

FERNDALE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
100 Dartmouth Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15905

HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices

This notice is designed to inform you of the privacy practices followed by the Ferndale Area School District's Group Health Plan. It also explains the federal privacy rights afforded to you and the members of your family as plan participants covered under a group health care plan.

As a plan sponsor, the Ferndale Area School District often needs access to health information in order to perform plan administrator functions. We want to assure the plan participants covered under our group health plan that we comply with federal privacy laws and respect your right to privacy. We require all members of our workforce and third parties that are provided access to health information comply with the privacy practices outlined below.

Uses and Disclosures of Health Information

Health Care Operations. We use and disclose health information about you in order to perform plan administration functions such as quality assurance activities, resolution of internal grievances, and evaluating plan performance. For example, we may review claims experience in order to understand participant utilization and to make plan design changes that are intended to control health care costs.

Payment. We may also use or disclose identifiable information about you without your written authorization in order to determine eligibility for benefits, seek reimbursement from a third party, or coordinate benefits with another health plan under which you are covered. For example, a health care provider that provided treatment to you will provide us with your health information. We use that information in order to determine whether those services are eligible for payment under our group health plan.

Treatment. Although the law allows use and disclosure of your health information for purposes of treatment, as a plan sponsor, we generally do not need to disclose your information for treatment purposes. Your physician or health care provider is required to provide you with an explanation of how they use and share your health information for purposes of treatment, payment, and health care operations.

As Permitted or Required by Law. We may also use or disclose your health information without your written authorization for other reasons permitted by law. Law permits us to share information, subject to certain requirements, in order to communicate information on health-related benefits or services that may be of interest to you, respond to court order, or provide information to further public health activities (e.g. preventing the spread of disease) with your written authorization. We will also disclose health information about you when required by law, for example, in order to prevent serious harm to you or to others.

Pursuant to Your Authorization. When required by law, we will ask you for your written authorization before using or disclosing your identifiable health information. If you choose to sign an authorization to disclose information, you can later revoke that authorization to cease any further uses or disclosures.

Right to Inspect and Copy. In most cases, you have the right to inspect and copy the health information we maintain about you. If you request copies, we will charge you \$.10 (10 cents) for each page. Your request to inspect or review your health information must be submitted in writing to the Privacy Officer.

Individual Rights

Right to an Accounting of Disclosures. You have the right to receive a list of instances where we have disclosed health information about you for reasons other than treatment, payment, or related administrative purposes.

Right to Amend. If you believe that information within your records is incorrect or if important information is missing, you have a right to request that we correct the existing information or add the missing information.

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Right to Amend. You may request in writing that we not use or disclose information for treatment, payment, or other administrative purposes except when specifically authorized by you, when required by law, or in emergency circumstances. We will consider your request, but are not legally obligated to agree to those restrictions.

Right to Request Restrictions. You may request in writing that we not use or disclose information for treatment, payment, or other administrative purposes except when specifically authorized by you, when required by law, or in emergency circumstances. We will consider your request, but are not legally obligated to agree to those restrictions.

Right to Request Confidential Communications. You have a right to receive confidential communications containing your health information. We are required to accommodate reasonable requests. For example, you may ask that we contact you at your place of employment or send communications regarding treatment to an alternate address.

Right to Receive a Paper Copy of this Notice. If you have agreed to accept this notice electronically, you also have a right to obtain a paper copy of this notice from us upon request.

Our Legal Duties

We are required by law to protect the privacy of your information, provide this notice about information practices, and follow the information practices that are described in this notice.

We may change our policies at any time. Before we make a significant change in our policies, we will provide you with a revised copy of this notice, as well as post the new notice in our central office. You can also request a copy of our notice at any time. For more information about our privacy practices, contact the person listed below.

**Privacy Officer
Ferndale Area School District
100 Dartmouth Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15905**

Complaints

If you are concerned that we have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision we made about access to your records, you may contact the Ferndale Area School District's Complaint Officer. Please submit your complaints in writing to: ***HIPAA Complaint Officer (Business Office), Ferndale Area School District, 100 Dartmouth Avenue, Johnstown, PA 15905.*** We appreciate hearing your concerns and will respond in writing to you. You also may send a written complaint to the U.S. Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services-Office of Civil Rights. Such complaints to the Secretary are required to be filed within 180 days of your discovery of the perceived violation. You may visit www.hhs.gov/ocr for further information. Under no circumstances will you be penalized or retaliated against for filing a complaint.

This form does not constitute advice and is provided "as is". This form is based upon current federal law and is subject to change based upon changes in federal law or subsequent interpretive guidance. This form must be modified to reflect state law where state law is more stringent.