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Maximum Copy Charges for Patient Records Increase

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The Uniform Health Care Information Act (HCIA) went into effect on July 28, 1991. This law regulates access to medical records by health care providers, health care facilities, patients, and others, as well as the maximum charges allowed for the copying of those records. The HCIA was amended in 1993, further defining reasonable copy charges for medical records to a \$15 flat fee for clerical searching and handling, 65¢ per page for the first 30 pages of records, and 50¢ per page after the 30th page.

Of particular note, the 1993 amended act states that copy charges may be adjusted every 2 years for inflation, according to the consumer price index as determined by the Washington State Secretary of Health pursuant to RCW 70.02.010 (12). Guess what? Very recently, changes have been made to the definition of reasonable copy charges.

Effective July 01, 2009, reasonable fees for duplicating health care records are as follows:

- A maximum \$23.00 flat fee for clerical searching and handling,
- A maximum \$1.02 per page for the first 30 pages of records, and
- A maximum .78¢ per page after the 30th page.

This new rate for copying medical records will remain in effect for two years through June 2011. Thereafter, the copy charges will once again be adjusted by the Washington State Department of Health.

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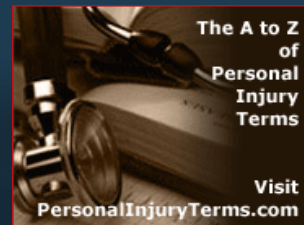
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