



Notice of Privacy Practices

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND ALSO DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

USES AND DISCLOSURES OF YOUR PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION

Protected health information includes demographic and medical information that concerns an individual's past, present, or future physical or mental health. Demographic information could include your name, address, telephone number, social security number, and any other means of identifying you as a specific person. Protected health information contains specific information that identifies a person or can be used to identify a person.

Protected health information is health information created or received by a health care provider. The Ear Research Foundation (ERF) can act as a health care provider. ERF utilizes this medical information in various ways throughout its normal business activities.

Your protected health information may be used or disclosed by ERF for purposes of treatment, payment, and health care operations. Healthcare professionals use medical information in clinics or hospitals to care for you. Your protected health may be shared, with or without your consent, with another health care provider for purposes of your treatment. ERF may use or disclose your health information for case management and services.

Your information may be used by personnel to improve ERF's health care operations. ERF may also send you appointment reminders, information about treatment options, or other health-related benefits and services.

Some protected health information can be disclosed without your written authorization as allowed by law. Those circumstances include:

- Reporting abuse of children, adults, or disabled persons.
- Investigations related to a missing child.
- Internal investigations and audits by ERF's board of directors.
- Public health purposes, including data/statistics and education.
- Research approved by ERF.
- Court orders, warrants, or subpoenas.
- Law enforcement purposes and investigations.

Other uses and disclosures of your protected health information by ERF will require your written authorization. These uses and disclosures may be for marketing and fundraising purposes.

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

You have the right to request ERF to restrict the use and disclosure of your protected health information to carry out treatment, payment, or health care operations. You may also limit disclosures to individuals involved with your care. ERF is not required to agree to any restriction.

You have the right to be assured that your information will be kept confidential. ERF will contact you in the manner and at the address or phone number you select. You may be asked to put your request in writing. If you are responsible for paying for services, you may provide an address other than your residence where you can receive mail and where we may contact you.

You have the right to inspect and receive a copy of your protected health information that ERF maintains within 30 days of ERF's receipt of your request to obtain a copy of your protected health information.

Your inspection of information will be at an appointed time and place. You may be denied access as specified by law.

If you choose to receive a copy of your protected health information, you have the right to receive the information in the form or format you request. If ERF cannot produce it in that form or format, it will give you the information in a readable hard copy form or another form or format that you and ERF agree to.

ERF cannot give you access to certain information being used in legal proceedings. Records are maintained for specified periods as required by law. If your request covers information beyond that time ERF is required to keep the record, the information may no longer be available.

You have the right to correct your protected health information. Your request to correct your protected health information must be in writing and provide a reason to support your requested correction. ERF may deny your request, in whole or part, if it finds the protected health information:

- ERF did not create it.
- It is not protected health information.
- By law, it is not available for your inspection.
- It is accurate and complete.

If your correction is accepted, ERF will correct and notify you and others who need to be informed about the change. If your request is denied, you may submit a letter explaining why you disagree with the decision. ERF may respond to your letter in writing.

You have the right to receive a summary of certain disclosures the ERF may have made of your protected health information. This summary does not include:

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EarRF.ORG

- Disclosures made to you.
- Disclosures to individuals involved with your care.
- Disclosures authorized by you.
- Disclosures are made to carry out treatment, payment, and health care operations.
- Disclosures for public health.
- Disclosures to health professionals for regulatory purposes.
- Disclosures to report abuse of children, adults, or the disabled.
- Disclosures before April 14, 2003

This summary does include disclosures made regarding:

- Purposes of research, other than those you authorized in writing.
- Responses to court orders, subpoenas, or warrants.

You may request a summary for a period not exceeding 6 years from the date of your request.

If you receive this Notice of Privacy Practices electronically, you have the right to a paper copy upon request.

ERF may mail, call, email, or text you with health care appointment reminders.

ERF is required by law to maintain the privacy of your protected health information. This Notice of Privacy Practices tells you how your protected health information may be used and how ERF keeps your information private and confidential. This notice explains the legal duties and practices relating to your protected health information. ERF has the responsibility to notify you following a breach of your unsecured protected health information.

As part of ERF's legal duties, this Notice of Privacy Practices must be given to you. ERF is required to follow the terms of the Notice of Privacy Practices currently in effect.

ERF may change the terms of its notice. The change, if made, will be effective for all protected health information that it maintains. New or revised notices or privacy practices will be posted on ERF's website and will be available by email and at ERF's offices. Also available are additional documents that further explain your rights to inspect and copy and amend your protected health information.

COMPLAINTS

If you believe your privacy health rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with the: Department of Health's Inspector General at 4052 Bald Cypress Way, BIN A03/Tallahassee, FL 32399-1704/telephone 850-245-4141 and with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at 200 Independence Avenue, S.W./Washington, D.C. 20201/telephone 202-619-0257 or toll free 877-696-6775.

The complaint must be in writing, describe the acts or omissions that you believe violate your privacy rights, and be filed within 180 days of when you knew or should have known that the act or omission occurred. ERF will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Requests for further information about the matters covered by this notice may be directed to the staff members of ERF.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This Notice of Privacy Practices is effective as of July 1, 2025, and will remain in effect until a new Notice of Privacy Practices is approved and posted.