

## Health Information Compliance Alert

### Enforcement News: HHS Unveils New Religious Freedom Division

Last month, the HHS Office for Civil Rights (OCR) added a new department to its slate: Conscience and Religious Freedom Division.

The feds designed the new division to "protect the fundamental and unalienable rights of conscience and religious freedom," noted an OCR release on Jan. 18, 2018.

"No one should be forced to choose between helping sick people and living by one's deepest moral or religious convictions," stated OCR Director **Roger Severino** said. "And the new division will help guarantee that victims of unlawful discrimination find justice."

OCR has not released any guidance in reference to the HIPAA Privacy rule on its new department for parties registering complaints or how enforcement will be determined going forward. Health Information Compliance Alert will continue to report on changes to the program.

Read the OCR release at:

[www.hhs.gov/about/news/2018/01/18/hhs-ocr-announces-new-conscience-and-religious-freedom-division.html](http://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2018/01/18/hhs-ocr-announces-new-conscience-and-religious-freedom-division.html).