NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

FRIENDSWOOD FAMILY MEDICINE

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.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 21, 2026

OUR LEGAL DUTY

Friendswood Family Medicine is required by applicable federal and Texas state law to maintain the privacy of your Protected Health Information (PHI). We are also required to give you this Notice about our privacy practices, our legal duties, and your rights concerning your PHI. We must follow the privacy practices described in this Notice while it is in effect.

We reserve the right to change our privacy practices and the terms of this Notice at any time, provided such changes are permitted by applicable law. If we make a material change, we will update this Notice and make the new Notice available in our office, on our website, and through our patient electronic check-in systems.

PROTECTIONS FOR SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER RECORDS

If our practice creates, receives, or maintains records pertaining to Substance Use Disorder (SUD) that are subject to federal confidentiality regulations under 42 CFR Part 2, those records receive enhanced protections.

1. Treatment, Payment, and Health Care Operations (TPO): We will obtain your explicit, written consent prior to using or disclosing your Part 2 SUD records for treatment, payment, or health care operations.

2. Restrictions on Legal Proceedings: Your Part 2 SUD records cannot be used or disclosed in civil, criminal, administrative, or legislative proceedings against you without your specific written consent or a specialized court order meeting the requirements of 42 CFR Part 2.

3. Separate Counseling Notes: Substance use counseling notes are maintained separately from the rest of your medical record. We must obtain a separate, independent written authorization from you to release these notes; they cannot be bundled with a general medical records release.

USES AND DISCLOSURES OF PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION

We may use and disclose your PHI for the following purposes:

Treatment: We may use or disclose your PHI to a physician or other healthcare provider providing treatment to you. For Part 2 SUD records, this requires your prior written consent.

Payment: We may use and disclose your PHI to bill and collect payment from you, an insurance company, or a third party for the health care services you received. For Part 2 SUD records, this requires your prior written consent.

Health Care Operations: We may use and disclose your PHI in connection with our healthcare operations, which include quality assessment and improvement activities, reviewing the competence or qualifications of healthcare professionals, evaluating practitioner and provider performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, certification, licensing, or credentialing activities. For Part 2 SUD records, this requires your prior written consent.

Other Uses and Disclosures Permitted or Required by Law:

* Public Health Risks: We may disclose PHI to public health authorities to prevent or control disease, injury, or disability, or to report child abuse or neglect.

* Judicial and Administrative Proceedings: We may disclose PHI in response to a court or administrative order, subpoena, or discovery request, subject to strict Texas law limitations and the absolute restrictions placed on Part 2 SUD data.

* Law Enforcement: We may disclose PHI for law enforcement purposes under highly specific legal constraints.

* Deceased Individuals: We may disclose PHI to a coroner, medical examiner, or funeral director.

Uses and Disclosures Requiring Your Written Authorization:

* Electronic Disclosures: Under Texas law, we must obtain a specific, separate authorization from you before making any electronic disclosure of your PHI for purposes outside of standard treatment, payment, or health care operations.

* Marketing and Sale of PHI: We will never sell your PHI or use it for marketing purposes without your express written authorization.

* Fundraising: If we use your information to contact you regarding fundraising, you have an absolute right to opt out of receiving any future fundraising communications.

YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION RIGHTS

Access to Your Records: Under Texas law, you have the right to inspect and obtain a copy of your PHI within fifteen (15) business days of submitting a written request. If your records are maintained electronically, you have the right to receive them in an electronic format.

Restriction Requests: You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of your PHI. We are not required to agree to your request, except if you request that we not disclose PHI to your health plan for purposes of payment or healthcare operations, and the PHI pertains solely to a health care item or service for which you have paid us out-of-pocket and in full.

Amendment: You have the right to request that we amend your PHI if you believe it is incorrect or incomplete. Your request must be in writing and provide a reason supporting the amendment. We may deny your request under certain circumstances, in which case we will provide you with a written explanation.

Accounting of Disclosures: You have the right to receive a list of instances in which we or our business associates disclosed your PHI for purposes other than treatment, payment, healthcare operations, and certain other activities.

Breach Notification: You have the right to be notified promptly following any breach of your unsecured PHI. This includes any unauthorized access or disclosure of your Part 2 SUD records.

Right to a Paper Copy: You have the right to receive a paper copy of this Notice at any time upon request.

COMPLAINTS AND QUESTIONS

If you are concerned that we have violated your privacy rights, or if you disagree with a decision we made about access or amendment to your PHI, you may file a complaint with our Privacy Officer using the contact information below.

You may also file a written complaint with the Region VI Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or with the Texas Office of the Attorney General. We will not retaliate against you in any way for filing a complaint.

Privacy Officer Contact Information:

Privacy Officer

Friendswood Family Medicine

300 E. Edgewood

Friendswood, TX 77546

Phone: 281-485-9034

Fax: 281-485-9807