

# HIETexas PULSE COVID Frequently Asked Questions

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## General Questions

### 1. What is PULSE COVID?

The Patient Unified Lookup System for Emergencies for the COVID-19 Pandemic, or PULSE COVID, is a light-weight version of the PULSE Enterprise solution, created specifically for use during the coronavirus response. Similar to PULSE Enterprise, PULSE COVID is a web portal that facilitates health information during declared disasters. It is intended to be a rapidly deployable solution that requires little training, provides a quick onboarding process, and allows for timely response in the face of a crisis. While lacking some of the more advanced functionality of PULSE Enterprise, PULSE COVID uses the same basic search functionality to query across national health information networks to provide patient information when and where it is needed most.

### 2. What are the main uses for PULSE COVID?

There are two main user groups for PULSE COVID: medical professionals and public health authorities.

#### **PULSE COVID for Medical Professionals:**

PULSE COVID supports medical professionals working in non-routine care settings where they may lack access to medical records through traditional Electronic Medical Record (EMR) systems. This allows providers in places such as, medical shelters, quarantine sites, or facilities designed to accommodate hospital surge to access patients' medical information to make informed care decisions.

#### **PULSE COVID for Public Health Authorities:**

PULSE COVID supports public health authorities in several ways. Authorized individuals can collect data on patient demographics, comorbidities, and health outcomes. This information is vital for public health interventions including health education and outreach, disease surveillance, contact tracing, and epidemiological assessment.

## General Questions

### **3. How is does the PULSE COVID platform handle patient privacy and security?**

THSA and Audacious Inquiry use a combination of industry-leading tools, services, and expertise to achieve its goals of optimizing security and quality throughout the software development life cycle. Audacious Inquiry is HITRUST certified and has a robust Software Security Framework. PULSE COVID also contains high fidelity auditing capabilities.

### **4. How do PULSE COVID users handle patient privacy and security?**

All Users are subject to the laws and regulations that govern patient privacy, including the Texas Medical Records Privacy Act, the Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act of 1996 ([HIPAA](#)), and the Data Use and Reciprocal Support Agreement ([DURSA](#)), and the HIETexas State-Level Trust Agreement. All authenticated users must agree to [Terms of Use](#) within the web application in order to acknowledge their responsibilities to protect patient health data.

## User Roles and Privileges

### 1. What are the specific user roles and privileges within PULSE COVID?

#### Organization Administrator

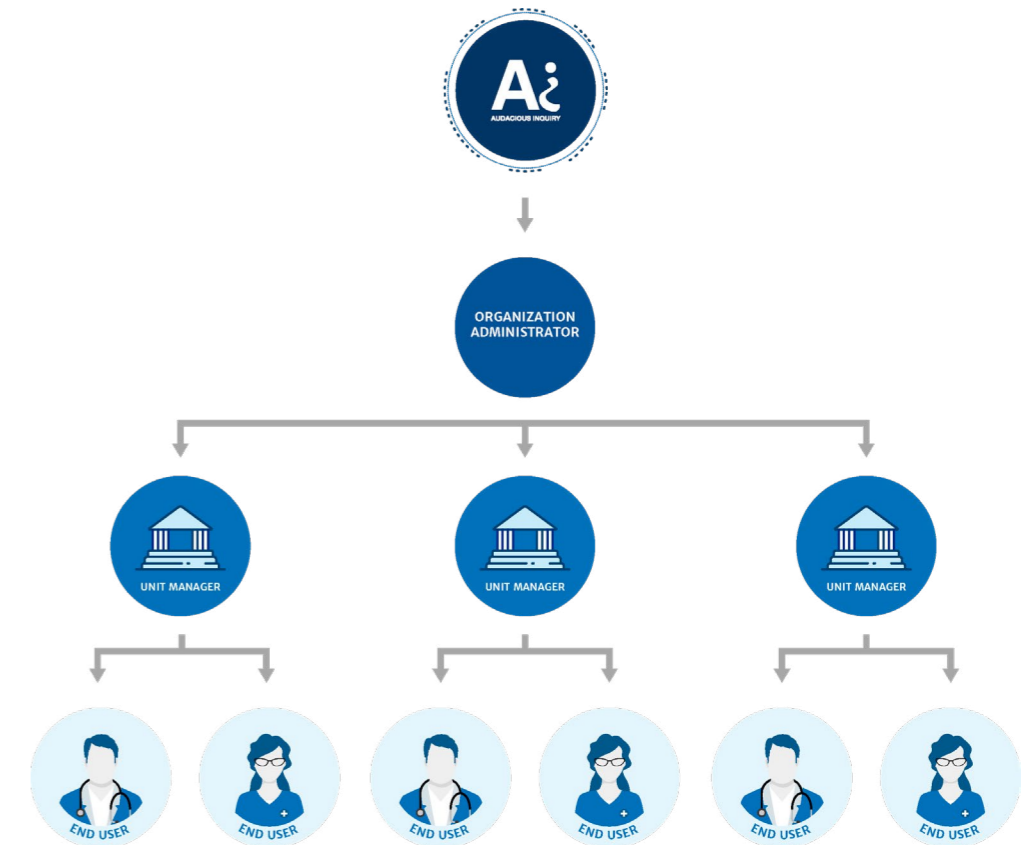
The Organization Administrator is the highest level of Administrator access. We recommend that each organization designate 2-3 organization Administrators. The Organization Administrator can define different “units” within their organization. This could be useful if an Administrator wanted to separate their organization by county or city. The Organization Administrator can view and control access for all Users across their organization. This role can create or deactivate accounts.

#### Unit Manager:

If an Organization Administrator defines “units” for counties or cities, they can designate a User to be the Unit Manager of that sub-organization. A Unit Manager has control of the Users in their sub-organization only. This role can create or deactivate accounts for Users within their designated unit.

#### End User

An End User can query for patient clinical documents, but they do not have any additional administrative privileges.



## User Roles and Privileges

### 2. Who can provision User accounts in PULSE COVID?

Organization Administrators and Unit Managers may authorize user access to PULSE COVID. Accounts can be created by the Organization Administrator through the User Management portal. Additionally, THSA and Audacious Inquiry can also provision user accounts.

### 3. What privileges do Administrators have?

Administrators can modify User accounts in several ways.

- An Administrator can deactivate a User in PULSE COVID, which will remove that User's ability to log into the system and display them in the "Inactive User" panel.
- An Administrator can edit a User's account to change organizational, demographic, and other information as needed.
- An Administrator can reset a User's password; however, Users can also reset their own passwords through secure processes.

### 4. What support is available for Administrators?

Administrators have access to 24/7 PULSE COVID Service Desk where technical and programmatic support can be requested.

## End User Access

### 1. How do my username and password get assigned?

An Organization Administrator or Unit Manager will provision End Users with an account. End Users cannot request their own account and must go through their organization's Administrator.

### 2. How do I reset my password?

End Users can reset their own passwords by navigating to <https://www.pulsecovid.com> and selecting the “Forgot Password” button on the login screen. Fill in the “Email Address” and “Text Verification” fields and click “Next”. You will then be prompted to answer one of the security questions you answered during initial account setup. Once completed, select the “Send Password Reset Link”. If your answer is correct, you will receive an email with an individualized link to reset your password. You will then be able to login to the system.

### 3. Who can I contact for assistance?

For assistance, please contact your Organization Administrator or Unit Manager as appropriate.

## Searching for a Patient

### 1. How are patient matches made?

Patient matches are made when a User enters the patient's demographic information into the PULSE COVID search fields. PULSE COVID then sends the patient search out to organizations across the national health information exchange networks (national networks). When an organization has a record that matches the patient information the User searched for, PULSE COVID will return the record(s).

### 2. What happens when I query for a patient?

After entering the patient's demographic information and sending out a query to the national health information exchange networks, the User will receive all matching records from PULSE COVID. The User can then select the patient of interest. At this point, PULSE COVID sends a query across the national networks to retrieve any records for that patient. Once the record(s) are returned, the User can select the document they wish to view from the Search Results listed on the screen.



## Searching for a Patient

### **3. How do I increase likelihood of a patient match?**

Users should enter as much demographic information as possible to receive the most accurate patient match. Users should also verify with the patient that their information matches what has been returned by the query. Best practices for asking the patient questions based on the search results include: have you recently been treated at a hospital, and if so, what is the name of the facility? Do you have any previous home addresses?

### **4. What if no documents are returned?**

There are several reasons why no documents are returned. These include poor matching criteria, patient opt out, restricted records, misspelling of the patient name, incorrect Date of Birth format, etc. It is also possible that the patient does not have any records located in the connected health information exchange networks.

## Data Sources

### 1. From where do these data originate?

The primary data source for PULSE COVID is the eHealth Exchange, the largest query-based health information network in the country. It is the principle network connecting federal agencies and non-federal organizations, allowing them to work together to improve patient care and public health.

Texas will have a pre-configured group of organizations on the eHealth Exchange for which PULSE COVID will query with each given patient search. These organizations will be those located in Texas, as well as organizations with national coverage, such as the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Kaiser Permanente, MyDirective, the Social Security Administration, DaVita, and Fresenius. A full listing of participating eHealth Exchange organizations can be found [here](#)

### 2. How do you determine which information you show me?

PULSE COVID returns all documents shared by the preconfigured endpoints on the national networks, which have the discretion to restrict

## Data Sources

**1. Does activation of PULSE COVID require a declared disaster?**

Yes, activation of PULSE COVID requires a declared disaster or public health emergency.

**2. How long will PULSE COVID be active?**

PULSE COVID will be offered through the 2020 hurricane season, at which time month to month renewal will be considered.

**3. What happens to the patient data after I logout of PULSE COVID?**

PULSE COVID uses a federated model, therefore while the platform allows Users to view clinical data, no query data is stored long-term in PULSE COVID. PULSE COVID caches data for 36 hours to reduce the response time for patients searched multiple times.

## Getting Help

### 1. Who do I call for assistance?

If you need assistance, please contact your Unit Manager or Organization Administrator for assistance.

### 2. Where can I find the contact information for my PULSE COVID Administrator?

The PULSE COVID Administrator should share their contact information during the PULSE COVID training session.

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