



**Lutheran
Social Service**
of Minnesota

Notice of Privacy Practices

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICE OF MINNESOTA

Purpose: To describe how medical information may be used and how this information may be accessed

Policy: LSS will follow these practices to protect private medical information, limit disclosures as required by law, and provide access to your health information. ***Note: If you have a court-appointed legal guardian, LSS will not provide your health information without direct permission from your guardian.***

Last Revision Date: 03/20/2020

Your Rights

****If you have a court-appointed legal guardian, these rights are held by your guardian. This means any of the requests or instructions listed below MUST come from your legal guardian.***

When it comes to your health information, you have certain rights. This section explains your rights and some of our responsibilities to help you.

You have the right to:

Receive an electronic or paper copy of your medical record

- You can ask to see or copy an electronic or paper copy of your medical record and other health information.
- We will provide a copy or a summary of your health information within 14 days.
- If you ask to see or receive a copy of your record for purposes of reviewing current medical care, we may not charge you a fee.
- If you request copies of your patient records of past medical care or for certain appeals, we may charge you specified fees as determined by the Minnesota Department of Health. Fees for 2020 are \$1.44 per page and \$19.19 for retrieval fees.

Your Rights (Cont'd)

Ask us to correct your medical record

- You can ask us to correct health information about you that you think is incorrect or incomplete.
- We may say “no” to your request, but we’ll tell you why in writing within 60 days.

Request for us to contact you confidentially

- You can ask us to contact you in a specific way (for example, home or office phone) or to send mail to a different address.
- We will say “yes” to all reasonable requests.

Ask us to limit what we use or share

- You can ask us not to use or share certain health information for treatment, payment, or our operations (TPO). We are not required to agree to your request and we may say “no” if it would affect your care.
- If you pay for a service or health care item out-of-pocket in full, you can ask us not to share that information for the purpose of payment or our operations with your health insurer. We will say “yes” unless a law requires us to share that information
- Minnesota Law requires consent for disclosure of treatment, payment, or operations information.

Effective Date: 04/01/2020

Your Rights (Cont'd)

Get a list of those with whom we've shared information

- You can ask for a list (accounting) of the times we've shared your health information for six years prior to the date you ask, who we shared it with, and why.
- We will include all the disclosures except for those about treatment, payment, and health care operations, and certain other disclosures (such as any you asked us to make). We'll provide one accounting a year for free but will charge a reasonable, cost-based fee if you ask for another one within 12 months.

Get a copy of this privacy notice

- You can ask for a paper copy of this notice at any time, even if you have agreed to receive the notice electronically. We will provide you with a paper copy promptly.

File a complaint if you feel your rights are violated

- You can complain if you feel we have violated your rights by contacting us using the information on page 11.
- You can file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights by sending a letter to 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201, calling 1-877-696-6775, or visiting www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/complaints/.
- We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

Your Choices

****If you have a court-appointed legal guardian, any of the requests or instructions listed below MUST come from your legal guardian.***

For certain health information, you can tell us your choices about what we share

If you have a clear preference for how we share your information in the situations described below, talk to us. Tell us what you want us to do and we will follow your instructions.

In these cases, you have both the right and choice to tell us NOT to:

- Share information with your family, close friends, or other involved in your care
- Share information in a disaster relief situation

If you are not able to tell us your preference, for example if you are unconscious, we may go ahead and share your information if we believe it is in your best interest. We may also share your information when needed to lessen a serious and imminent threat to health or safety.

Effective Date: 04/01/2020

Your Choices (Cont'd)

In these cases we never share your information unless you give us written permission:

- Marketing purposes
- Sale of your information
- Most sharing of psychotherapy notes

Minnesota law requires consent for most other sharing purposes as well.

In the case of fundraising:

- We may contact you for fundraising efforts but you can tell us not to contact you again.

Our Uses and Disclosures

How do we typically use or share your health information?

We typically use or share your health information in the following ways. We need your consent before we disclose protected health information for treatment, payment, and operations purposes, unless the disclosure is to a related entity, or the disclosure is for a medical emergency and we are unable to obtain your consent due to your condition or the nature of the medical emergency.

Treat you

We can use your health information within our organization to treat you. We can share your information with other professionals who are treating you only if we have your consent. We can only release your health records to health care facilities and providers outside our network without your consent if it is an emergency and you are unable to provide consent due to the nature of the emergency. We may also share your health information with a provider in our network.

Example: A doctor treating you for an injury asks another doctor about your overall health condition.

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Our Uses and Disclosures (Cont'd)

Run our Organization

We can use and share your health information to run our business, improve your care, and contact you when necessary. We are required to obtain your consent before we release your health records to other providers for their own health care operations.

Example: We use health information about you to manage your treatment and services.

Bill for your services

We can use and share your health information to bill and get payment from health plans or other entities only if we obtain your consent.

Example: We give information about you to your health insurance plan so it will pay for your services.

How else can we use or share your health information?

We are allowed or required to share your information in other ways – usually in ways that contribute to the public good, such as public health and research. We have to meet many conditions in the law before we can share your information for these purposes. For more information see: www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/index.html

Our Uses and Disclosures (Cont'd)

Help with public health and safety issues

We can share health information about you for certain situations such as:

- Preventing disease
- Helping with product recalls
- Reporting adverse reactions to medications
- Reporting suspected abuse, neglect, or domestic violence
- Preventing or reducing a serious threat to anyone's health or safety

Do research

We can use and share your information for health research if you do not object.

Comply with the law

We will share information about you if state or federal laws require it, including with the Department of Health and Human Services if it wants to see that we're complying with federal privacy law.

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Our Uses and Disclosures (Cont'd)

Work with a medical examiner or coroner

We can share health information with a coroner and medical examiner when an individual dies. When possible, we will seek your consent to share information with a funeral director.

Address workers' compensation, law enforcement, and other government requests

We can use or share health information about you:

- For workers' compensation claims
- For law enforcement purposes or with a law enforcement official with your consent, unless required by law
- With health oversight agencies for activities authorized by law
- For special government functions such as military, national security, and presidential protective services with your consent, unless required by law

Respond to lawsuits and legal actions

We can share health information about you in response to a court or administrative order, or in response to a subpoena.

Minnesota Law

In Minnesota, we need your consent before we disclose protected health information for treatment, payment, and operations purposes, unless the disclosure is to a related entity, or the disclosure is for a medical emergency and we are unable to obtain your consent.

Our Rights and Responsibilities

Maintain privacy & security

We are required by law to maintain the privacy and security of your protected health information.

Inform of breach

We will let you know promptly if a breach occurs that may have compromised the privacy or security of your information.

Follow notice practices

We must follow the duties and privacy practices described in this notice and give you a copy of it.

We will not use or share your information other than as described here unless you tell us we can. If you tell us we can, you may change your mind at any time. Let us know if you change your mind and we will record and follow your wishes.

For more information see:

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-individuals/guidance-materials-for-consumers/index.html>

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Contact Us

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Changes to the terms of this notice

We can change the terms of this notice, and the changes will apply to all information we have about you. The new notice will be available upon request in our office and on our website.



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