



Brattleboro Retreat

COMPREHENSIVE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES SINCE 1834

Privacy Policy

Your Information. Your Rights. Our Responsibilities. This notice describes how your medical information may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. **Please review it carefully.**

Your Rights

When it comes to your health information, you have certain rights. This section explains your rights and some of our responsibilities to help you.

- Get a copy of your paper or electronic medical record
 - You can ask to see or get an electronic or paper copy of your medical record and other health information we have about you. Ask us how to do this.
 - We will provide a copy or a summary of your health information, usually within 30 days of your request. We may charge a reasonable, cost-based fee.
- Ask us to correct your paper or electronic medical record
 - You can ask us to correct health information about you that you think is incorrect or incomplete. Ask us how to do this.
 - We may say “no” to your request, but we will tell you why in writing within 60 days.
- Request confidential communication
 - You can ask us to contact you in a specific way (for example, home or office phone) or to send mail to a different address.
 - We will say “yes” to all reasonable requests we can accommodate.
- Ask us to limit the information we share
 - You can ask us not to use or share certain health information for treatment, payment, or our operations. We are not required to agree to your request, and we may say “no” if it would affect your care or is not operationally possible.
 - If you pay for a service or health care item out of pocket in full, you can ask us not to share that information for the purpose of payment or our operations with your health insurer. We will say “yes” unless a law requires us to share that information.

- Get a list of those with whom we have shared your information
 - You can ask for a list (accounting) of the times we have shared your health information for six years prior to the date you ask, who we shared it with, and why.
 - We will include all the disclosures except those about treatment, payment and health care operations, and certain other disclosures (such as any you asked us to make). We will provide one accounting a year for free, but will charge a reasonable, cost-based fee if you ask for another within 12 months.
- Get a copy of this privacy notice
 - You can ask for a paper copy of this notice at any time, even if you have agreed to receive the notice electronically. We will provide you with a paper copy promptly.
- Choose someone to act for you
 - If you have given someone medical power of attorney or if someone is your legal guardian, that person can exercise your rights and make choices about your health information.
 - We will make sure the person has this authority and can act for you before we take any action.
- File a complaint if you believe your privacy rights have been violated
 - You can complain if you feel we have violated your rights by contacting us at:
 Brattleboro Retreat Privacy Officer
 P.O. Box 803
 Brattleboro, VT 05302
 Phone: 802-258- 3728 Email: privacyofficerdl@brattlebororetreat.org
- You can file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights by sending a letter to 200 Independence Avenue S.W., Washington, DC 20201, by calling [1.877.696.6775](tel:18776966775), or by visiting <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/filing-a-complaint/what-to-expect/index.html>
- We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

Your Choices

For certain health information, you can tell us your choices about what we share. If you have a clear preference for how we share your information in the situations described below, talk to us. Tell us what you want us to do, and we will follow your instructions.

In these cases, you have both the right and choice to tell us to:

- Share information with your family, close friends, or others involved in your care or payment for your care
- Share information in a disaster relief situation
- Include your information in a hospital directory

If you cannot tell us your preference, for example if you are unconscious, we may go ahead and share your information if we believe it is in your best interest. We may also share your information when needed to lessen a serious and imminent threat to health or safety.

In these cases, we never share your information unless you give us written permission:

- Marketing purposes
- Sale of your information
- Most sharing of psychotherapy notes

In the case of fundraising:

- We may contact you for fundraising efforts, but you can tell us not to contact you again.

If we have your substance use disorder patient records, subject to 42 CFR part 2, we will give you clear and obvious notice in advance and a choice about whether to receive fundraising communications that use your Part 2 information.

We can share health information with a coroner, medical examiner, or funeral director when an individual dies.

Our Uses and Disclosures

How do we typically use or share your health information? We typically use or share your health information in the following ways:

- Treat you:
 - We can use your health information and share it with other professionals who are treating you.

Example: We send information to your primary care provider after an Emergency Department visit or hospitalization.

- Run our organization:
 - We can use and share your health information to run our organization, improve your care, and contact you when necessary. This can include sharing information with

“business associates,” which are contracted people or entities that provide services that help us to conduct health care functions.

Example: We may contract with an entity that assists with data analysis or utilization reviews.

- Bill for your services:
 - We can use and share your health information to bill and get payment from health plans or other entities.

Example: We give information about you to your health insurance plan so it will pay for your services.

How else can we use or share your health information?

We are allowed or required to share your information in other ways – usually in ways that contribute to the public good, such as public health and research. We must meet many conditions in the law before we can share your information for these purposes. For more information, see:

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-individuals/guidance-materials-for-consumers/index.html>

- Help with public health and safety issues.

We can share health information about you for certain situations such as:

- Preventing disease
 - Helping with product recalls
 - Reporting adverse reactions to medications
 - Reporting suspected abuse, neglect, or domestic violence
 - Preventing or reducing a serious threat to anyone’s health or safety
- Do research
 - We can use or share your information for health research.
 - Comply with the law

- We will share information about you if state or federal laws require it, including with the Department of Health and Human Services, if it wants to see that we are complying with federal privacy law. If two laws that govern privacy conflict, we will follow the law that affords you the most privacy.
- Respond to organ and tissue donation requests
 - We can share health information about you with organ procurement organizations.
- Work with a medical examiner or funeral director
 - We can share health information with a coroner, medical examiner, or funeral director when an individual dies.
- Address workers' compensation, law enforcement, and other government requests

We can use or share health information about you:

- For workers' compensation claims
 - For law enforcement purposes or with a law enforcement official or correctional institution
 - With health oversight agencies for activities authorized by law
 - For special government functions such as military, national security, and presidential protective services
- Respond to lawsuits and legal actions
 - We can share health information about you in response to a court or administrative order or in response to a subpoena.

To the extent that we have your substance use disorder patient records, subject to 42 CFR part 2, we will not share that information for investigations or legal proceedings against you without (1) your written consent or (2) a court order and a subpoena.

Certain Other Health Information

Some categories of health information may be protected by additional laws, such as Vermont State Privacy Laws and other federal laws and regulations. These laws may limit whether and how we share the following types of health information about you without your permission:

- The Vermont Bill of Rights, for hospital patients who have been admitted as inpatients, requires that only medical personnel, or individuals under the supervision of medical personnel, who are directly treating the patient, or monitoring the quality or researching the effectiveness of the treatment have access to the patient's medical record. Others may have access to the records only with a patient's written authorization.

- Substance Use Treatment Program records: to the extent that we have your substance use disorder treatment records that are subject to 42 CFR Part 2, we will not use or share that information for civil, criminal, administrative, or legislative investigations or legal proceedings against you with your written consent, or a court order and a subpoena. We will also give you clear notice in advance and a choice about whether to receive fundraising communications that use your Part 2 information.
- Certain records of minors.
- Certain mental health records.
- Certain genetic information.

You can complain if you feel we have violated your rights by contacting us at:

Brattleboro Retreat, Privacy Officer

P.O. Box 803

Brattleboro, VT 05302

Phone: 802-258-3728

Email: privacyofficerdl@brattlebororetreat.org

Changes to the Terms of this Notice

The Brattleboro Retreat reserves the right to change the terms of this notice, and the changes will apply to all the information we have about you, including from the past. The new notice will be available upon request, in our office, and on our website.

Notice of Privacy Practice Effective Dates:

2016, 2021, July 2026

Note: This Notice is available in alternate formats.