

Call Recording Services for Agents

As agents, it is vital and required by CMS law to record your phone calls to your clients. Under HIPAA law, all patient voice recordings qualify as protected health information (PHI) and are subject to protection. How can you record these critical phone calls to remain compliant? There are three categories for call recording services: VoIP phone number services, business phone system providers, and stand-alone call recording services.

Business Phone System Providers

These kinds of providers offer a comprehensive business phone system or contact center solution with advanced call recording features. Examples of businesses that provide this service include Vonage, RingCentral, and 8x8.

VoIP Phone Number Services

VoIP stands for Voice over Internet Protocol. VoIP companies sell call recording systems as a feature with any virtual number you purchase from that company. VoIP is not limited to wired desk phones. A VoIP phone number can send and receive calls over the Internet instead of a traditional phone line. The VoIP number gets assigned to a specific person or an account instead of a single device.

VoIP offers flexibility to enable voice calling from any device with a microphone and Internet connection, so users can use multiple devices or be in various locations. This method should help you not to miss calls. You will need an appropriate device, such as a laptop computer, tablet, smartwatch, or cellular phone, and an account with a VoIP provider. In 2023, nearly one-third of all businesses make calls with VoIP “due to its productivity-boosting and cost-saving features.”

The cost of a VoIP service is less expensive than a traditional telephone service because VoIP uses Internet connections and devices you already own instead of a separate system and extra hardware. VoIP services also give the choice of selecting a local or a toll-free phone number. The option should allow you to influence a caller’s expectations of your business.

These services remain ideal for businesses with a small or large staff and want call recording but do not require a full virtual phone system replacement. Some examples of these businesses include RingCentral, AVOXI, CallRail, and Tollfreeforwarding.

The best services provide encryption for call recordings that prevent data from being leaked. For example, RingCentral earned HITRUST certification, a gold-standard recognition of meeting the requirements of multiple data-privacy regulations, including HIPAA. Also, RingCentral’s website states how they store call recordings to comply with the U.S. government’s standards. RingCentral states, “We store call recordings in Amazon S3 buckets, and we encrypt this data-at-rest with Advanced Encryption System 256 (AES-256 bit). This means your call recordings are protected by a government-recommended, ISO/IEC 18033-3-approved standard.”

There are some downsides to VoIP phone number services. You will need a powerful connection to have a VoIP phone number. High-quality bandwidth, ping times, and jitter times are necessary for the most effective VoIP phone calls.

Bandwidth is vital to your call recording. You need at least one megabit per second for every ten concurrent calls. You need two megabits per second for every 20 concurrent calls, and so on.

Ping Time refers to the latency or lag on the line. It measures in milliseconds how much of a delay between the sender’s device requesting a connection, and it is established on the recipient’s end. A high ping time means more delay between when you talk into your phone and when the recipient hears you. High ping times can sound like an echo, especially with speakerphone. Anything under 100MS (milliseconds) is considered excellent.

Jitter Time measures how stable the connection is across time and if it is likely to drop out during a call. A jitter time ranging between 15-20ms is considered good. The lower the number, the better. Anything higher than 20ms (milliseconds) can cause choppy audio.

Since VoIP relies on an Internet connection to make phone calls, your devices risk suffering from phishing, hacker, or malware attacks. Acquiring trustworthy anti-virus software and a secure virtual private network can help limit the chances of security intrusions. Regularly updating your operating system also helps in protecting your devices.

Stand-Alone Call Recording Services

These services are for a businessperson who only needs call recording but does not require all the add-on features the other companies offer. VoiceStamps, CallCabinet, and Orecx are examples of these stand-alone call-recording services. You will have access to the calls after they end. Generally, calls get stored in the cloud, and you will have a set number of hours in your plan. Providers vary on how long you can keep the recordings. As an agent or broker, CMS requires you to keep recordings for ten years, so you must purchase a plan that offers such extended storage or allows you to download the recordings and save them on your own devices. For instance, RingCentral lets you download your phone recordings so you may store your calls and satisfy CMS requirements. RingCentral also provides instructions on downloading the call log and recorded phone calls.

Many call recording services exist, and you may have the option to record your phone calls on your current phone provider. Whether you need to search for a service or upgrade to one, ask the provider questions about what they offer. **You might want to ask the following:**

Do you offer a call recording service?

Is your call recording service HIPAA compliant?

How long can I store my recorded phone calls?

Can I download my recorded phone calls?

Recording Law

Phone recording laws vary across the United States of America. For instance, in Texas, only one party on the phone must know that a call recording is taking place. In 11 states, all parties on the phone call must be aware of the conversation undergoing recording. Those states include California, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and Washington. Laws can change. So, to be safe, ensure you comply with your state's law by informing your call recipient at the beginning of the conversation that you are recording the call and requesting the recipient to express verbal consent to being recorded.