



4/28/2023

To: Social Security Advocacy Services grantees

From: Social Security Advocacy Services (SSAS) contract manger

RE: Sending Client Data Securely to DHS

It is critical that emails containing client data (client name, date of birth, social security numbers, etc.) are sent to DHS staff encrypted. Grantees are contractually obligated to implement and maintain appropriate safeguards for protected information that includes clients name and other private information (date of birth, social security number, etc.). Any communications sent to DHS that includes a client name or any other private information must be sent encrypted to safeguard client information per your contract. This warning is per contract Clause 10 - *Information and Security* and the subsequent Attachment A – *Data Sharing Agreement and Business Associate Agreement Terms and Conditions*. Clause C4 under encryption states, “Grantee must use encryption to store, transport or transmit Protected Information and must not use unencrypted email to transmit Protected Information.”

All SSAS grantees are required to have email encryption capabilities. If your agency does not currently have the ability to encrypt emails, your SSAS coordinator can help. When you need to send client data securely to DHS, call or email your coordinator asking them to send you an encrypted email. After they do this, you can then reply to their email with client data or private information, and it will be sent back to DHS secured. All SSAS coordinators are required to report contract violations, and if they continue, DHS will terminate contracts.

The work that you do is so important to our clients, but we must also protect our client’s personal information for Social Security Advocacy Services to continue effectively. We appreciate the work you are doing but ensure any further communication that contains client names and private information is only exchanged with DHS securely.

Contact Shawn Tobias, Contracts Manager, with any questions at hssdcontracts.dhs@state.mn.us or call 651-431-6158.