



PATIENTS' RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

River Valley Health is committed to building health and bridging gaps by providing comprehensive, quality healthcare.

River Valley Health is deeply committed to the rights and responsibilities of our patients. We believe that everyone should be treated with dignity, respect, and kindness. Our goal is to create a safe and welcoming environment for everyone.

We make sure that our patients understand their treatment options, can access their medical records, and have a say in their healthcare decisions. We also encourage patients to talk openly with their providers and follow the treatment plans that have been agreed upon. It's important for everyone to respect each other's rights, including those of other patients and staff members.

By working together with patients and healthcare teams, River Valley Health strives to provide excellent care and support the health of our community.



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NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

This notice describes how medical information about you may be used, disclosed, and how you can get access to this information. *Please review it carefully.*

YOUR INFORMATION.

YOUR RIGHTS.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES.

Your Rights

You have the right to:

- Get a copy of your paper or electronic medical record
- Correct your paper or electronic medical record
- Request confidential communication
- Ask us to limit to those with whom we've shared your information
- Get a list of those with whom we've shared your information
- Get a copy of this privacy notice
- Choose someone to act for you
- File a complaint if you believe your privacy rights have been violated

Your Choices

You have choices in the way that we use and share information as we:

- Tell family and friends about your condition
- Provide mental health care
- Market our services
- Raise funds

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**YOUR INFORMATION.
YOUR RIGHTS.
YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES.**

**Our Uses
and
Disclosures**

**We may use and share your information
as we:**

- Treat you
- Run our organization
- Bill for your services
- Help with public health and safety issues
- Comply with the law
- Respond to organ and tissue donor requests
- Work with a medical examiner or funeral director
- Address workers' compensation, law enforcement, and other government requests
- Respond to lawsuits and legal actions

At River Valley Health, we prioritize your well-being and are committed to ensuring a respectful and transparent healthcare experience. As a patient, you have the right to receive comprehensive and compassionate care, be informed about your treatment options, and have your privacy respected at all times. Your responsibilities include providing accurate health information and adhering to prescribed treatments.

River Valley Health is dedicated to protecting your personal health information and will only use or disclose it for legitimate medical purposes, in accordance with legal requirements. We will provide you with the necessary consent forms and thoroughly explain any uses or disclosures of your information. Our commitment to your privacy and informed consent is unwavering, and we strive to uphold the highest standards of confidentiality in all aspects of your care.

PATIENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

River Valley Health is committed to providing high quality care that is fair, responsive, and accountable to the needs of our patients and families. We are committed to providing our patients and families with a means to not only receive appropriate health care and related services, but also to address any concerns they may have regarding such services. We encourage all our patients to be aware of their Rights and Responsibilities and to take an active role in maintaining and improving their health and strengthening their relationships with our health care providers.

If you have any questions, issues or concerns, you can contact our Compliance Hotline 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, at 1-888-MYCOMPLY (1-888-692-6675) or at <https://rivervalleyhealthpa.i-reported.com>. Additionally, the Compliance Officer can be reached by emailing ComplianceOfficer@rivervalleyhealthpa.org or calling 570-567-5413. The Compliance Hotline is not an emergency line and should not be used for immediate access to a provider. Emergency services must be addressed by calling River Valley Health 570-567-5400 or Emergency Services # 911.

Human Rights

- All patients have the right and privilege of seeking services without discrimination and be treated with respect regardless of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, religion, physical or mental handicap or disability, sexual orientation or preference, marital status, socio-economic status, diagnosis/condition, gender identification, protected veteran status or on any other grounds as applicable under federal, state and local laws or regulations.
- All patients shall be treated with courtesy, consideration and respect by all staff, always, under all circumstances and in a manner that respects their dignity and privacy as set forth in our Standards of Conduct Policy, 19.0.03.

Health Care

- All patients shall receive high quality care based on professional standards of practice, without regard to their ability to pay for such services.
- You may request a different health care provider if a substantial or egregious situation can be substantiated that threatens the ability of the provider to provide you with care. River Valley Health will use its best efforts to match you with an appropriate provider but cannot guarantee that reassignment requests will always be accommodated.
- You have a right to complete accurate information and explanations that are easily understood, in the language you normally speak, and in words that you understand, both culturally and linguistically. You have a right to information about your health or illness, treatment plan, including the nature of your treatment; its expected benefits; its inherent risks and hazards and the consequences of refusing treatment; the reasonable alternatives, if any and their risks and benefits; and the expected outcome, if known. This information is called obtaining your Informed Consent.
- You have the right and responsibility to ask questions at any time before, during or after receiving services regarding any diagnosis, treatment, prognosis and/or planned course of treatment, alternatives and risks, to participate fully in decisions related to your health care. If a patient is unable to participate fully, he or she has the right to be represented by parents, guardians, family members, or other designated surrogates.
- You may refuse any treatment except, as prohibited by law, and you shall be informed of the alternatives and/or consequences of refusing treatment, which could require us to inform the appropriate authorities of your decision, for example if a patient was to refuse treatment for an infectious disease that would require notification to the local Center for Disease Control (CDC). You may also express preferences regarding any future treatments. You will be asked to provide an explanation for such refusal and to tell us clearly what your wants and needs may be.

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- You have the right to obtain another medical opinion prior to any procedure.
- You will be informed if any treatment to be undertaken is for purposes of research or is experimental in nature, and you will be given the opportunity to provide your informed consent before such research or experiment begins, unless such consent is otherwise waived.
- You shall be informed if “AI technology” is used in the generation of your patient records and will be asked to consent to (accept/decline) the use of these tools, as it relates to your healthcare. All uses of “AI” will be disclosed in the record by stating, “AI technology was used to summarize and organize the information presented in this document.”
- You may develop Advanced Directives and be assured that all healthcare providers will comply with those directives in accordance with the law. It is your responsibility to participate and follow the treatment plan recommended by your health care providers, and to the extent you are able, work with your providers to achieve desired health outcomes. You should also let your health care providers know if you experience any changes or reactions to medication and/or your treatment.
- You may request a chaperone to be present during any intimate examination, and your provider may request a chaperone at any time, when desirable for the delivery of quality care. If you refuse a chaperone when requested by your provider, the visit will promptly end.

- You have access to care even when the River Valley Health is closed, with 24-hours phone assistance/after-hours coverage through our River Valley Health Nurse Triage Line. This assistance is accessed by calling (570) 567-5400 to be connected directly to a nurse. We want to ensure quality patient care coverage during off hours, so at least one of our providers is on-call to communicate with the triage staff on an as-needed basis.
- In addition, you can expect us to provide continuity of care after your ED or Inpatient stay. If you present in the Emergency Department, we will be notified and given the chief complaint. The same is true if you are admitted to an Inpatient Facility. We will then follow up with you in two business days of our notification. Our goal is to offer you an appointment within 14 days to provide follow-up care with your primary care provider.
- On your initial visit, you will be asked to sign an authorization necessary to govern the ways that we may deal with your health records and a consent to treat you or your child. With a valid consent on file, you may then authorize another person to bring your child in for a visit, if necessary. We may also accept verbal consent, but only in limited circumstances. We may require some verification of the circumstances surrounding a child's parentage or legal custody status to ensure that any appropriate consent/custody arrangements are adhered to and documented. In all cases, we shall retain the right, at River Valley Health's sole discretion, to refuse to see a child if such verification is not completed. Family planning services are provided solely on a voluntary basis. Clients will not be coerced to accept services or to use or not use any method of contraception in family planning. All family planning services remain confidential between patients and providers only, according to federal and state laws and in compliance with River Valley Health policies.

- All patients are automatically enrolled in our patient communication software platform, Caremessage. This software is used for appointment reminders, direct messaging, patient education, and health reminders. You will be contacted through this software either via text message or voice message at the number you provide at initial registration. You have the option to opt out at any time by responding to the messages/calls or calling us at 570-567-5400. It is your responsibility to advise us of any change in your contact information including telephone number or any required terms under which we are to contact you. You have the right to request that messages be limited as to the subject matter or to include or exclude access by others, such as to support confidentiality, and we will do our best to honor your requests. Failure to enroll may impede your ability to receive important reminder information that could result in the cancellation of your appointment.

Privacy

- River Valley Health's Notice of Privacy Practices Policy 6.0.02 sets forth the ways in which your protected health information and medical records may be used or disclosed and the rights granted to you under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). You will be asked to confirm your receipt of this notice by signing the acknowledgement. Overall, it is reasonable for you to expect that all individually identifiable health information and/or your medical records will be kept confidential and only disclosed in accordance with proper written authorization or as otherwise permitted or required by law. All discussion of PHI with patients or staff will be held in a confidential manner.
- River Valley Health uses an electronic health record system and paper documents to record the care provided to you. River Valley Health also participates in a regional/statewide health information exchange, which could result in the sharing of your health records electronically with other health care providers who participate in the health information exchange and your care. These providers will be able to access your records only for certain purposes related to your health care.

- You may access, review, and/or get a copy of, your medical records, upon request made to River Valley Health. Upon reviewing your medical record, you may wish to request amendments and/or corrections to said records. Any denial of any amendment or correction may be appealed by providing such request to the Compliance Officer at ComplianceOfficer@rivervalleyhealthpa.org. You may place a written statement of disagreement with a final decision regarding these records, which will be included in your record in future disclosures.
- All River Valley Health, incoming and outgoing telephone calls are recorded for customer service and quality management processes, in accordance with HIPAA and Pennsylvania state privacy law, these records may contain PHI and are saved to a secure HIPAA compliant server for six (6) years.

Payment

- You have the right to ask for and receive information regarding your financial responsibility for services provided to you, to include receipt of an itemized copy of the bill, an explanation of charges, and a description of the services that will be charged to your insurance.
- You should provide accurate personal, financial, insurance, and medical information including all current treatments and medications prior to receiving services from River Valley Health and its health care providers. You must pay, or arrange to pay, all agreed fees for services. If you cannot pay right away, you will be responsible for working out a payment plan. No individual will be denied services because of their inability to pay.
- You should familiarize yourself with your health benefits and any exclusions, deductibles, co-payments, and treatment costs that you will ultimately be responsible for paying.
- As applicable, you should inform us of any changes in your financial status and make a good faith effort to meet your financial obligations, including promptly paying for services provided for which you may be given a prompt payment incentive. Financial counseling is available to explore established payment alternatives and/or insurance options.

- If your income is less than the federal poverty guidelines, you may be eligible to enroll in a sliding fee schedule program (discounted fee).

Rules

- You are responsible for following all administrative and operational rules, policies and procedures posted within the River Valley Health facility or specified here, which were established for your safety and security. You should request any additional assistance necessary to understand and/or comply with our administrative procedures, or rules to access health care and related services, participate in treatments, or satisfy payment obligations.
- You are expected to always behave in a polite, courteous, considerate, and respectful manner to all staff and other patients, including respecting their privacy and dignity. You are expected to refrain from “hateful, threatening, or abusive” conduct to include, but not limited to, any kind of vulgarity or racial slurs towards other patients and/or River Valley Health staff.
- You are responsible for supervising your children under the age of sixteen (16) while at River Valley Health facilities, for their safety, and the protection of other patients, staff and property. Children are not to be left unsupervised in the waiting room or any other location within the facility, i.e. a hallway while a parent/guardian or other adult is undergoing medical or dental treatment. Thus, please refrain from bringing your child(ren) with you to your medical or dental appointment. We have the right to re-schedule the appointment should you have your child(ren) and the provider feels there is a safety risk. Without prior approval, no one except personnel employed by River Valley Health is to be present in the medical exam rooms or dental treatment room while a patient is being examined or treated. You are permitted to be in the exam room when your child is here for any medical appointment.

- All children under the age of eighteen (18) that are not emancipated, or receiving “confidential services”, must be accompanied by a parent or guardian if it is a visit that requires a Consent for Treatment to be signed. Initial consents signed by the parent or guardian are only valid for three (3) years. If a Consent for Treatment has been signed and is in force and the child is sixteen (16) or older, they may be treated in the absence of the presence of said parent or guardian. However, certain procedures and treatments may have different requirements, so be sure to check with us prior to your appointment. If your child is under sixteen (16) years of age and is to be accompanied by a surrogate, i.e. grandparents or other responsible adults, the parent or guardian must provide written or verbal permission.
- River Valley Health asks parents of older children to be seen for a dental appointment to remain in the waiting room when children are brought into the dental treatment room. Due to the limited space within each dental treatment room and sharp dental instruments, it is unsafe to have additional people in the small area. We understand parents’ concern, but our dentists are experienced with children and can usually handle behavioral problems that might arise. By allowing your child to enter the treatment room without you, you’re placing trust in your dental professionals and teaching your child to do the same.
- No animals or pets, including emotional support animals, are permitted in any River Valley Health facility except for an authorized service dog, such as a guide dog.
- You do not have the right and **ARE ABSOLUTELY FORBIDDEN** to carry any type of weapon or explosive material or device into any River Valley Health facility.
- You are responsible for keeping all appointments scheduled and arriving on time. Late arrival may delay or cause your appointment to be rescheduled. You will also be asked to update your information during each visit.
- You are expected to notify us no later than 24 hours prior to the time of your appointment that you cannot keep the appointment scheduled. When you miss an appointment due to this lack of notification, by failing to attend your appointment, late cancellation or late arrival, these occurrences are defined as a “Failed Appointment”, which may result in affecting your flexibility in scheduling of future appointments.

- **For Dental appointments, you must confirm your appointment by 2 p.m. the day prior to such appointment or said appointment will be filled with another patient and should you come in, you either must wait to be seen, if the schedule will permit, or reschedule your appointment.** We understand that some circumstances may prevent you from following our policy, and we will work with you to resolve those barriers which may cause you to have a failed appointment. As no-shows increase, the availability of your next appointment will be scheduled out on a timeline which differs based on patient status (New vs. Existing). For more information and details, please review River Valley Health's Patient Failed Appointment Policy 12.0.06.
- **For NEW medical patient appointments, you must confirm your appointment by 2:00 pm the day prior to said appointment or said appointment will be filled with another patient and should you come in, you will have to wait to be seen, if the schedule permits, or reschedule your appointment.**
- You have the right to request access to the River Valley Health Patient Portal by completing the Patient Demographic Information sheet on your first visit, or any subsequent visit to River Valley Health. The Patient Portal provides you with information regarding your treatment including your medical chart summaries, labs, billing details, and appointment schedules. The Patient Portal is meant to assist you in gaining access to important information regarding your care and includes a feature to send messages to your care team and provider. The Patient Portal is not an emergency contact system and should not be used to gain immediate response to what may be a critical need. Abuse of your access to the Patient Portal, i.e. multiple messages or harassing of staff will not be tolerated. In such an event, access to the Patient Portal may be temporarily or permanently suspended.

- Patient Portal access is suspended for adolescent patients between 13 and 17 years of age in accordance with HIPAA privacy regulations and Pennsylvania Privacy regulations affecting care of minors. Patients between 13 and 17 years of age may apply for their own Patient Portal access by presenting, in person, to the Registration Desk with their “own” email address, that is different from their parent or guardian. Adolescent patient access through the Patient Portal allows the patient to view their upcoming appointments, medications and test results, visit notes, etc. The patient does not need to share access to their Portal with parents or guardians and should not feel pressured to do so, nor do adolescent patients need a parent or guardian approval to obtain Patient Portal access or “confidential services”.
- River Valley Health performs routine video recording (excluding audio) of patients and visitors for security purposes, but otherwise a patient must authorize and consent, in writing, to any capture or use of their likeness. Patients, family members, and/or visitors are not permitted to take photographs of or audio/video record anyone, especially other patients or workforce members in our facilities without their written consent and the written consent of our management.
- River Valley Health management, or their designees, may listen in on customer service lines to ensure that employees are respectful and responsive to customers, or for other legitimate business purposes. Customer service calls may also be monitored for training purposes to critique customer service skills and provide feedback for job performance as needed. Patients do not have the legal right to record telephone calls from River Valley Health staff or management without prior consent to do so in the state of Pennsylvania.

- We expect that you will actively participate in your care by following your provider's treatment plan that is based on their professional judgement for optimal clinical outcomes and regularly attend scheduled appointments for necessary follow-up and monitoring of your health. Should, at any point, the treating provider find that your lack of participation and/or behavior, including not attending scheduled appointments, inhibits safe prescribing practices or threatens the delivery of best practice/evidence-based clinical practices for effective, safe treatment, they have the right to deny medication refills and other treatment options, that result from your failure to follow their recommended care plan. While we recognize that you have the right to refuse any recommended course of treatment, significant failure to follow a provider's recommendation may result in damage to the patient/provider relationship which could jeopardize your ability to continue to be seen as a patient.

Concerns

- If you are not satisfied with our services or have a concern about the services River Valley Health provides, please let us know as we welcome suggestions on how to improve our services and care we provide. You can contact us using our Compliance Hotline at 1-888-MYCOMPLY (888-692-6675) or on-line at <https://rivervalleyhealthpa.i-reported.com>. The Compliance Hotline is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Please be aware that the Compliance Hotline is not an emergency helpline, and it may take twenty-four hours or more to initiate a response to a submitted concern.
- You have the right to file a complaint about us or our staff without fear of discrimination or retaliation and to have it resolved in a fair, efficient, and timely manner. You will never be denied care due to the exercise of this right.
- You should utilize all services, including reporting a concern, in a responsible, non-abusive manner, consistent with our rules, policies and procedures.

- Staff and management will seek to resolve any complaints that you have. You may seek assistance from executive staff and if necessary, obtain review by our President & CEO, or their designee. The facts and circumstances of the complaint and your input will be reviewed for appropriate corrective action to determine the outcome that should be achieved, as appropriate. The President & CEO is the final arbitrator of any complaint.

Dismissal of Care

- If it becomes necessary to terminate the provider/patient relationship, you have the right to receive advance written notice explaining the reason why and you will have thirty (30) days to find other health care provider. If you have created a threat to the safety of the staff and/or other patients or engaged in “hateful, threatening, or abusive” conduct, we may stop treating you immediately, and without prior written notice, in accordance with River Valley Health Dismissal of Care Policy, 12.0.04.
- Reasons that might cause you to lose your status as a patient:
 - Failure to obey center rules and policies and procedures.
 - Failure to follow your health care plan, such as instructions about taking medications, personal health practices, or follow up appointments, as recommended by your healthcare provider. Disruptive, unruly or abusive behavior to the point that it seriously impairs River Valley Health’s ability to furnish services either to you or other patients.
 - Threatening the commission of, or commission of, an act of physical violence directed at a practitioner, any member or members of River Valley Health staff, or other patients or other acts constituting a threat to the safety of the staff and/or other patients or River Valley Health facilities.
 - Fraudulent or illegal acts, including but not limited to, permitting the use of a patient ID card or insurance card by another, theft of prescription pads, alteration of prescriptions, theft or other criminal or fraudulent acts committed on River Valley Health premises.

- Other circumstances that indicate an untenable or irreparable breach occurred in the provider/patient relationship and in River Valley Health's sole discretion or opinion, termination or transfer of care to another provider, would result in a better outcome for your health.

Appeals/Reinstatements

- If River Valley Health has given you notice of termination of the patient/provider relationship, you have the right to appeal. Unless you have a medical emergency, we will not continue to see you as a patient while you are appealing the decision.
- A patient may be readmitted to River Valley Health's care if they meet the requirements of its Dismissal of Care Policy 12.0.04, which includes in part a recommendation from the Patient Relations Committee that must receive unanimous consent from all committee members. This recommendation must then be presented to the President & CEO for final approval. Additionally, there must be an agreement on the Plan of Care between the patient and provider. Such reinstatement is not available to you if the original reason for termination involved a threat of physical violence, hateful, threatening, or abusive' conduct or a fraudulent or illegal act that produces liability for River Valley Health or our staff or patients.

Please note that these Patient Rights and Responsibilities are subject to change without notice, and you can always find the most up-to-date version on our website at <https://rivervalleyhealthpa.org/patient-resources/patient-bill-of-rights/>.

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**BUILDING HEALTH AND BRIDGING GAPS
BY PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE,
QUALITY HEALTHCARE.**

