

Notice of Privacy Practices
Addendum for the Rock County Human Services Department
Effective August 1, 2022

**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.**

**If you have any questions about this notice, please contact the
Human Services Department's Privacy Officer at (608) 757-5448.**

This Addendum is provided to you as part of Rock County's Notice of Privacy Practices, as required by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The Addendum provides additional information to help you understand how the Notice of Privacy Practices may apply to you as a client of the Human Services Department. For example, it lists the routine disclosures to the State of Wisconsin that the Human Services Department is required to make for certain program areas.

General Exceptions to Privacy

- ◆ **Professional Communication:** Under Wis Stats 51.30(4)(b)(8g), providers are permitted to release treatment records without informed written consent to a health care provider or to any person acting under the supervision of the health care provider who is involved with a client's care, if necessary for the current treatment of the individual. Information that may be released is limited to: The client's name, address, date of birth; name of the client's provider of services for mental illness, developmental disability, alcoholism or drug dependence; date of any of those services provided; the client's medications, allergies, diagnoses, diagnostic test results and symptoms; and other relevant demographic information for the current treatment of the client.
- ◆ **Safety and Court Order:** All staff are also required by law to share information related to (1) suspected child abuse or neglect; (2) imminent risk of suicide or life-threatening aggression, and (3) a court order.
- ◆ **Parents and Guardians:** Parents of a minor child and court-appointed guardians have a right to access the client's record. Program staff will also communicate certain information to parents and guardians throughout treatment.

Information is shared between Behavioral Health programs of the Rock County Human Services Department (RCHSD) on a professional need-to-know basis as permitted by law. These programs include: Crisis Services, Community Recovery Services, Outpatient Services, and Child/Family Services.

Information is shared between Children, Youth & Families programs of the RCHSD as needed for coordination of care. These programs include: Child Protective Services Access, Initial Assessment, Substitute Care & Ongoing services, Diversion & Family Skills, Youth Justice and the Youth Services Center.

Information is shared between Children's Long Term Support and the Aging & Disability Resource Center as well as between Adult Protective Services and the Aging & Disability Resource Center as needed for coordination of care.

For the recipients of mental health or substance abuse services, the Wisconsin Mental Health Act, Chapter 51, 42 CFR Part 2, and the Wisconsin Administrative Code HFS 92 govern the use and disclosure of information and are generally more protective of Protective Health Information than HIPAA. Whenever there is a conflict, the more protective law is followed.

Rock County Human Services Staff Department staff may access Medical Information through Health Information Exchange Platforms (for example, if your healthcare provider uses EPIC CareLink) without your consent for the provision, coordination, or management of health care and related services. Any records that are used to make treatment or service decisions about you including records from other providers may be re-disclosed by RCHSD.

Rock County is required to submit reports to the State of Wisconsin and other administrative entities on a regular basis including the Program Participation System (PPS) for Mental Health and AODA services, Client Assistance for Re-employment and Economic Support (CARES), Wisconsin's Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (eWiSACWIS) and the Wisconsin Service Point System (WISP). This information is protected under state and federal law and these entities maintain the privacy of clients.

Group Therapy or Group Activities

When you agree to participate in group therapy or to take part in other types of group activities, the other participants will be aware that you are a client of a particular unit or program of the RCHSD. If you have concerns about such therapy or activities, please discuss the matter with your therapist or case manager.

Use of Interpreters

The RCHSD makes use of interpreter services (both by telephone and in-person) to provide services to persons who do not speak or understand English well. Although the interpreters are not Rock County employees, the interpreters are also required to protect client information.

Use of Public Information

At times, your provider(s) may seek public information about you for risk management or other clinical purposes. If this happens, you will be told about this information and have an opportunity to correct any incorrect information. This includes internet searches, criminal and arrest records, and other relevant public records.

Email, Texting, and other electronic communication

In general, staff communicate with clients through phone calls and in person. Other forms of electronic communication may be possible, and staff will discuss this with clients as needed.

Changes to the Notice Addendum

We reserve the right to change this notice addendum. Its effective date is at the top of the first page and at the bottom of the last page. We reserve the right to make the revised or changed addendum effective for health information we already have about you as well as any information we receive in the future.

Right to Obtain a Copy of this Notice

You may obtain a paper copy of Rock County's Notice of Privacy Practices and this Addendum from the Rock County Human Services Department, even if you have previously received a copy. You may also view it electronically on Rock County's web site at www.co.rock.wi.us.

Complaints

If you believe your privacy rights as stated in the Notice of Privacy Practices or this Addendum have been violated, you may file a written complaint with Rock County Human Services Department, the Rock County Privacy Officer, or the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. No retaliation will occur against you for filing a complaint.

Contact Information

For further explanation of this document, to file a complaint or to get more information about the complaint process, please contact the Rock County Privacy Officer.

Rock County Privacy Officer/Human Services Department

Medical Records Supervisor
PO Box 1649, Janesville, WI 53547-1649
Telephone: (608) 757-5448; Fax: (608) 757-5011.

This notice addendum accompanies Rock County's current Notice of Privacy Practices and is effective in its entirety as of July 1, 2024.

Distribution of Addendum to all clients served on or after July 14, 2003.