



NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES AND PATIENT RIGHTS

Privacy Policy

This document is our privacy notice for our patients and clients. It describes our policies and your rights regarding your protected health information (PHI). Please read it carefully. VHA has already had in place for many years a strict policy in accordance with Federal Regulations 42 CFR limiting our releases of PHI. The new rules will change the wording of some documents, and require additional documentation such as this notice to you.

The words “we”, “our” and “us” refer to Valley Health Associates (VHA). The words “you” and “your” refer to all of our patients and clients. Protected Health Information is also referred to as individually identifiable health information, and includes any two pieces of nonpublic information identifying the patient or clients. We must obtain written consent for any disclosure of PHI except in court related matters or otherwise allowed by HIPAA Privacy Rule and Federal Confidentiality. We will not disclose your PHI except as disclosed in this policy or as otherwise permitted by law. Consent will expire 60 days after discharge.

We maintain administrative, physical, and technical safeguards to protect the privacy of your PHI, and we limit the information we disclose to others including contracted personnel and our staff to the least amount possible. Therefore, **Your PHI may be disclosed to the following agencies:** (if applicable) Monterey County Courts; Monterey County Probation; local Parole office; Monterey County Health Dept., Behavioral Health Division; Monterey County District Attorney's Office; Monterey County Public Defender's Office; and other local, state or federal courts or agencies referring you to us for treatment or paying for your treatment (including, but not limited to local, state, and federal funding sources); and a collection agency as needed to collect payment for services received. Information may also be disclosed to McGilloway Ray Brown & Kaufman (certified financial auditors), and other individuals or entities for whom you may have signed a written authorization for release of confidential information

Crimes committed on our premises or against other clients and staff are not protected by confidentiality laws

The information we disclose on court referred clients may include the following: (when applicable) participation in VHA's programs (enrollment, progress, discharge reports); attendance at program

427 Pajaro St. Ste. 4, 5 & 6, Salinas, Ca 93901

Phone: (831) 424 - 6655 | **Fax:** (831) 424 - 9717 & (831) 424 - 9807 (Youth Outpatient)

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activities and 12-step meetings; illegal activities; drug screenings results; noncompliance with program requirements (includes fees), and standards

You do not have a right to opt out of these disclosures of confidential information.

It is possible that your PHI would be seen by auditors from local, state, and federal agencies; and the accrediting and licensing bodies. Vendors such as Netalytics and Ray Morgan Managed IT Services may also access your information for the sole purpose of providing technical and software support for our computerized systems. These auditors and vendors are restricted by Federal Confidentiality Rules (42 CFR part 2).

Patient Rights

In accordance with state and federal standards and regulations, each person receiving services from VHA shall have rights which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The right to privacy and confidentiality as provided in Title 42 Part 2 (Code of Federal Regulations), and VHA's Privacy Practices (HIPAA Privacy Rule).
2. To be accorded dignity at all times by the staff, board members, and other persons including other participants in our programs. In addition, a respectful and safe treatment for women is accomplished through staff sensitivity towards women's issues and adequate female staffing.
3. To be accorded safe, clean, accessible, and comfortable accommodations to meet his or her needs in an alcohol/drug free environment. In addition, the facility will be well lit and supervised by competent staff.
4. To be free from: abuse (verbal, intellectual, emotional, physical and/or inappropriate sexual behavior); financial or other exploitation; retaliation; humiliation; and neglect.
5. To be assured of nondiscrimination on the basis of age, mental or physical disability, ethnic group identification, race, national origin, religion, sex or sexual orientation.
6. To be given an orientation of VHA program requirements: expectations; related regulations; fees assessed for services and refund policy; referrals to legal entities for appropriate representation or other legal right; and referrals to 12-step meetings and community resources.
7. To be accorded access, upon written request to the Program Director, records relating to your treatment at VHA.

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8. To be able to file a grievance or appeal, or to request an investigation and resolution for any VHA decisions regarding your treatment including but not limited to involuntary discharge or infringement of your rights. First, you should contact your counselor. Then, the next course of action is to contact:

- A) VHA's Executive Director, Salinas office 427 Pajaro Street Suite 4,5,6 Salinas, CA 93901; (831) 424-6655 ext. 14.
- B) Monterey County Health, Behavioral Bureau, 1270 Natividad Rd. 93905 Salinas Ca; or the State of California Health and Human Services Agency Department of Healthcare Services 1600 Ninth Street Room 460. Sacramento, Ca. 95814 (916) 654- 3454

Copies of this policy are posted and available in the lobby of our Salinas location, as well as located in the Patient Handbook, and reviewed and signed by clients/patients upon admission into the VHA program.

If you have complaints or concerns regarding the use or disclosure of PHI, please submit them in writing to VHA's Executive Director at 427 Pajaro Street Suite 4,5,6 Salinas, CA 93901. You may also submit complaints of violations to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services at 200 Independence Avenue, S. W., Washington, D. C. 20201

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