

## Guide to Selecting a Qualified Information Destruction Service

HIPAA, and virtually every other data protection regulation in the United States, has specific requirements of vendors who process any patient information.

- 1) **A Business Associate (BA) Agreement:** HIPAA requires a special agreement which binds the service provider to regulatory compliance. Any reputable information destruction service provider will be able to provide this agreement. NAID member-companies have access to a state-of-the-art BA Agreement that was created specifically for secure information destruction contractors by one of the country's most highly respected privacy attorneys.
- 2) **Written Policies and Procedures:** Any reputable information destruction service provider will have written policies and procedures that describe their employee screening practices, access control, training and the destruction process.

Here are some other qualifications you should consider when selecting a qualified information destruction service provider:

- Do they screen their employees and hire only those with no known history of theft or fraud?
- Do the containers they provide to collect and transport material for destruction lock and protect material from unauthorized access?
- Do they offer training resources?
- Are their service employees professional, polite and easily identifiable?
- Do their representatives understand HIPAA requirements and do they maintain a legitimate, recognized industry certification or accreditation?
- Are they able to provide the employee instructions for the information destruction program they provide to your office, which are required by HIPAA and every other major data protection regulation?

NOTE: Demonstrating due diligence when selecting data-related vendors is an important aspect of HIPAA compliance. This checklist will serve to document that selection process.