



Confidentiality Information

Please note you are receiving Comprehend's "Consumer Rights / Consumer Responsibilities" policy as a separate item of your packet of information. You are also receiving a copy of Comprehend's "Notice of Privacy Practice", as outlined in "HIPAA": the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996*.

Confidentiality is central to what we do. The confidential nature of the information contained in your "client records" is most important and necessary to the provision of appropriate services. It is also required by both state and federal laws. Any information about you or in your records cannot be disclosed without your informed consent and signature on a specific release form. ("Blanket" release forms are not legal for such information, and are not used or honored by Comprehend.)

But there are some limits to confidentiality in state and federal law.

- Kentucky law now requires physicians, psychologists, social workers, etc. to report any known or suspected abuse and neglect.
- If a therapist believes you are at serious risk of physically harming yourself or someone else, law requires this be reported so responsible action can be taken to protect people (including yourself) from harm.
- The law also states that information from your "client record" can be disclosed in a medical emergency, or as required by a court order.
- A researcher, auditor or program evaluator may have access to your client records – and everyone else's – in the process of state or federally authorized research, audits or evaluations of our programs.
- State & federal law also say, "if a client commits or threatens to commit a crime on program premises or against program personnel, information from your file may be released to authorities.
- Finally, information from your file (such as your name, address, phone and the amount owed to Comprehend) may be released if necessary to collect what you owe us.

Information from your client record, if used to criminally investigate or prosecute an alcohol or drug use-related charge, is limited (42 CFR Part 2, "*Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Records*").

Other than the exceptions listed above, information about you and your medical record is kept strictly confidential. Records are filed in a chart by the Medical Records staff and are locked up when not in use. Access to the records is made by our staff only as necessary for case consultation, quality review, etc. All staff members are required to strictly preserve the confidential nature of records and information about all clients of Comprehend.

Any consumer complaint or grievance regarding your treatment should be directed either in writing or in person to Comprehend's Consumer Ombudsman, located at 611 Forest Avenue, Maysville, KY 41056 (606) 564-4016. If the Ombudsman is not available, please ask for the Human Resources Director or the Executive Director.