

PICKERINGTON EYE CARE

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

**THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED
AND
DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION.**

**PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.
THE PRIVACY OF YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT TO US.**

OUR LEGAL DUTY

We are required by applicable federal and state law to maintain the privacy of your health information. We are also required to give you this Notice about our privacy practices, our legal duties, and your rights concerning your health information. We must follow the privacy practices that are described in this Notice while it is in effect. The Notice takes effect April 14, 2003, and will remain in effect until we replace it.

We reserve the right to change our privacy practices and the terms of this Notice at any time, provided such changes are permitted by applicable law. We reserve the right to make the changes in our privacy practices and the new terms of our Notice effective for all health information that we maintain, including health information we created or received before we made the changes. In the event, we make a material change in our privacy practices, we will change this Notice and provide it to you.

You may request a copy of our Notice at any time. For more information about your privacy practices, or for additional copies of this Notice, please contact us using the information listed at the end of this Notice.

USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

We use and disclose health information about you for treatment, payment, and healthcare operations. For example:

Treatment: We may use or disclose your health information to an optician, ophthalmologist or other healthcare provider providing treatment to you for: a) the provision, coordination, or management of health care and related services by health care providers; b) consultation between health care providers relating to a patient; c) the referral of a patient for health care from one health care provider to another, or d) recall information.

Payment: We may use and disclose your health information to obtain payment for services we provide to you. This may include: a) billing and collection activities and related data processing; b) actions by a health plan or insurer to obtain premiums or to determine or fulfill its responsibilities for coverage and provision of benefits under its health plan or insurance agreement; determinations of eligibility or coverage; adjudication or subrogation of health benefit claims; c) medical necessity and appropriateness of care reviews; utilization review activities; and d) disclosure to consumer reporting agencies of information relating to collection of premiums or reimbursement.

Healthcare Operations: We may use and disclose your health information in connection with our healthcare operations. Healthcare operations include things such as quality assessment and improvement activities, reviewing the competence or qualifications of healthcare professionals, evaluating practitioner and provider performance, conducting training programs accreditation, certification, licensing or credentialing activities.

Your Authorization: In addition to our use of your health information for treatment, payment or healthcare operations, you may give us written authorization to use your health information or to disclose it to anyone for any purpose. If you give us an authorization, you may revoke it in writing at any time. Your revocation will not affect any use or disclosures permitted by your authorization while it was in effect. Unless you give us a written authorization, we cannot use or disclose your health information for any reason except those described in this Notice.

Marketing Health Products or Services: We will not use your health information for marketing communications without your prior written authorization. We may provide you with information regarding products or services that we offer related to your health care needs. We will never sell your health information without your prior authorization.

Persons Involved in Care: We may use or disclose health information to notify, or assist in the notification of (including or locating) a family member, your personal representative or another person responsible for your care, of your location, your general condition, or death. If you are present, then prior to use or disclosure of your health information, we will provide you with an opportunity to object to such uses or disclosures. In the event of your incapacity or emergency circumstances, we will disclose health information based on a determination using our professional judgment disclosing only health information that is directly relevant to the person's involvement in your healthcare. We will also use our professional judgment and our experience with common practice to make reasonable inferences of your best interest in allowing a person to pick up filled prescriptions, medical supplies, x-rays, or other similar forms of health information.

Required by Law: We may use or disclose your health information when we are required to do so by law, including judicial and administrative proceedings.

Abuse or Neglect: We may disclose your health information to appropriate authorities if we reasonably believe that you are a possible victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence or the possible victim of other crimes. We may disclose your health information to the extent necessary to avert a serious threat to your health or safety or the health or safety of others.

National Security: We may disclose to military authorities the health information of (including or locating) a family member, your personal representative or another person responsible for your care, of your location, your general condition, or death. If you are present, then prior to use or disclosure of your health information, we will provide you with an opportunity to object to such uses or disclosures. In the event of your incapacity or emergency circumstances, we will disclose health information based on a determination using our professional judgment disclosing only health information that is directly relevant to the person's involvement in your healthcare. We will also use our professional judgment and our experience with common practice to make reasonable inferences of your best interest in allowing a person to pick up filled prescriptions, medical supplies, x-rays, or other similar forms of health information.

Appointment Reminders and Treatment Alternatives: We may use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminders (such as voicemail messages, postcards, or letters) or information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.