



PLUMAS COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

HIPAA RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

EFFECTIVE APRIL 14, 2003

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS TO A COMPLAINT PROCESS

Policy:

Plumas County recognizes and commits to safeguarding an individual's right to file a complaint concerning the County's practices with respect to the privacy and confidentiality of protected health information.

Purpose:

Individuals have the right to file a complaint without fear of retaliation; complaints may be filed directly with a covered entity or with the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services.

Responsibilities:

Plumas County and all departments providing health related services, will designate a contact person to be responsible for receiving complaints regarding privacy practices.

Plumas County must cooperate with the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services investigations including permitting access to information at any time.

Plumas County staff may not threaten, intimidate or retaliate against any individual who files a complaint.

Process:

Receipt: Complaints may be made orally or in writing to the contacts listed in the Notice of Privacy Practices. Complaints must be made within 180 days of the known violation.

Complaints will be forwarded to the appropriate department's designated contact person.

Logging: The contact person will complete a complaint report and maintain records to track the nature of complaints and assess the need for changes in practices.

Response: The contact person will contact the complainant, provide the complainant the opportunity to discuss additional information, and inform the complainant of the status of the internal review of the matter.

Investigation: The contact person or Privacy Officer will assume responsibility for determining the appropriate nature and extent of investigation and will investigate the matter or appoint an investigator.

Report and Recommendation: The investigator's report will include the complaint, the surrounding circumstances, the investigator's conclusions and recommendations.

Recommendations may include changes in Privacy Policies and Procedures, changes in specific practices and additional workforce training.

Documentation: Documentation of all complaints received and their disposition will be maintained for at least six years.

No Waiver of rights: The County will not require any individual to waive their rights as a condition of receiving services

No Retaliatory Action: Plumas County will not take any retaliatory action against individuals who file a complaint

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