



Notice of Privacy Practices for Health Information

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.

This Notice of Privacy Practices describes the practices of Principal Life Insurance Company for safeguarding individually identifiable health information. The terms of this Notice apply to members, their spouses and dependents for their group medical expense, group dental expense and/or group vision care expense insurance with us (“insurance”). As used in this Notice, the term “health information” means information about you that we create, receive or maintain in connection with your insurance; that relates to your physical or mental condition or payment for health care provided to you; and that can reasonably be used to identify you. This Notice was effective April 14, 2003 and revisions to this Notice are effective November 1, 2017.

We are required by law to maintain the privacy of our members’ and dependents’ health information and to provide notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to their health information. We are required to abide by the terms of this Notice as long as it remains in effect. We reserve the right to change the terms of this Notice as necessary and to make the new Notice effective for all health information maintained by us. Copies of revised Notices will be mailed to plan sponsors for distribution to the members then covered by our insurance. You have the right to request a paper copy of the Notice, although you may have originally requested a copy of the Notice electronically by e-mail.

Uses and Disclosures of Your Health Information

Authorization. Except as explained below, we will not use or disclose your health information for any purpose unless you have signed a form authorizing a use or disclosure. Unless we have taken any action in reliance on the authorization, you have the right to revoke an authorization if the request for revocation is in writing and sent to: Health Information Protection Analyst, Group Compliance, Principal Life Insurance Company, Des Moines, IA 50392-0002. A form to revoke an authorization can be obtained from the Health Information Protection Analyst.

Disclosures for Treatment. We may disclose your health information as necessary for your treatment. For instance, a doctor or healthcare facility involved in your care may request your health information in our possession to assist in your care.

Uses and Disclosures for Payment. We will use and disclose your health information as necessary for payment purposes. For instance, we may use your health information to process or pay claims, for subrogation, to perform a hospital admission review to determine whether services are for medically necessary care or to perform prospective reviews. We may also forward information to another insurer in order for it to process or pay claims on your behalf. Unless we agree in writing to do otherwise, we will send all mail regarding a member’s spouse or dependents to the member, including information about the payment or denial of insurance claims.

Uses and Disclosures for Health Care Operations. We will use and disclose your health information as necessary for health care operations. For instance, we may use or disclose your health information for quality assessment and quality improvement, credentialing health care providers, premium rating, conducting or arranging for medical review or compliance. We may also disclose your health information to another insurer, health care facility or health care provider for activities such as quality assurance or case management. We participate in an organized health care arrangement with the health plan of a member’s employer. We may disclose your health information to the health plan for certain functions of its health care operations. This Privacy Notice does not cover the privacy practices of that plan. We may contact your health care providers concerning prescription drug or treatment alternatives.

Other Health-Related Uses and Disclosures. We may contact you to provide reminders for appointments; information about treatment alternatives; or other health-related programs, products or services that may be available to you.

Information Received Pre-enrollment. We may request and receive from you and your health care providers health information prior to your enrollment under the insurance. We will use this information to determine whether you are eligible to enroll under the insurance and to determine the rates. We will not use or disclose any genetic information we obtain about you or provided from your family history. If you do not enroll, we will not use or disclose the information we obtained about you for any other purpose. Information provided on enrollment forms or applications will be utilized for all coverages being applied for, some of which may be protected by the state, not federal, privacy laws.

Business Associate. Certain aspects and components of our services are performed by outside people or organizations pursuant to agreements or contracts. It may be necessary for us to disclose your health information to these outside people or organizations that perform services on our behalf. We require them to appropriately safeguard the privacy of your health information. Principal Life Insurance Company may itself be a business associate of your health plan or health insurance company. We may disclose your health information to your health plan or insurance company and its business associates as needed to fulfill our contractual obligations to them. Please see the notice of privacy practices issued by your plan or insurance company for information about how it uses and discloses your health information.

Plan Sponsor. When permitted by law, we may disclose to the plan sponsor the minimum necessary amount of your health information that it needs to perform administrative functions on behalf of the plan (if any), provided that the plan sponsor certifies that the information will be maintained in a confidential manner and will not be utilized or disclosed for employment-related actions and decisions or in connection with any other benefit or employee benefit plan of the plan sponsor.

Family, Friends, and Personal Representatives. With your approval, we may disclose to family members, close personal friends, or another person you identify, your health information relevant to their involvement with your care or paying for your care. If you are unavailable, incapacitated or involved in an emergency situation, and we determine that a limited disclosure is in your best interests, we may disclose your health information without your approval. We may also disclose your health information to public or private entities to assist in disaster relief efforts.

Other Uses and Disclosures. We are permitted or required by law to use or disclose your health information, without your authorization, in the following circumstances:

- For any purpose required by law;
- For public health activities (for example, reporting of disease, injury, birth, death or suspicion of child abuse or neglect);
- To a governmental authority if we believe an individual is a victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence;
- For health oversight activities (for example, audits, inspections, licensure actions or civil, administrative or criminal proceedings or actions);
- For judicial or administrative proceedings (for example, pursuant to a court order, subpoena or discovery request);
- For law enforcement purposes (for example, reporting wounds or injuries or for identifying or locating suspects, witnesses or missing people);
- To coroners and funeral directors;
- For procurement, banking or transplantation of organ, eye or tissue donations;
- For certain research purposes;
- To avert a serious threat to health or safety under certain circumstances;
- For military activities if you are a member of the armed forces; for intelligence or national security issues; or about an inmate or an individual to a correctional institution or law enforcement official having custody; and
- For compliance with workers' compensation programs.

We will adhere to all state and federal laws or regulations that provide additional privacy protections. We are prohibited from using or disclosing protected health information that is genetic information of an individual for purposes of determining eligibility for coverage, the amount of benefits or premiums or discounts, including rebates, payments in kind, or other premium or benefit differential mechanisms in return for activities such as completing a health risk assessment or participating in a wellness program. We will not request, use or disclose psychotherapy notes without your authorization (except to defend ourselves in a legal action brought by you.) We will not sell your protected health information or use or disclose it for marketing purposes without your authorization, except as permitted by law. We are required by law to maintain the privacy of protected health information, to provide individuals with notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to protected health information, and to notify affected individuals following a breach of unsecured protected health information.

Your Rights

Restrictions on Use and Disclosure of Your Health Information. You have the right to request restrictions on how we use or disclose your health information for treatment, payment or health care operations. You also have the right to request restrictions on disclosures to family members or others who are involved in your care or the paying of your care. To request a restriction, you must send a written request to: Health Information Protection Analyst, Group Compliance, Principal Life Insurance Company, 711 High Street, Des Moines, IA 50392-0002. A form to request a restriction can be obtained from the Health Information Protection Analyst. We are not required to agree to your request for a restriction. If your request for a restriction is granted, you will receive a written acknowledgement from us.

Receiving Confidential Communications of Your Health Information. You have the right to request communications regarding your health information from us by alternative means (for example by fax) or at alternative locations. We will accommodate reasonable requests. To request a confidential communication, you must send a written request to: Health Information Protection Analyst, Group Compliance, Principal Life Insurance Company, 711 High Street, Des Moines, IA 50392-0002. A form to request a confidential communication can be obtained from the Health Information Protection Analyst.

Access to Your Health Information. You have the right to inspect and/or obtain a copy of your health information we maintain in your designated record set, subject to certain exceptions. To request access to your information, you must send a written request to: Health Information Protection Analyst, Group Compliance, Principal Life Insurance Company, 711 High Street, Des Moines, IA 50392-0002. A form to request access to your health information can be obtained from the Health Information Protection Analyst. A fee will be charged for copying and postage.

Amendment of Your Health Information. You have the right to request an amendment to your health information to correct inaccuracies. To request an amendment, you must send a written request to: Health Information Protection Analyst, Group Compliance, Principal Life Insurance Company, 711 High Street, Des Moines, IA 50392-0002. A form to request an amendment to your health information can be obtained from the Health Information Protection Analyst. We are not required to grant the request in certain circumstances.

Accounting of Disclosures of Your Health Information. You have the right to receive an accounting of certain disclosures of your health information made by us during the 6 year period before your request. To request an accounting, you must send a written request to: Health Information Protection Analyst, Group Compliance, Principal Life Insurance Company, 711 High Street, Des Moines, IA 50392-0002. A form to request an accounting of your health information can be obtained from the Health Information Protection Analyst. The first accounting in any 12-month period will be free; however, a fee will be charged for any subsequent request for an accounting during that same time period.

Complaints. If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you can send a written complaint to us at Grievance Coordinator, Group Compliance, Principal Life Insurance Company, 711 High Street, Des Moines, IA 50392-0002 or to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. There will be no retaliation for filing a complaint.

If you have any questions or need any assistance regarding this Notice or your privacy rights, you may contact the Group Call Center at Principal Life Insurance Company at (800) 843-1371.