

LANE COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES



Effective Date: April 14, 2003

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.

Lane County Health & Human Services (H&HS) provides many types of services, such as public health, mental health, and drug and alcohol services. H&HS staff must collect information about you to provide these services. H&HS knows that information we collect about you and your health is private. H&HS is required to protect this information by Federal and State law. We call this information "protected health information (PHI)."

The Notice of Privacy Practices will tell you how H&HS may use or disclose information about you. Not all situations will be described. H&HS is required to give you a notice of our privacy practices about the information we collect and keep about you. H&HS is required to follow the terms of the notice currently in effect.

H&HS May Use and Disclose Information Without Your Authorization

- **For Treatment.** H&HS may use or disclose information with health care providers who are involved in your health care. For example, information may be shared to create and carry out a plan for your treatment. There are exceptions to this for some A&D, Mental Health, and HIV services (see pg 2).
- **For Payment.** H&HS may use or disclose information to get payment or to pay for the health care services you receive. For example, H&HS may provide PHI to bill your health plan for health care provided to you.
- **For Health Care Operations.** H&HS may use or disclose information in order to manage its programs and activities. For example, H&HS may use PHI to review the quality of services you receive.
- **For Health Oversight Activities.** H&HS may use or disclose information during inspections or investigations of our services.
- **As Required by Law and For Law Enforcement.** H&HS will use and disclose information when required or permitted by federal or state law or by a court order.
- **For Abuse Reports and Investigations.** H&HS is required by law to receive and investigate reports of abuse.
- **To Avoid Harm.** H&HS may disclose PHI to law enforcement in order to avoid a serious threat to the health and safety of a person or the public.

Uses and Disclosures in Special Situations

We may use or disclose your PHI in the situations described below unless you notify us in writing that you would like us not to. See the information below under “Your PHI Privacy Rights” for information about how to request limitations.

- **Appointments and Other Health Information.** H&HS may send you reminders for medical care or checkups. H&HS may send you information about other treatment or health services that may be of interest to you.
- **For Public Health Activities.** H&HS is the public health agency that keeps and updates vital records, such as births and deaths, and tracks some diseases.
- **For Government Programs.** H&HS may use and disclose information for public benefits under other government programs. For example, H&HS may disclose information for the determination of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.
- **For Research.** H&HS uses information for studies and to develop reports. These reports do not identify specific people.
- **Disclosures to Family, Friends, and Others.** H&HS may disclose information to your family or other persons who are involved in your medical care. You have the right to object to the sharing of this information.

Other Uses and Disclosures Require Your Written Authorization

For other situations, H&HS will ask for your written authorization before using or disclosing information. You may cancel this authorization at any time in writing. H&HS cannot take back any uses or disclosures already made with your authorization.

- **Other Laws Protect PHI.** Many H&HS programs have other laws for the use and disclosure of information about you. For example, you must give your written authorization for H&HS to use and disclose your mental health, HIV, or alcohol and drug treatment records.

Your PHI Privacy Rights

When information is maintained by H&HS as a public health agency, the public health records are governed by other State and Federal laws and are not subject to the rights described below.

- **Right to See and Get Copies of Your Records.** In most cases, you have the right to look at or get copies of your records. You must make the request in writing. You may be charged a fee for the cost of copying your records.
- **Right to Request a Correction or Update of Your Records.** You may ask H&HS to change or add missing information to your records if you think there is a mistake. You must make the request in writing, and provide a reason for your request.

- **Right to Get a List of Disclosures.** You have the right to ask H&HS for a list of disclosures made after April 14, 2003. You must make the request in writing. This list will not include the times that information was disclosed for treatment, payment, or health care operations. The list will not include information provided directly to you or your family, or information that was sent with your authorization.
- **Right to Request Limits on Uses or Disclosures of PHI.** You have the right to ask that H&HS limit how your information is used or disclosed. You must make the request in writing and tell H&HS what information you want to limit and to whom you want the limits to apply. H&HS is not required to agree to the restriction. You can request that the restrictions be terminated in writing or verbally.
- **Right to Choose How We Communicate with You.** You have the right to ask that H&HS share information with you in a certain way or in a certain place. For example, you may ask H&HS to send information to your work address instead of your home address. You must make this request in writing. You do not have to explain the basis for your request.
- **Right to File a Complaint.** You have the right to file a complaint if you do not agree with how H&HS has used or disclosed information about you.
- **Right to Get a Paper Copy of this Notice.** You have the right to ask for a paper copy of this notice at any time.

How to contact H&HS to Review, Correct, or Limit Your Protected Health Information (PHI)

You may contact your local H&HS office or the H&HS Privacy Officer at the address listed at the end of this notice to:

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| • Ask to look at or copy your records | • Ask to correct or change your records |
| • Ask to limit how information about you is used or disclosed | • Ask for a list of the times H&HS disclosed information about you |
| • Ask to cancel an authorization | |

H&HS may deny your request to look at, copy or change your records. If H&HS denies your request, H&HS will send you a letter that tells you why your request is being denied and how you can ask for a review of the denial. You will also receive information about how to file a complaint with H&HS or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights.

How to File a Complaint or Report a Problem

You may contact any of the people listed below if you want to file a complaint or to report a problem with how H&HS has used or disclosed information about you. H&HS cannot retaliate against you for filing a complaint, cooperating in an investigation, or refusing to agree to something that you believe to be unlawful.

Lane County Health & Human Services

Assistant Director

125 E. 8th Ave.

Eugene, OR 97401

Phone: 541-682-3942 Fax: 541-682-4487 email: Karen.Gaffney@co.lane.or.us

US Department of Health & Human Services, Office for Civil Rights

Medical Privacy, Complaint Division

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

200 Independence Avenue, SW, HHH Building, Room 509H

Washington, D.C. 20201

Phone: 866-627-7748 TTY: 886-788-4989 Email: www.hhs.gov/ocr

For More Information

If you have any questions about this notice or need more information, please contact the program contact person below:

Lane County Health & Human Services

Assistant Director

125 E. 8th Ave.

Eugene, OR 97401

Phone: 541-682-3942 Email: Karen.Gaffney@co.lane.or.us

In the future, H&HS may change its Notice of Privacy Practices. Any changes will apply to information H&HS already has, as well as any information H&HS receives in the future. A copy of the new notice will be posted at each H&HS site and facility and provided as required by law. You may ask for a copy of the current notice anytime you visit an H&HS facility, or get it on-line at www.lanecounty.org/hhs