

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.

The Victim Service Center of Central Florida, Inc. Is required by the Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA) to keep all health care records and other identifiable health information (protected health information or PHI) confidential. This notice describes how health information about you may be used and disclosed, your rights and how you can get access to your individually identifiable health information.

- I. Uses and Disclosures: The Victim Service Center is permitted to disclose and use your health care records for the purposes of treatment, payment, and health care operations without your specific written authorization.
 - Treatment** is when the Victim Service Center provides, coordinates or manages your healthcare and other services related to your health care. An example of treatment would be when the Victim Service Center consults with other health care providers such as your family physician.
 - Payment** is when the Victim Service Center obtains reimbursement for your healthcare. Examples of payment are when the Victim Service Center discloses your PHI to Victim Compensation for your therapy services.
 - Health Care Operations** are activities related to the performance and operation of the Victim Service Center. Examples of health care operations are quality assessment and improvement activities, business related matters such as audits and administrative services, and case management and coordination.

The Victim Service Center may also use your confidential information to remind you of an appointment or provide you with information about treatment options or other health related services via telephone or mail.
- II. Uses and Disclosures Requiring Authorization: The Victim Service Center may use or disclose PHI for purposes outside of treatment, payment, and health care operations when your appropriate authorization is obtained. An "authorization" is written permission above and beyond the general consent that permits only specific disclosures. In those instances when the Victim Service Center asks for information for purposes outside of treatment, payment, and a health care operations, the Victim Service Center will obtain an authorization from you before releasing this information. You may revoke all such authorizations at any time, provided each revocation is in writing. You may not revoke an authorization to the extent that (1) Victim Service Center has relied on that authorization or (2) if the authorization was obtained as a condition of obtaining insurance coverage and the law provides the insurer the right to contest the claim under the policy.
- III. Uses and Disclosures with Neither Consent nor Authorization: The Victim Service Center may use or disclose PHI without your consent or authorization in the following circumstances:
 - a. Child Abuse: If the Victim Service Center knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's

welfare, the law requires that the Victim Service Center report such knowledge or suspicion to the Florida Department of Child and Family Services.

- b. **Adult and Domestic Abuse:** If the Victim Service Center knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a vulnerable adult (disabled or elderly) has been or is being abused, neglected or exploited, the Victim Service Center is required by law to immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the Central Abuse Hotline.
- c. **Health Oversight:** If a complaint is filed against the Victim Service Center with Florida Department of Health, then the DOH has the authority to subpoena confidential information from the Victim Service Center relevant to that complaint.
- d. **Judicial or Administrative Proceedings:** If you are involved in court proceeding and a request is made for information about your treatment and the records thereof, such information is privileged under state law, and the Victim Service Center will not release information without the written authorization of you or your legal representative, or a subpoena of which you have been properly notified and you have failed to inform the Victim Service Center that you are opposing the subpoena or court order. The privilege does not apply when you are being evaluated for a third party or where the evaluation is court ordered. You will be informed in advance if this is the case.
- e. **Serious Threat to Health or safety:** When you present a clear and immediate probability of physical harm to yourself, to other individuals, or to society, the Victim Service Center may communicate relevant information concerning this to the potential victim, appropriate family member, law enforcement or other appropriate authorities.
- f. **Worker's Compensation:** If you file a worker's compensation claim, the Victim Service Center must upon request of your employer, the insurance carrier, an authorized qualified rehabilitation provider, or the attorney for the employer or insurance carrier, furnish your relevant records to those persons.

I. Patient's Rights

- **Right to Request Restrictions** – You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of protected health information about you. However, the Victim Service Center is not required to agree to a restriction you request.
- **Right to Receive Confidential Communications by Alternative Means and at Alternative Locations** – You have the right to request and receive confidential communication of PHI by alternative means and at alternative locations. For example you may not want family members to know you are being seen by the Victim Service Center and upon your request we will send mailings to an alternative address.
- **Right to Inspect and Copy** – You have the right to inspect or obtain a copy (or both) of PHI. In limited circumstances, we may deny you access to your medical information, and you may appeal certain types of denials. Requests to inspect or copy PHI may take up to 30 days to facilitate.
- **Right to Amend** – You have the right to request an amendment of PHI for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record. The Victim Service Center may



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deny your request. On your request, the Victim Service Center will discuss with you the details of the request process.

- Right to an Accounting – You generally have the right to receive an accounting of disclosures of PHI regarding you. On your request, the Victim Service Center will discuss with you the details of the accounting process.
- Right to a Paper Copy – You have the right to obtain a paper copy of the notice of privacy practices from the Victim Service Center upon request, even if you have agreed to receive the notice electronically.

Victim Service Center:

- Is required by law to maintain the privacy of PHI and to provide you with a notice of the legal duties and privacy practices with respect to PHI.
- Reserves the right to change the privacy policies and practices described in this notice. Unless the Victim Service Center notifies you of such changes, the Victim Service Center is required to abide by the terms currently in effect.
- Will have available any revised notice of privacy practices at our administrative office and will provide you a copy upon your request.

III. Questions and Complaints

If you have questions about this notice, disagree with a decision that the Victim Service Center makes about access to your records or have other concerns about your privacy rights, you may contact the Victim Service Center at (407) 254-9415.

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated and wish to file a complaint with the Victim Service Center, you may send your written complaint to:

Executive Director
Victim Service Center of Central Florida, Inc.
2111 E. Michigan Street, Suite 210
Orlando, Florida 32806

For additional information about HIPPA or to file a complaint, contact:
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Civil Rights
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

You have specific rights under the Privacy Rule. The Victim Service Center will not retaliate against you for exercising your right to file a complaint.

IV. Effective Date, Restrictions, and Changes to Privacy Policy

This notice is effective April 14, 2003. The Victim Service Center reserves the right to change the terms of this notice and to make the new provisions effective for all PHI that the Victim Service Center maintains. The Victim Service Center will provide a revised notice posted in the waiting room and a copy will be available upon request.