

# My Health Record emergency access function

My Health Record supports healthcare providers to access information for the purpose of providing healthcare. In some circumstances, healthcare recipients may choose to restrict access to their record or selected documents within their record. Restricted information is not generally visible to healthcare provider organisations unless access has been granted by the healthcare recipient.

In limited circumstances, healthcare providers may be authorised to override access controls in order to access all information in a person's record. This type of access is referred to as 'emergency access'. Once granted, emergency access to a record is available for a maximum of 5 days.

## Appropriate use

The emergency access function is designed for use in situations that are authorised under section 64 of the [My Health Records Act 2012](#). This authorises a healthcare provider to bypass access controls (by using the emergency access function), **if**:

- a. The healthcare provider reasonably believes that the collection, use or disclosure of information within a person's record is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to an individual's life, health or safety **and** it is unreasonable or impracticable to obtain the consent of the person to the collection, use or disclosure, **or**
- b. the healthcare provider reasonably believes that the collection, use or disclosure by the participant is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to public health or safety.

As there are limitations on the use of emergency access, the Agency monitors use of this function by healthcare provider organisations as part of its role in administering the system.

## Resources

Further information about the emergency access function is available via the links below. You are encouraged to distribute this to staff within your organisation:

- Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC):
  - [Guidance](#) – My Health Record emergency access function
  - My Health Record emergency access function [FAQs and flowchart](#)
- Australian Digital Health Agency:
  - [Overview](#) - My Health Record Emergency access function
  - Emergency access [podcast](#)
  - Using the Emergency Access function in My Health Record [webinar](#)
  - Clinical Software Summary Sheets – currently available for [Best Practice](#), [MedicalDirector](#), [Fred Dispense](#) and [Minfos](#).

## Staff training

As part of your organisation's training program, you may wish to include modules from the [training.digitalhealth.gov.au](https://training.digitalhealth.gov.au) online training platform, such as the [My Health Record Security, Privacy and Access](#) module. You are also encouraged to use the resources listed above for the purpose of staff training.

Please note that the training process for your organisation must be outlined in your My Health Record [Security and Access policy](#) (required under the [My Health Records Rules 2026](#)).

## Other important healthcare provider obligations

As your healthcare organisation is registered for My Health Record, your organisation is required to adhere to a range of obligations, as outlined on our website: [My Health Record participation obligations](#)

In addition, you need to ensure that your organisation's information within Health Professional Online Services (HPOS) is kept up to date. For more information, please refer to: [Managing the responsible officer and organisation maintenance officers for your organisation](#).