
Peace Corps Notice of Privacy Practices

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 describes what the Peace Corps does to protect your medical information, and how we use it. Because there are several laws and policies that govern the Peace Corps on this subject, it is particularly important that you read this Notice carefully. This Notice will tell you about the kinds of information we collect about you, how we use it, the information we must or may disclose, and what rights you have. We are required by law to protect the privacy of your medical information, and we may use and disclose such information under certain circumstances. We are also required to provide you this notice of our duties and practices.

What kinds of medical information will the Peace Corps collect about you?

Over the course of the Peace Corps application, service, and post-service process, we collect various types of medical information from various sources, including you, your doctors and other health care professionals, Peace Corps medical officers, and other Peace Corps health care professionals and consultants. Protected health information may include, but is not limited to, general physical and mental health care and treatment history and records; information about past, present, or future physical or mental health conditions or treatments; lab results; X-rays; and pharmacy and dental records.

How does the Peace Corps use your medical information?

The Peace Corps may use the information to determine your eligibility for Peace Corps service.

If you are selected for Peace Corps service, we may use your health information for placement purposes, and to arrange for and provide medical care and treatment for you overseas and in the U.S. We may use the information to arrange for payment for such care and treatment. We may also use it in connection with the operation of the Peace Corps medical services program, such as ensuring that the quality of care being provided is appropriate; for legal review; and for audit, compliance, and training purposes. In general, only those parts of the agency involved in these activities will have any access to your medical information.

What laws and policies govern the Peace Corps' use and protection of your medical information?

The Peace Corps takes its responsibilities to protect the confidentiality of medical information very seriously. As a federal government agency, the Peace Corps is subject to the Privacy Act, which sets out the terms for using and sharing information about you that is kept in personally identifiable systems of records, including medical records. The Peace Corps also has a specific policy to protect the confidentiality of medical records. And, for medical information in the U.S., **but not overseas**, the Peace Corps is subject to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). This notice reflects the impact of those laws and policies.

To whom are we required to disclose your medical information?

- As a general matter, to you when you request it. The process for requesting your information is discussed below.
- To the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in connection with its performing a HIPAA compliance review.

When *may* we disclose your medical information without your express permission?

Under HIPAA, we are permitted to disclose medical information for the following purposes. In some circumstances, the Privacy Act may limit such disclosure.

- To those who need to know in connection with your medical care and treatment, such as physicians, other medical officers, and consultants.
- To those who need to know for purposes of payment. The Peace Corps pays for certain evaluations, treatments, and other health-related services you may receive.
- To those who need to know for health care operations, such as assessing and improving the quality of the Peace Corps medical program; providing training; detecting and preventing fraud, abuse, and misrepresentation; ensuring legal compliance; and cost management.
- When disclosure is required by law.
- For certain public health activities, such as notification of communicable diseases; or to prevent or control disease, injuries, or child abuse and neglect.
- To health oversight agencies, such as the Food and Drug Administration or the Peace Corps Inspector General.
- For judicial and administrative proceedings, if sought through a court order, or in response to a subpoena of which you have been given appropriate notice.
- To law enforcement officials for certain purposes, including in connection with search warrants, to report a crime, to help identify or locate someone, or in emergencies.
- To appropriate authorities to report abuse, neglect, or domestic violence.
- To coroners, medical examiners, and funeral directors.
- To facilitate organ donation.
- For approved research purposes.

- To prevent a serious threat to health and safety.
- For national security activities and protection of the President.
- For workers' compensation purposes.

What may we disclose only with your authorization?

Other uses of your medical information require a written authorization from you. You may revoke such an authorization by notifying us in writing. Please note that any such revocation cannot apply to any information that was disclosed prior to receiving the revocation.

What rights do you have relating to your medical information?

- You have the right to review and get a copy of medical information in your medical record. To do so, you will need to complete a *Peace Corps Authorization of Release of Information*. You may request it by mail at the address below, or you may call 1-800-424-8500 ext. 1500 to request a copy. You can send it to Peace Corps, Paul D. Coverdell Peace Corps Headquarters, 1111 20th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20526, Attn: Medical Records Manager, or if you are a Volunteer overseas, under the Privacy Act you can provide it to your Peace Corps Medical Officer at post. We will then let you know when and how you can review or get a copy of your record. We have the right under HIPAA and the Privacy Act to limit your access to some or all of your medical records. If any records are not disclosed, we will tell you why in writing and let you know how you can appeal the decision.
- You have the right to request that information in your medical record be amended. You will need to explain in writing the amendments that you are asking for. We will respond promptly and in writing. If we agree, we will make amendments. If we disagree with your request, we will tell you why in writing, and let you know how you can appeal the decision.

- You are entitled to a paper version of this Notice on request.
- You have the right to choose how we provide medical information to you. You may ask us to send information to you at a certain place, such as at your work address, or in a certain manner. We will do so if we reasonably and legally can.
- You have the right to ask us to limit our use or disclosure of your medical information, but we do not have to agree to your request.
- You have the right to ask us for a list of disclosures we make of your medical information. The list will not include disclosures for treatment, payment, or health care operations purposes; disclosures to you or your representative; disclosures that you authorized; or disclosures for disaster relief, national security or intelligence purposes.

We are required to comply with the provisions of this Notice while it is in effect. We reserve the right to modify this Notice. We reserve the right to make the revised notice effective for medical information we already have about you as well as for information we receive in the future. We will provide notice of

revisions on the Peace Corps website, and make reasonable efforts to provide notice to individuals as well.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions regarding this notice or want to lodge a complaint about our privacy practices, please let us know by writing to: Peace Corps, Paul D. Coverdell Peace Corps Headquarters, 1111 20th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20526, Attn: Medical Records Manager.

You may also contact the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, with complaints or concerns. They can be contacted at 1-800-368-1019 or by mail at 150 S. Independence Mall West, Suite 372, Public Ledger Building, Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111. You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.

Effective: September 2004