

HIPAA Regulations Affect Wellness Programs

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Small businesses that implement employee wellness programs are to be commended. These businesses must be aware, however, that the design of wellness programs must comply with new legal requirements under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The Department of Labor has said that it will enforce the new requirements.

- Programs must limit reward size
- The program must be reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease
- Eligible individuals must have a chance to qualify at least yearly
- The reward must be available to all "similarly situated" individuals
- Program must disclose alternative standards

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