

FROM: HUD-OIG, Human Resources Division

TO: New Hires

SUBJECT: Personally Identifiable Information (PII) Acknowledgement Letter

As a HUD-OIG employee, you may receive personal, privileged, and/or confidential information. That information may concern other employees, HUD-OIG operations or other organizations with whom HUD-OIG does business. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of your responsibilities to safeguard and handle PII.

PII is one or more pieces of information that when considered together or when considered in the context of how it is presented or how it is gathered is sufficient to specify an individual. PII can include:

- Personal characteristics (such as height, weight, gender, or date of birth).
- A unique set of numbers or characters assigned to a specific individual (including name, address, social security number, or driver's license number).
- Descriptions of an event or point in time (for example, information in documents such as arrest reports, and medical records).

The loss of PII can result in substantial harm, embarrassment, and inconvenience to individuals and may lead to identity theft or other fraudulent use of the information. Because Federal agencies maintain significant amounts of information concerning individuals, employees at all levels have a special duty to protect that information from loss or misuse.

You are obligated to ensure that this information remains safeguarded while in your possession. It is also a matter of trust that PII is treated with respect and handled in a secure manner. This applies whether you are actively employed, on leave or your employment with HUD-OIG ends.

The best practices for handling PII is to always ensure any information considered PII is in a secure location (locked office or locked filing cabinet). Keep only what is necessary and shred extra copies of any other items. Ensure any papers with PII are kept face down if you are not working on them. Make sure to shred papers containing PII; do not recycle them or throw them away. If you need to photocopy PII, do not leave the copier until the job is finished and you have retrieved the original and the copy.

If your employment with the agency terminates, for any reason, you must return to HUD-OIG all documentation considered PII. You are not permitted to retain copies of any PII. Failure to safeguard PII can result in disciplinary action, up to and including removal.

If you have questions or need clarification regarding PII, please contact your Supervisor immediately.

Employee Signature _____

Date _____