## Notice of Privacy Practices

Privacy Practices are crucial for safeguarding the client’s privacy while ensuring the flow of necessary health data. A copy will be made available to the client at time of admission and receipt of acknowledgement will be obtained to reflect that the client received the Notice. If an acknowledgement cannot be secured, LWB will document efforts made to and an explanation. If a privacy breach of PHI is discovered, LWB will make the necessary notifications.

LWB reserves the right to modify practices and introduce new provisions affecting all PHI maintained. In the event of any serious changes to the Privacy Practices, notification will be provided within 60 days of the revision.

Information shared by any client receiving and/or requesting services may not be released nor shared, in any form or manner, unless prior written authorization is obtained and approved.

If disclosing certain information from a client’s record or granting access to specific details within that record would cause harm to the client, the licensed professional responsible for their treatment, along with the Program Manager, can designate which information should not be released to external entities or accessed by the client. Reasons for such a designation would include putting the client’s well-being in jeopardy or serious harm to a non-healthcare provider or another person.

**Uses and Disclosures of Health Information for Purposes of Treatment, Payment, and Health Care Operations**

* **Treatment**: Health information may be disclosed about the client to provide them with treatment or services. This includes coordination with a third party where consent has been previously acquired.
* **Payment:** Health information may be disclosed to bill for services and receive payment from a third party, such as an insurance company
* **Health Care Operations:** Disclosing health information to facilitate business operations and ensure high-quality care for clients.
* **Appointment Reminders:** Health information may be disclosed when clients are contacted as a reminder for appointments.

**Exceptions to Privacy and Permissible Disclosures**

* **Public Health:** A request to report information about certain diseases and about any deaths to government agencies that collect that information, except for information concerning HIV status.
* **Health Oversight:** A request from county and/or the state health oversight agency when they oversee the program in which the client receives care or has the right to inspect LWB offices and/or investigate healthcare practices.
* **Legal Consultation:** Appropriate consultation from legal counsel, any other situation (usual or unusual) in which information is required to be released by Federal or Commonwealth law.
* **Mandatory Reporting:** A report of suspected child abuse or elder abuse, as required by law. Or requested as part of a legally constituted investigation of suspected child abuse. This will involve the disclosure of PHI, which can be reported on behalf of the client.
* **To Avert a Serious Threat to Safety:** If the client presents as imminent danger to themselves and/or any other person(s), appropriate legal authorities and/or the person(s) threatened must be personally and specifically notified of the nature and extent of the threat (Duty to Warn).
* **National Security:** A request due to purposes of national security
* **Law Enforcement:** An order from a legally constituted court of law. Except when required by law, the disclosures to law enforcement are subject to a minimum necessary determination by the covered entity. Moreover, if the law enforcement official making the request for information is not known to the covered entity, the covered entity must verify the identity and authority of such person prior to disclosing the information.
* **Investigation of a Crime:** A request from the police for the names and addresses of all persons who had access to the scene of a crime at the time if the crime was committed on LWB premises. To respond to a request for PHI for purposes of identifying or locating a suspect, fugitive, material witness or missing person; but the covered entity must limit disclosures of PHI to name and address, date and place of birth, social security number, date, and time of death.
* **Subpoena/Court order:** A subpoena or court order from a legally constituted court of law. Covered entities can disclose PHI in cases of court orders, court ordered warrants, subpoena or summons issued by a judicial officer or a grand jury subpoena. It is understood that privacy is considered during the process which would have led to the granting of such orders.
* **Coroner/Medical Examiner:** A request for health information from a coroner or funeral director after the death of a person served. Information about a decedent may also be shared with medical examiners or coroners to assist them in identifying the decedent, determining the cause of death, or to perform their other authorized duties.

LWB upholds the security and privacy of the health information received. Team Members that process a health information request of any sort for an individual served, will take appropriate steps to verify the identity and/or authority of any requester of health or billing information is not certain.

Tocontrol the amount of personally identifiable health information made available to Team Member and business associates based on a need to know, Team Members will only request, use and/or disclose the minimum amount of individually identifiable health information that is necessary to achieve the intended purpose of the permitted use or disclosure.

**Right to Request Restrictions:** Clients have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the use and disclosure of their private health information for treatment, payment, and healthcare operations, as well as for limited sharing with family members or others involved in the care. LWB will take all such requests into consideration, even though there is no obligation under the federal HIPAA Privacy Regulations to grant them.

**Right to Request Confidential Communication:** LWB will accommodate reasonable requests from clients or parents/guardians to receive communications through alternative means or at separate locations. To facilitate this, the client or guardian will sign a consent form granting LWB to do so.

**Disciplinary Consequences for Violations:** Any breaches of confidentiality, or violations of the privacy and security procedures committed by any LWB Team Member, will have a sanction imposed on them.