

EYE PHYSICIANS OF NORTHAMPTON

PRIVACY POLICY NOTICE

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.

Eye Physicians of Northampton respects your privacy. We understand that your personal health information is very sensitive. We will not disclose your information to others unless you tell us to do so, or unless the law authorizes us to do so.

The law protects the privacy of the health information we create and obtain in providing our care and services to you. For example, your protected health information includes your symptoms, test results, diagnoses, treatment, health information from other providers, and billing and payment information relating to these services. Federal and state law allows us to use and disclose your protected health information for purposes of treatment and health care operations. State law requires us to get your authorization to disclose this information for payment purposes.

Examples of Use and Disclosures of Protected Health Information for Treatment, Payment, and Health Operations.

Information obtained by a nurse, technician, physician or other member of our health care team will be recorded in your medical record and used to help decide what care may be right for you.

- We may also provide information to others providing you care. This will help them stay informed about your care.

For payment:

- We request payment from your health insurance plan. Health plans need information from us about your medical care. Information provided to health plans may include your diagnoses, procedures performed or recommended care.

For health care operations:

- We use your medical records to assess and improve services.
- We may use and disclose medical records to review the qualifications and performance of our health care providers and to train our staff.
- We may contact you to remind you about appointments and give you information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services.
- We may use and disclose your information to conduct or arrange for services, including:
 - medical quality review by your health plan;
 - accounting, legal, risk management and insurance services;
 - audit functions, including fraud and abuse detection and compliance programs.

Your Health Information Rights

The health care billing records we create and store are the property of Eye Physicians of Northampton. The protected health information in it, however, generally belongs to you. Under certain circumstances we have the right to deny you access. You have a right to:

- Receive, read and ask questions about this Notice;
- Restrict certain uses and disclosures. We are not required to grant the request. In this case, your medical records will be released directly to you;
- Request and receive from us a paper copy of the most current Privacy Policy Notice for Protected Health Information;
- Request that you be allowed to see and get a copy of your protected health information. This request must be in writing. We have a form available for this type of request.
- Have us review a denial of access to your health information;
- Ask us to change your health information. You may write a statement of disagreement if your request is denied. It will be stored in your medical record and included with any release of records.
- When you request, we will give you a list of disclosures of your health information. The list will not include disclosures to third-party payers. You may receive this information, as well as a copy of your health information, with out charge.
- Ask that your health information be given to you by another means or at another location. Please sign, date and give us your request in writing.
- Cancel prior authorizations to use or disclose health information by giving us a written revocation. Your revocation does not affect information that has already been released. It also does not affect any action taken before we have it. Sometimes, you cannot cancel an authorization if its purpose was to obtain insurance.

For help with these rights during normal business hours, please contact:

Our Privacy Officer, Debra, at (413) 584-6422 Ext. 109.

Our Responsibilities:

- Keep your health information private;
- give you this notice;
- Follow the terms of this notice.

We have the right to change our practices regarding health information we maintain. If we make changes, we will update this Notice. You may receive the most recent copy of this Notice by calling and asking for it or by visiting Eye Physicians of Northampton to pick up one.

To Ask Questions or Complain

If you have questions, want more information, or want to report a problem about the handling of your protected health information, you may contact:

Our Privacy Officer, Debra, at (413) 584-6422 Ext. 109.

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may discuss your concerns with the Privacy Officer. You may also deliver a written complaint to any Eye Physicians of Northampton. You may also file a complaint with the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services. If you complain, we will not retaliate against you.

Other Disclosures and Uses of Protected Health Information

We may use & disclose your protected health information without your authorization as follows:

- Another physician within Eye Physicians of Northampton may review records for the purpose of random review as part of quality improvement.
- To Medical Researchers: if the request has been approved and has policies to protect the privacy of your health information.
- To Funeral Directors/ Coroners
- To Organ Procurement Organizations
- To the Food & Drug Administration (FDA)
- To Comply with Workers' Compensation Laws: if you made a workers' compensation claim
- For Public Health & Safety Purposes & to Correctional Institutions
- For Work-related Conditions that could affect Employee Health
- To the Military Authorizations of U. S. & Foreign Military Personnel as required by law
- In the Course of Judicial Administrative Proceedings at your request or as directed by a subpoena or court order.
- For Specialized Government Functions
- Uses & Disclosures not in this Notice will be made only as allowed or required by law or with your written authorization.