or browse wet drives	Shoot rear asset tag & serial plate only; cover monitor screens	Custody transfer to clinic IT MSP or certified forensic/electronic recovery lab
3. Student & Academic Files (FERPA)	School registrar vaults, counselor drawers, IEP binders, nurse logs	Lock file drawers in place until school official authorizes transfer	Wide cabinet count only; prohibit close-ups of student IDs or transcripts	School-supervised relocation or certified archival freeze-drying vendor
4. Legal, HR & Accounting Case Files	Law firm war rooms, HR personnel cabinets, CPA tax-prep desks	Keep client-matter labels face-down; pack upright inside lidded totes	Count linear feet or sealed box totals; zero document-title captures	NDA-covered restricted vault bay; client privilege sign-off at return
5. R&D Formulas, CAD & Trade Secrets	Lab notebooks, prototype benches, QA testing binders, tooling drawings	Clear cameras from lab bench until owner covers proprietary prototypes	Owner-approved generic description ('R&D Lab Binder Lot — 4 Boxes')	Dedicated locked crate or direct retention by client security team
6. Payment Terminals & POS / PCI Media	Retail counters, clinic check-out desks, merchant batch paper rolls	Isolate damaged POS terminals and paper batch slips in sealed pouch	Log terminal model/serial only; never capture credit card slips or PIN pads	Direct handoff to merchant IT/processor for compliant destruction or swap

Practitioner Operational Takeaways

• Confirm required BAA, NDA, or FERPA vendor authorizations and designate the client's on-site Privacy Officer before entering record zones.

• Shield open patient charts, student records, computer monitors, and proprietary lab benches before taking any room context photographs.

• Log regulated documents strictly by sealed container ID, linear feet, and serialized tamper-seal number—never by individual names or text.

• Store packed regulated totes inside a locked, access-logged vault cage or route directly to a BAA-covered freeze-dry or IT vendor.

• Route any approved non-salvageable regulated paper solely through certified cross-cut shredding with a signed certificate of destruction.

Visual Workflow & Benchmark Summary



Companion Endpoints & Verified Primary Sources

- **Markdown Twin (plain text):** https://restorationintel.com/field-guide-hipaa-ferpa-trade-secret-privacy-pack-outs.md
- **NIST Privacy Framework:** https://www.nist.gov/privacy-framework
- **US Department of Education FERPA Student Privacy Guidance:** https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/
- **ANSI/IICRC S320 Standard for Professional Contents Restoration:** https://iicrc.org/s320/
- **Restoration Industry Association (RIA):** https://www.restorationindustry.org/