

Commitment to Privacy

The appropriate collection, use and disclosure of client personal health information is fundamental to the agency's day-to-day operations and to client care. Protecting the privacy and the confidentiality of client personal information is important to the Nurse Manager and care staff at Caregivers 24/7. The agency strives to provide clients with excellent non-medical, in-home care and service. Each member of the Caregivers 24/7 team must adhere by the agency's commitment to privacy in the handling of personal information.

Applicability of This Privacy Policy

The agency's Privacy Policy attests to its commitment to privacy and demonstrates the ways in which the agency ensures that client privacy is protected. The agency's Privacy Policy applies to the personal health information of each client that is in the agency's possession and control.

What is Personal Health Information?

Personal health information (PHI) means identifying information about an individual relating to his/her physical or mental health (including medical history), the providing of in-home care to the individual, payments or eligibility for in-home care and health identifying numbers.

The current Privacy Policy reflects the agency's compliance with fair information practices, applicable laws and standards of agency:

Accountability

The agency takes its commitment to securing client privacy very seriously. The agency's Nurse Manager and individuals employed or contracted with the agency is responsible for the personal information under his/her control. Upon hiring, the agency employees and/or contractors are informed about the importance of privacy and receive information periodically to update him/her about the agency's Privacy Policy and related issues.

Identifying Purposes: Why We Collect Information

The agency asks clients for personal information to establish a business relationship as well as to effectively serve the client's in-home care needs. The agency obtains most of its information about clients directly from the client, or other healthcare provider who the client has seen and is authorized to disclose to us. Clients are entitled to know how the agency uses his/her information and this is demonstrated in the Privacy Policy posted at the Caregivers 24/7 administrative office. The agency will limit the information that it collects to that which is necessary for in-home care purposes, and will use this information only for those reasons. The agency will obtain client consent if it wishes to use client information for any other purpose.

Consent

Clients have the right to determine how his/her personal health information is used and disclosed. For most in-home care purposes, consent is implied when the client agrees to non-medical, in-home care services via telephone, email, text conversations, or any form of written or verbal communication with Agency employees. However, in all circumstances express consent must be written. The client's written consent will be forwarded to the Agency Administrator or Agency Director who shall document the request in the client's file as well as notify relevant healthcare providers and their supporting staff. Clients who have withdrawn consent to disclose protected health information must sign and date the Consent to Withdrawal Form. It is understood that the consent directive applies only to the PHI which the client has already provided, and not to PHI which the client might provide in the future. HIPAA permits certain collections, uses and disclosures of the PHI despite the consent directive and healthcare providers may override the consent directive in certain circumstances such as medical emergencies. The consent directive may result in delays in receiving care services and/or reduced quality of care services due to the provider's lacking complete information regarding the client as well as the healthcare provider's refusal to offer non-emergency care. The client's written Consent to Withdrawal form shall be forwarded to the Agency Administrator or Agency Director who shall document the request in the client's file as well as notify relevant healthcare providers and their supporting staff.

Limiting Collection

The agency collects information by fair and lawful means, and collects only that information which may be necessary for purposes related to the provision of the agency's non-medical, in-home care services.

Limiting Use, Disclosure and Retention

The information that the agency requests from its client's is used for the purposes defined herein. The agency shall seek client consent before using the information for purposes beyond the scope of the agency's Privacy Policy. Under no circumstances does the agency sell client lists or other personal information to third parties. There are some types of disclosures of client personal health information that may occur as part of this agency's fulfilling its routine obligations and/or agency management. This includes, but is not limited to, consultants and suppliers of the agency with the understanding that each shall abide by the agency's Privacy Policy. The agency will retain client information only for the time it is required for the purposes described herein, and once the client's personal information is no longer required it will be destroyed. However, for legal purposes, some client information is kept for a longer period. Clients may be required to sign and date a Consent to Disclose PHI Form.

Accuracy

The agency strives to ensure that all decisions involving client personal information are based upon accurate and timely information. While the agency will do its best to base decisions on accurate information, it relies on the client to disclose all material information and to inform the agency of any relevant changes.

Safeguards: Protecting the Agency's Information

Caregivers 24/7 protects client information with appropriate safeguards and security measures. The agency maintains personal information in a combination of paper and electronic files. Recent paper records concerning an individual's personal information are stored in files kept onsite at the agency's administrative office located at 120 Preston Executive Drive, Suite 236, Cary, North Carolina 27513. Access to personal information will be authorized only to the Nurse Manager. Access also shall be granted to staff associated with the agency on a need to know basis, as well as other individuals who require access in the performance of their duties, and to those otherwise authorized by law. The agency provides information to healthcare providers acting on clients' behalf, with the understanding that these individuals are also bound by law and ethics to safeguard privacy. Other organizations and individuals must agree to abide by the agency Privacy Policy and may be asked to sign agreements to that effect. The agency shall provide only the information necessary to perform the services for which he/she is entrusted, and will require that he/she not store, use or disclose the information for purposes other than to carry out those services. Agency computer systems are password-secured and constructed in such a way that only authorized individuals can access secure systems, databases, and files. If a client sends an e-mail message that includes personal information, such as his/her name included in the "address", the agency will use that information to respond to the inquiry. E-mail is not necessarily secure against interception. If communication with the agency is very sensitive, individuals should not send it electronically unless the e-mail is encrypted or his/her internet browser indicates that the access is secure.

Openness: Keeping You Informed

The agency has prepared this plain-language Privacy Policy to keep individuals informed. Caregivers 24/7 encourages individuals to contact the agency with any questions or concerns that he/she may have concerning privacy or the agency's Privacy Policy. The agency may be reached by sending an email with questions or concerns to info@caregivers24-7.com.

This policy was last modified on the 25th day of April, 2025.