

COUNCIL BLUFFS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER
300 West Broadway, Suite 6
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503
Phone: (712) 325-1990

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

WHO WILL FOLLOW THIS NOTICE

This notice describes the privacy practices of Council Bluffs Community Health Center entities including:

- All Council Bluffs Community Health Center administrative offices and clinics.
- Any health care professional authorized to enter information into your health record.
- All employees, and health care professional students of Council Bluffs Community Health Center
- Any and all medical contracted services with the Council Bluffs Community Health Center, that would have access to your medical records

All the above-identified entities, locations, and individuals will follow the terms of this notice. In addition, these entities, sites and individuals may share health information with each other for treatment, payment or health care operations as described in this notice.

OUR PLEDGE REGARDING HEALTH INFORMATION

We understand that your health information is personal and we are committed to protecting that health information. We create a record of the care and services you receive to ensure quality care and to comply with contractual and legal requirements. This notice applies to all of the records of your care generated by Council Bluffs Community Health Center and the persons and entities listed above. It describes your rights and our obligations regarding the use and disclosure of your health information.

We are required by law to:

- **protect the privacy of your health information;**
- **give you this notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to your health information; and**
- **Follow the terms of the notice that is currently in effect.**

HOW WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION

The following categories describe different ways we use and disclose health information. We have included some examples of each use and disclosure. Not every use or disclosure within a category will be listed.

- **For Treatment.** We may use or disclose health information about you to doctors, nurses, technicians, residents, health care professional students, and/or other personnel who are involved in your care. For example, a doctor treating you may use your health history in diagnosing your illness. Our physicians and nurses may share health information about you in order to coordinate ordering prescriptions, lab work, x-rays, and follow-up care. We may disclose health information about you to health care providers outside Council Bluffs Community Health Center who are involved in your ongoing health care.
- **For Payment.** We may use and disclose health information about you so that the treatment and services you receive may be billed to and payment may be collected from you, an insurance company or a third party. For example, we may need to give your health plan information about a surgery you received so the health plan will pay us or reimburse you for the surgery. We may tell your health plan about a scheduled treatment to obtain prior approval or to determine whether your health plan will pay for the treatment. We may disclose your health information to entities outside Council Bluffs Community Health Center, such as ambulance companies, who may need this information to bill for services they provided you.

- **For Health Care Operations.** We may use and disclose health information about you for Council Bluffs Community Health Center's health care operations. These uses and disclosures are necessary to operated Council Bluffs Community Health Center and promote quality care. For example, we may use health information to review our treatment and services and to evaluate the performance of our staff. We may also combine health information about many patients to decide what additional services we should offer and whether certain new treatments are effective. We may disclose information to doctors, nurses, technicians, residents, health care professional students and other personnel for review and learning purposes. We may disclose health information about you to entities outside Council Bluffs Community Health Center for their health care operations as long as both Council Bluffs Community Health Center and the other entity have treated you. We may also combine the health information from other health care providers to compare how we are doing and see where we can make improvements in care and services. We may remove information that identifies you from this set of health information so that others may use it to study health care and health care delivery without learning patient specifics.
- **To Business Associates.** We may disclose health information to other persons or organizations, known as business associates, who provide services on our behalf. To protect your health information, we require our business associates to appropriately safeguard the information we disclose to them.
- **Appointment Reminders.** We may use and disclose health information to contact you by phone, voice mail, email, or mail to remind you about a scheduled appointment.
- **Marketing.** We will obtain your written authorization prior to using your health information to send you any marketing materials. We can, however, provide you with marketing materials in a face-to-face encounter without obtaining your authorization. We may also give you a promotional gift of nominal value, if we so choose, without obtaining your authorization.
- **Treatment Alternatives.** We may use and disclose health information to tell you about or recommend treatment options or health-related benefits and services of possible interest to you.
- **Fundraising Activities.** We may disclose contact information about you to our fundraising offices and contractors so they may contact you when raising money for Council Bluffs Community Health care operations, services and research. We will only release your name, address, phone number and the dates your received treatment or services. If you do not want to be contacted for fundraising efforts, you must notify the Council Bluffs Community Health Center Privacy Officer in writing at the address provided below.
- **Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care.** We may release health information about you to family or any other person you identify as involved in your health care or who is involved in the payment for your care. We will release this information if you agree to the disclosure or are given the opportunity to object to such a disclosure and do not. We may also release your health information where, in our professional judgment, it would be common practice and in your best interests to allow a person to act on your behalf. For example, a friend may pick up you prescriptions or medical supplies. In addition, we may disclose health information about you in a disaster relief effort so that your family can be notified about your condition, status and location.
- **Research.** Under certain circumstances, we may use and disclose health information for research purposes. For example, a research project may involve comparing the health of all patients who received one medication to those who received another for the same condition. Most research projects are conducted only with patient authorization and following approval through our research approval process. There are a few instances where patient authorization is not obtained. Such research projects, however, are subject to a specific approval process. This process evaluates a proposed research project and its use of health information, balancing the research needs with patients' need for privacy of their health information and concluding that patient authorization requirements be waived. We may disclose health information to people preparing to conduct research, for example, to help them look for patients with specific health needs. We will do so only if the health information does not leave Council Bluffs Community Health Center and is not used for any purpose other than preparation for research.
- **Limited Data Set.** Each of us may use and disclose your health information (not including your name, address or other direct identifiers) for research, public health or health care operations. We will only do so if the recipient signs an agreement to protect the information and not use it to identify you.
- **To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety.** We may use and disclose your health information when necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to a person's or the public's health or safety. Any disclosure would only be to someone able to help prevent or lessen the threat.

- **Organ or Tissue Donation.** We may release health information to organizations that facilitate organ, eye or tissue procurement banking or transplantation.
- **Workers' Compensation.** We may release health information as authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with state worker's compensation laws or other similar programs.
- **Public Health Activities.** We may disclose your health information for public health activities, including:
 - Reporting health information to public health authorities for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease, injury or disability.
 - Reporting child abuse and neglect to public health authorities or other government authorities authorized by law to receive such reports.
 - Reporting information about products and services under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.
 - Alerting a person who may have been exposed to a communicable disease or otherwise is at risk of contracting or spreading a disease or condition.
 - Reporting information to your employer as required under laws addressing work-related illnesses and injuries or workplace medical surveillance.
- **Abuse, Neglect or Domestic Violence.** If we reasonably believe a person has been the victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence, we may disclose health information to the appropriate government authority. We will disclose your health information if you agree or when required or authorized by law.
- **Health Oversight Activities.** We may disclose health information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. Oversight activities are those necessary for the government to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws including audits, investigations and inspections.
- **Lawsuits and Disputes.** If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose your health information in response to a court or administrative order. We may also disclose your health information in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or another lawful process by someone else involved in the dispute. We do so only if efforts have been made to tell you about the request or to obtain an order protecting the requested information.
- **Law Enforcement.** We may release your health information if asked to do so by a law enforcement official for the following reasons:
 - In response to a court order, subpoena, warrant, summons or similar process.
 - To identify or locate a suspect, fugitive, material witness, or missing person.
 - In response to inquiries as to the victim of a crime if, under certain limited circumstances, we are unable to obtain the person's agreement.
 - In response to inquiries as to a death we believe may be the result of criminal conduct.
 - In response to inquiries as to criminal conduct at the Council Bluffs Community Health Center clinic site.
 - In emergency circumstances to report a crime; the location of a crime or victims; or the identity, description or location of the person who committed the crime.
- **Decedents.** We may release health information to a coroner or medical examiner, as necessary, for example, to identify a deceased person or determine the cause of death. We may also release health information about patients to funeral directors as necessary to carry out their duties.
- **Military Activities.** If you are a member of the Armed Forces, we may use or disclose your health information to the appropriate military authorities. If you are foreign military personnel, we may disclose your health information to the appropriate foreign military authority.
- **National Security and Intelligence Activities.** We may release your health information to authorized federal officials for intelligence and other national security activities authorized by law.
- **Medical Suitability Determinations.** We may release your health information to the Department of State for medical suitability determinations.
- **Protective Services for the President and Others.** We may disclose your health information to authorized federal officials so they may provide protection to the President, other authorized persons or foreign heads of state or to conduct special investigations.
- **Inmates.** We may release your health information to a correctional institution or law enforcement official if you are an inmate of a correctional institution or under the custody of law enforcement official. This release would be necessary:
 - For the institution to provide you with health care;
 - To protect your health and safety or the health and safety of others; or
 - For the safety, security and good order of the correctional institution.

- **Highly Confidential Information.** Federal and state law requires special privacy protections for certain highly confidential information, such as drug and alcohol treatment information. We will follow any additional laws protecting such information.
- **As Required By Law.** We will disclose health information about you when required to do so by any law not already referenced in this Notice.

OTHER USES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

Other uses and disclosures of health information not covered by this notice to the laws that apply to us will be made only with your authorization. If you provide us authorization to use or disclose your health information, you may revoke that authorization, in writing, at any time. If you revoke your authorization, we will no longer use or disclose health information for the reasons covered by your written authorization. You understand that: (1) we will make disclosures where required by law; (2) we are unable to take back any disclosures we have already made with your authorization; and (3) we are required to retain records of the care provided.

YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS REGARDING THE HEALTH INFORMATION WE MAINTAIN ABOUT YOU:

- **Right to Inspect and Copy:** You have the right to inspect and copy your health information that may be used to make decisions about your care. Usually, this includes health care and billing records. This does not include psychotherapy notes, records made in anticipation of legal proceedings, and certain laboratory records. You must submit your request to inspect and copy health information that may be used to make decisions about your care in writing to Director of Operations – Council Bluffs Community Health Center, 300 West Broadway, Suite 6, Council Bluffs, Iowa, 51503. If you request a copy of the information, we may charge a fee for the costs of copying, mailing or other supplies associated with your request. If you request a written summary, we may charge you a fee for this service. We may deny your request to inspect and copy health information in certain circumstances. If you are denied access to health information and the law permits, you may request that the denial be reviewed. A licensed health care professional chosen by Council Bluffs Community Health Center will review your request and the denial. The person conducting the review will not be the person who denied your request. We will comply with the outcome of the review. **Request forms are available** at the front desk of all Council Bluffs Community Health Center clinics.
- **Right to Amend.** If you feel that health information we have about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for Council Bluffs Community Health Center. To request an amendment, your request must be in writing and submitted to the Council Bluffs Community Health Center Privacy Officer at the address below. You must provide a reason that supports your request for amendment. We may deny your request for an amendment if it is not in writing or if it does not include a reason to support the request. We reserve the right to deny your request to amend information that is:
 - Not created by us, unless the person or entity that created the information is no long available to make the amendment;
 - Not part of the health information kept by or for a Council Bluffs Community Health Center entity;
 - Not part of the information which you would be permitted to inspect and copy under the law; or
 - Accurate and complete.
- **Right to an Accounting of Disclosures:** You have the right to request an accounting of disclosures, which is a list of disclosures of your health information made without your authorization and unrelated to treatment, payment or operations. To request an accounting of disclosures, you must submit a request in writing to the Privacy Officer at the address below. Your request may be for disclosures made during any time period prior to the date of your request up to six years. It may not include dates before February 14, 2003. If you request an accounting from the Council Bluffs Community Health Center more than once during a twelve (12) month period, we will charge you.
- **Right to Restrict Restrictions.** You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the health information we use or disclose about you for treatment, payment or health care operations. You also have the right to request a limit on the health information we disclose to family or friends who are involved in your care or paying for your care. We are not required to agree to your request. If we do agree to your request, we will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide emergency treatment. To request restrictions, you must make

your request in writing to the Privacy Officer. Your request must state the information you want to limit; how you want to restrict our use or disclosure; and to whom you want the limits to apply.

- **Right to Request Confidential Communications.** You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your health matters in a certain way or at a certain location. To request confidential communications, you must make your request in writing to the Council Bluffs Community Health Center Privacy Officer at the address below. We will not ask you the reason for your request. Your request must specify how or where you wish to be contacted. We will accommodate all reasonable requests.
- **Right to a Paper Copy of the Notice.** You have the right to a paper copy of this notice.

EFFECTIVE DATE AND CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE

This notice is effective beginning April 14, 2003. We reserve the right to change this notice. We may also be required by law to change our privacy practices and this notice as well. We reserve the right to make the revised notice effective for health information we already have about you as well as new information we receive. If there is a material change in this notice, we will post the new notice in each Council Bluffs Community Health Center location.

COMPLAINTS

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with the Council Bluffs Community Health Center Privacy Officer or with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. ***You will not be penalized or otherwise retaliated against for filing a complaint.***

CONTACT COUNCIL BLUFFS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER'S PRIVACY OFFICER

For answers to questions or additional information about this Notice and our Privacy Practices, please contact:

Council Bluffs Community Health Center
Attn: Council Bluffs Community Health Center Privacy Officer
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Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503
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