

# NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES HIPAA POLICY

Aligned Chiropractic & Decompression Center - 401 Hughes Road #1,  
Madison AL 35758

Privacy Officers:  
Sherman Connell DC, Tanner Glass DC - (256) 325-1222

Effective Date: 8-8-13, Amended 11-8-2020

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.

We understand the importance of privacy and are committed to maintaining the confidentiality of your medical information. We make a record of the medical care we provide and may receive such records from others. We use these records to provide or enable other health care providers to provide quality medical care, to obtain payment for services provided to you as allowed by your health plan and to enable us to meet our professional and legal obligations to operate this medical practice properly. We are required by law to maintain the privacy of protected health information, to provide individuals with notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to protected health information, and to notify affected individuals following a breach of unsecured protected health information. This notice describes how we may use and disclose your medical information. It also describes your rights and our legal obligations with respect to your medical information. If you have any questions about this Notice, please contact one of our Privacy Officers listed above.

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## A. How This Medical Practice May Use or Disclose Your Health Information

This medical practice collects health information about you and stores it in a chart and on a computer. This is your medical record. The medical record is the property of this medical practice, but the information in the medical record belongs to you. The law permits us to use or disclose your health information for the following purposes:

1. **Treatment.** We use medical information about you to provide your medical care. We disclose medical information to our employees and others who are involved in providing the care you need. For example, we may share your medical information with other physicians or other health care providers who will provide services that we do not provide. Or we may share this information with a pharmacist who needs it to dispense a prescription to you, or a laboratory that performs a test. We may also disclose medical information to members of your family or others who can help you when you are sick or injured, or after you die.
2. **Payment.** We use and disclose medical information about you to obtain payment for the services we provide. For example, we give your health plan the information it requires before it will pay us. We may have to release your information to insurance companies, clearing houses, collections agencies, 3rd party payers, attorneys, adjusters, etc. in order to receive payment. We may have to send you statements of balances that are due through email or mail. We may

contact you via phone, email, fax, text message, mail, etc. in order to receive payment for balances due.

3. Health Care Operations. We may use and disclose medical information about you to operate this medical practice. For example, we may use and disclose this information to review and improve the quality of care we provide, or the competence and qualifications of our professional staff. Or we may use and disclose this information to get your health plan to authorize services or referrals. We may also use and disclose this information as necessary for medical reviews, legal services, and audits. These may include, but are not limited to: fraud and abuse detection, state agencies, state licensing boards, national licensing boards, malpractice companies, insurance companies, compliance programs, business planning and management. We may have to share your information with attorneys or 3rd party payers in order to fulfill the needs of a personal injury case or other similar case. We may sometimes have to share your medical information with our EHR software company in order to receive administrative help with your account. We may have to share your information to another healthcare facility in the case of a referral, such as a referral for diagnostic imaging or a referral from the VA. We may also share your information with other health care providers, health care clearinghouses or health plans. They may request for us to help them with their quality assessment and improvement activities, their patient-safety activities, their population-based efforts to improve health or reduce health care costs, their protocol development, case management or care-coordination activities, their review of competence, qualifications and performance of health care professionals, their training programs, their accreditation, certification or licensing activities, or their health care fraud and abuse detection and compliance efforts. We may also share medical information about you with the other health care providers, health care clearinghouses and health plans that participate with us in "organized health care arrangements" (OHCAs) for any of the OHCAs' health care operations. OHCAs include hospitals, physician organizations, health plans, and other entities which collectively provide health care services.

4. Appointment Reminders. We may use and disclose medical information to contact and remind you about appointments. If you are not home, we may leave this information on your answering machine or in a message left with the person answering the phone. We may also send you an email or text message.
5. Sign In Sheet. We may use and disclose medical information about you by having you sign in when you arrive at our office. We may also call out your name when we are ready to see you.
6. Open door policy. Sometimes the treatment room door may be open during treatment. To the best of our ability we will only discuss private information in a time and place that cannot be heard by others. You may request at any time to be moved to a private location or to have the treatment room door closed and we will make these changes immediately with no questions asked.
7. Notification and Communication With Family. We may disclose your health information to notify or assist in notifying a family member, your personal representative or another person responsible for your care about your location, your general condition or, unless you have instructed us otherwise, in the event of your death. In the event of a disaster, we may disclose information to a relief organization so that they may coordinate these notification efforts. We may also disclose information to someone who is involved with your care or helps pay for your care. If you are able and available to agree or object, we will give you the opportunity to object prior to making these disclosures, although we may disclose this information in a disaster even over your objection if we believe it is necessary to respond to the emergency circumstances. If you are unable or unavailable to agree or object, our health professionals will use their best judgment in communication with your family and others.
8. Marketing. Provided we do not receive any payment for making these communications, we may contact you to give you information about products or services related to your treatment, case management or care coordination, or to direct or recommend other treatments, therapies, health care providers or settings of care that may be of interest to you. We will not otherwise use or disclose your medical information for marketing purposes or accept any payment for other

marketing communications without your prior written authorization. The authorization will disclose whether we receive any compensation for any marketing activity you authorize, and we will stop any future marketing activity to the extent you revoke that authorization.

9. Communication. We may communicate with you through mail, email, phone, fax, text message, or any other form of communication. You may provide us with your preferred method of communication or revoke any type of communication that you are not comfortable with. To make any communication changes please contact us at the address or phone number on the first page.
10. Sale of Health Information. We will not sell your health information without your prior written authorization. The authorization will disclose that we will receive compensation for your health information if you authorize us to sell it, and we will stop any future sales of your information to the extent that you revoke that authorization. Required by Law. As required by law, we will use and disclose your health information, but we will limit our use or disclosure to the relevant requirements of the law. When the law requires us to report abuse, neglect or domestic violence, or respond to judicial or administrative proceedings, or to law enforcement officials, we will further comply with the requirement set forth below concerning those activities.
11. Public Health. We may, and are sometimes required by law, to disclose your health information to public health authorities for purposes related to: preventing or controlling disease, injury or disability; reporting child, elder or dependent adult abuse or neglect; reporting domestic violence; and reporting disease or infection exposure. When we report suspected elder or dependent adult abuse or domestic violence, we will inform you or your personal representative promptly unless in our best professional judgment, we believe the notification would place you at risk of serious harm or would require informing a personal representative we believe is responsible for the abuse or harm.
12. Health Oversight Activities. We may, and are sometimes required by law, to disclose your health information to health oversight agencies during the course of audits, investigations, inspections,

licensure and other proceedings, subject to the limitations imposed by law.

13. Judicial and Administrative Proceedings. We may, and are sometimes required by law, to disclose your health information in the course of any administrative or judicial proceeding to the extent expressly authorized by a court or administrative order. We may also disclose information about you in response to a subpoena, discovery request or other lawful process if reasonable efforts have been made to notify you of the request and you have not objected, or if your objections have been resolved by a court or administrative order.
14. Law Enforcement. We may, and are sometimes required by law, to disclose your health information to a law enforcement official for purposes such as identifying or locating a suspect, fugitive, material witness or missing person, complying with a court order, warrant, grand jury subpoena and other law enforcement purposes.
15. Coroners. We may have to disclose your health information to coroners in connection with their investigations of deaths.
16. Organ or Tissue Donation. We may disclose your health information to organizations involved in procuring, banking or transplanting organs and tissues.
17. Public Safety. We may, and are sometimes required by law, to disclose your health information to appropriate persons in order to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a particular person or the general public.
18. Specialized Government Functions. We may disclose your health information for military or national security purposes or to correctional institutions or law enforcement officers that have you in their lawful custody.
19. Workers' Compensation. We may disclose your health information as necessary to comply with workers' compensation laws. For example, to the extent your care is covered by workers' compensation, we will make periodic reports to your employer about your condition. We are also required by law to report cases of occupational injury or occupational illness to the employer or workers' compensation insurer.



20. Personal injury. We may disclose your health information as necessary to comply with a personal injury case. We may have to disclose information to an attorney, adjuster, judge, insurance company, or any other authorized individual.
21. Change of Ownership. In the event that this medical practice is sold or merged with another organization, your health information/record will become the property of the new owner, although you will maintain the right to request that copies of your health information be transferred to another physician or medical group.
22. Breach Notification. In the case of a breach of unsecured protected health information, we will notify you as required by law. If you have provided us with a current e-mail address, we may use e-mail to communicate information related to the breach. We may also provide notification by other methods as appropriate.

#### B. When This Medical Practice May Not Use or Disclose Your Health Information

Except as described in this Notice of Privacy Practices, this medical practice will, consistent with its legal obligations, not use or disclose health information which identifies you without your written authorization. If you do authorize this medical practice to use or disclose your health information for another purpose, you may revoke your authorization in writing at any time.

## C. Your Health Information Rights

1. **Right to Request Special Privacy Protections.** You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of your health information by a written request specifying what information you want to limit, and what limitations on our use or disclosure of that information you wish to have imposed. If you tell us not to disclose information to your commercial health plan concerning health care items or services for which you paid for in full out-of-pocket, we will abide by your request, unless we must disclose the information for treatment or legal reasons. We reserve the right to accept or reject any other request, and will notify you of our decision.
2. **Right to Request Confidential Communications.** You have the right to request that you receive your health information in a specific way or at a specific location. For example, you may ask that we send information to a particular e-mail account or to your work address. We will comply with all reasonable requests submitted in writing which specify how or where you wish to receive these communications.
3. **Right to Inspect and Copy.** You have the right to inspect and copy your health information, with limited exceptions. To access your medical information, you must submit a written request detailing what information you want access to, whether you want to inspect it or get a copy of it, and if you want a copy, your preferred form and format. We will provide copies in your requested form and format if it is readily producible, or we will provide you with an alternative format you find acceptable, or if we can't agree and we maintain the record in an electronic format, your choice of a readable electronic or hardcopy format. We will also send a copy to any other person you designate in writing.

4. Right to Amend or Supplement. You have a right to request that we amend your health information that you believe is incorrect or incomplete. You must make a request to amend in writing, and include the reasons you believe the information is inaccurate or incomplete. We are not required to change your health information, and will provide you with information about this medical practice's denial and how you can disagree with the denial. We may deny your request if we do not have the information, if we did not create the information (unless the person or entity that created the information is no longer available to make the amendment), if you would not be permitted to inspect or copy the information at issue, or if the information is accurate and complete as is. If we deny your request, you may submit a written statement of your disagreement with that decision, and we may, in turn, prepare a written rebuttal. All information related to any request to amend will be maintained and disclosed in conjunction with any subsequent disclosure of the disputed information.
5. Right to an Accounting of Disclosures. You have a right to receive an accounting of disclosures of your health information made by this medical practice.
6. Right to a Paper or Electronic Copy of this Notice. You have a right to notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to your health information, including a right to a paper copy of this Notice of Privacy Practices, even if you have previously requested its receipt by e-mail.

If you would like to have a more detailed explanation of these rights or if you would like to exercise one or more of these rights, contact one of our Privacy Officers listed at the top of this Notice of Privacy Practices.

#### D. Changes to this Notice of Privacy Practices

We reserve the right to amend this Notice of Privacy Practices at any time in the future. Until such amendment is made, we are required by law to comply with the terms of this Notice currently in effect. After an amendment is made, the revised Notice of Privacy Protections will apply to all protected health information that we maintain, regardless of when it was created or received. We will keep a copy of the current notice posted in our reception area, and a copy will be available at each appointment. We will also post the current notice on our website.

#### E. Complaints

Complaints about this Notice of Privacy Practices or how this medical practice handles your health information should be directed to one of our Privacy Officers listed at the top of this Notice of Privacy Practices. If you are not satisfied with the manner in which this office handles a complaint, you may submit a formal complaint to: [OCRMail@hhs.gov](mailto:OCRMail@hhs.gov). The complaint form may be found at <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/filing-a-complaint/index.html>. You will not be penalized by Aligned Chiropractic and Decompression Center in any way for filing a complaint.