



# **Yolo County Office of Education Health Plan Notices November 1, 2024**

## **Included in This Packet:**

- Medicare Notice of Creditable Coverage
- Notice of Grandfathered Plan Status
- Patient Protection Notice
- Notice of Special Enrollment Rights
- Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act Notice
- Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act Notice
- Notice of HIPAA Privacy Practices

# Health Plan Notices

## MEDICARE NOTICE OF CREDITABLE COVERAGE

### Important Notice About Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare

#### Notice of Creditable Coverage

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**This Notice applies only if you and/or your dependent(s) are enrolled in a Yolo County Office of Education medical plan and you are eligible for Medicare. If this does not apply to you, you may ignore this notice.**

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**Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it. This notice has information about your prescription drug coverage with Yolo County Office of Education and your options under Medicare's prescription drug coverage. This information can help you decide whether or not you want to join a Medicare drug plan. If you are considering joining, you should compare your employer coverage, including which drugs are covered at what cost, with the coverage and costs of the plans offering Medicare prescription drug coverage in your area. Information about where you can get help to make decisions about your prescription drug coverage is at the end of this notice.**

**There are two important things you need to know about your employer coverage and Medicare's prescription drug coverage:**

- 1. Medicare prescription drug coverage became available in 2006 to everyone with Medicare. You can get this coverage if you join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan or join a Medicare Advantage Plan (like an HMO or PPO) that offers prescription drug coverage. All Medicare drug plans provide at least a standard level of coverage set by Medicare. Some plans may also offer more coverage for a higher monthly premium.**
- 2. Yolo County Office of Education has determined that the prescription drug coverage offered under the Yolo County Office of Education plan(s) are, on average for all plan participants, expected to pay out as much as standard Medicare prescription drug coverage pays and is therefore considered Creditable Coverage. Because your coverage is Creditable Coverage, you can keep this coverage and not pay a higher premium (a penalty) if you later decide to join a Medicare drug plan.**

#### **When Can You Join A Medicare Drug Plan?**

**You can join a Medicare drug plan when you first become eligible for Medicare and each year from October 15th to December 7th. However, if you lose your creditable prescription drug coverage through no fault of your own, you will also be eligible for a two (2) month Special Enrollment Period (SEP) to join a Medicare drug plan.**

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## **What Happens To Your Employer Coverage If You Decide to Join A Medicare Drug Plan?**

Your health plan coverage pays for other health expenses in addition to prescription drug. If you enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan, you and your eligible dependents may not be eligible to receive all of your current health and prescription drug benefits. If you do decide to join a Medicare drug plan and drop your employer coverage, be aware that you and your dependents may not be eligible to receive health and prescription drug benefits in the future.

## **When Will You Pay A Higher Premium (Penalty) To Join A Medicare Drug Plan?**

You should also know that if you drop or lose your employer coverage and don't join a Medicare drug plan within 63 continuous days after the coverage ends, you may pay a higher premium (a penalty) to join a Medicare drug plan later.

If you go 63 continuous days or longer without creditable prescription drug coverage, your monthly premium may go up by at least 1% of the Medicare base beneficiary premium per month for every month that you did not have that coverage. For example, if you go nineteen months without creditable coverage, your premium may consistently be at least 19% higher than the Medicare base beneficiary premium. You may have to pay this higher premium (a penalty) as long as you have Medicare prescription drug coverage. In addition, you may have to wait until the following October to join.

## **For More Information About This Notice Or Your Employer Prescription Drug Coverage...**

Contact the person listed below for further information. NOTE: You'll get this notice each year. You will also get it before the next period you can join a Medicare drug plan, and if this coverage changes. You also may request a copy of this notice at any time.

## **For More Information About Your Options Under Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage...**

More detailed information about Medicare plans that offer prescription drug coverage is in the "Medicare & You" handbook. You'll get a copy of the handbook in the mail every year from Medicare. You may also be contacted directly by Medicare drug plans.

For More Information about Medicare prescription drug coverage:

- Visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)
- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see the inside back cover of your copy of the "Medicare & You" handbook for their telephone number) for personalized help
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

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If you have limited income and resources, extra help paying for Medicare prescription drug coverage is available. For information about this extra help, visit Social Security on the web at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), or call them at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

**Remember: Keep this Creditable Coverage notice. If you decide to join one of the Medicare drug plans, you may be required to provide a copy of this notice when you join to show whether or not you have maintained creditable coverage and, therefore, whether or not you are required to pay a higher premium (a penalty).**

November 1, 2024  
Yolo County Office of Education  
Human Resources  
1280 Santa Anita Court, Suite 100  
WoodlandCA95776  
(530) 668-3778

# Health Plan Notices

## Patient Protection Notice

Your health plan may require or allow for the designation of a primary care provider. If so, you have the right to designate any primary care provider who participates in our network and who is available to accept you or your family members, including a pediatrician, as the primary care provider. Until you make this designation, the health plan may designate one for you.

You do not need prior authorization from the health plan or from any other person (including a primary care provider) in order to obtain access to obstetrical or gynecological care from a health care professional in our network who specializes in obstetrics or gynecology. The health care professional, however, may be required to comply with certain procedures, including obtaining prior authorization for certain services, following a pre-approved treatment plan or procedures for making referrals.

For information on how to select a primary care provider, a list of participating primary care providers, or a list of health care professionals who specialize in obstetrics or gynecology, contact your health plan.

## Notice of HIPAA Special Enrollment Rights

If an eligible employee declines enrollment in a group health plan for the employee or the employee's spouse or dependents because of other health insurance or group health plan coverage, the eligible employee may be able to enroll him/herself and eligible dependents in this plan if eligibility is lost for the other coverage (or because the employer stops contributing toward this other coverage). However, the eligible employee must request enrollment within **30** days after the other coverage ends (or after the employer ceases contributions for the coverage).

In addition, if an eligible employee acquires a new dependent as a result of marriage, birth, adoption or placement for adoption, the eligible employee may be able to enroll him/herself and any eligible dependents, provided that the eligible employee requests enrollment within **30** days after the marriage, birth, adoption, or placement for adoption.

Furthermore, eligible employees and their eligible dependents who are eligible for coverage but not enrolled, shall be eligible to enroll for coverage within 60 days after becoming ineligible for coverage under a Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Plan (CHIP) plan or being determined to be eligible for financial assistance under a Medicaid, CHIP, or state plan with respect to coverage under the plan.

To request special enrollment or obtain more information, contact your health plan.

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## **Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act Notice**

Group health plans and health insurance issuers generally may not, under federal law, restrict benefits for any hospital length of stay in connection with childbirth for the mother or newborn child to less than 48 hours following a vaginal delivery, or less than 96 hours following a cesarean section. However, federal law generally does not prohibit the mother's or newborn's attending provider, after consulting with the mother, from discharging the mother or her newborn earlier than 48 hours (or 96 hours as applicable). In any case, plans and issuers may not, under Federal law, require that a provider obtain authorization from the plan or the insurance issuer for prescribing a length of stay not in excess of 48 hours (or 96 hours). If you would like more information on maternity benefits, contact your health plan.

## **Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act Notice**

If you have had or are going to have a mastectomy, you may be entitled to certain benefits under the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998 (WHCRA). For individuals receiving mastectomy-related benefits, coverage will be provided in a manner determined in consultation with the attending physician and the patient, for:

- All stages of reconstruction of the breast on which the mastectomy was performed;
- Surgery and reconstruction of the other breast to produce a symmetrical appearance;
- Prostheses; and
- Treatment of physical complications of the mastectomy, including lymphedema.

These benefits will be provided subject to the same deductibles and coinsurance applicable to other medical and surgical benefits provided under this plan. If you would like more information on WHCRA benefits, contact your health plan.

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## Notice of HIPAA Privacy Practices

**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.**

This Notice of Privacy Practices (the "Notice") describes the legal obligations of the Yolo County Office of Education Health Plan (the "Plan") sponsored by Yolo County Office of Education ("Plan Sponsor") and your legal rights regarding your protected health information held by the Plan under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH Act) and subsequent amending regulations ("HIPAA Privacy Rule"). Among other things, this Notice describes how your protected health information may be used or disclosed to carry out treatment, payment, or health care operations, or for any other purposes that are permitted or required by law. We are required to provide this HIPAA Privacy Notice to you pursuant to HIPAA.

The HIPAA Privacy Rule protects only certain medical information known as "protected health information." Generally, protected health information is health information, including demographic information, collected from you or created or received by a health care provider, a health care clearinghouse, a health plan, or your employer on behalf of a group health plan, from which it is possible to individually identify you and that relates to:

- Your past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition;
- The provision of health care to you; or
- The past, present, or future payment for the provision of health care to you.

If you have any questions about this Notice or about our privacy practices, please contact the individual listed at the end of this notice.

### **Our Responsibilities**

Yolo County Office of Education is required by law to:

- Maintain the privacy of your protected health information;
- Provide you with certain rights with respect to your protected health information;
- Provide you with a copy of this Notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to your Protected health information; and
- Follow the terms of the Notice that is currently in effect.

We reserve the right to change the terms of this Notice and to make new provisions regarding your protected health information that we maintain, as allowed or required by law. If we make any material change to this Notice, we will provide you with a copy of our revised HIPAA Privacy Notice electronically or by first class mail to the last known address on file.

# Health Plan Notices

## How We May Use and Disclose Your Protected Health Information

Under the law, we may use or disclose your protected health information under certain circumstances without your permission. The following categories describe the different ways that we may use and disclose your protected health information. Not every use or disclosure in a category will be listed. However, all of the ways we are permitted to use and disclose information will fall within one of the categories.

***For Payment.*** We may use or disclose your protected health information to determine your eligibility for Plan benefits, to facilitate payment for the treatment and services you receive from health care providers, to determine benefit responsibility under the Plan, or to coordinate Plan coverage. For example, we may tell your health care provider about your medical history to determine whether a particular treatment is experimental, investigational, or medically necessary, or to determine whether the Plan will cover the treatment. We may also share your protected health information with a utilization review or precertification service provider. We may share or discuss your PHI with your family members or others involved in your care or payment for your care, unless you object in writing and provide the objection to the Plan's HIPAA contact listed at the end of this Notice. Likewise, we may share your protected health information with another entity to assist with the adjudication or subrogation of health claims or to another health plan to coordinate benefit payments. In any of these cases, we will disclose only the information necessary to resolve the issue at hand.

***For Health Care Operations.*** We may use and disclose your protected health information for other Plan operations. These uses and disclosures are necessary to run the Plan. For example, we may use medical information in connection with conducting quality assessment and improvement activities; underwriting, premium rating, and other activities relating to Plan coverage; submitting claims for stop-loss (or excess-loss) coverage; conducting or arranging for medical review, legal services, audit services, and fraud and abuse detection programs; business planning and development such as cost management; and business management and general Plan administrative activities. However, we will not use your genetic information for underwriting purposes.

***Treatment Alternatives or Health-Related Benefits and Services.*** We may use and disclose your protected health information to send you information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that might be of interest to you.

***To Business Associates.*** We may contract with individuals or entities known as Business Associates to perform various functions on our behalf or to provide certain types of services. In order to perform these functions or to provide these services, Business Associates will receive, create, maintain, transmit, use, and/or disclose your protected health information, but only after they agree in writing with us to implement appropriate safeguards regarding your protected health information. For example, we may disclose your protected health information to a Business Associate to process your claims for Plan benefits or to provide support services, such as utilization management,



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pharmacy benefit management, or subrogation, but only after the Business Associate enters into a Business Associate contract with us.

***As Required by Law.*** We will disclose your protected health information when required to do so by federal, state, or local law. For example, we may disclose your protected health information when required by national security laws or public health disclosure laws.

***To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety.*** We may use and disclose your protected health information when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety, or the health and safety of the public or another person. Any disclosure, however, would only be to someone able to help prevent the threat. For example, we may disclose your protected health information in a proceeding regarding the licensure of a physician.

***To Plan Sponsors.*** For the purpose of administering the plan, we may disclose to certain employees of the Employer protected health information. However, those employees will only use or disclose that information as necessary to perform plan administration functions or as otherwise required by HIPAA, unless you have authorized further disclosures. Your protected health information cannot be used for employment purposes without your specific authorization.

## Special Situations

In addition to the above, the following categories describe other possible ways that we may use and disclose your protected health information without your specific authorization. For each category of uses or disclosures, we will explain what we mean and present some examples. Not every use or disclosure in a category will be listed. However, all of the ways we are permitted to use and disclose information will fall within one of the categories.

***Organ and Tissue Donation.*** If you are an organ donor, we may release your protected health information after your death to organizations that handle organ procurement or organ, eye, or tissue transplantation or to an organ donation bank, as necessary to facilitate organ or tissue donation and transplantation.

***Military.*** If you are a member of the armed forces, we may release your protected health information as required by military command authorities. We may also release protected health information about foreign military personnel to the appropriate foreign military authority.

***Workers' Compensation.*** We may release your protected health information for workers' compensation or similar programs, but only as authorized by, and to the extent necessary to comply with, laws relating to workers' compensation and similar programs that provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness.

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**Public Health Risks.** We may disclose your protected health information for public health activities. These activities generally include the following:

- to prevent or control disease, injury, or disability;
- to report births and deaths;
- to report child abuse or neglect;
- to report reactions to medications or problems with products;
- to notify people of recalls of products they may be using;
- to notify a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition;
- to notify the appropriate government authority if we believe that a patient has been the victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence. We will only make this disclosure if you agree, or when required or authorized by law.

**Health Oversight Activities.** We may disclose your protected health information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. These oversight activities include, for example, audits, investigations, inspections, and licensure. These activities are necessary for the government to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.

**Lawsuits and Disputes.** If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose your protected health information in response to a court or administrative order. We may also disclose your protected health information in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process by someone involved in a legal dispute, but only if efforts have been made to tell you about the request or to obtain a court or administrative order protecting the information requested.

**Law Enforcement.** We may disclose your protected health information if asked to do so by a law-enforcement official:

- in response to a court order, subpoena, warrant, summons, or similar process;
- to identify or locate a suspect, fugitive, material witness, or missing person;
- about the victim of a crime if, under certain limited circumstances, we are unable to obtain the victim's agreement;
- about a death that we believe may be the result of criminal conduct; and
- about criminal conduct.

**Coroners, Medical Examiners, and Funeral Directors.** We may release protected health information to a coroner or medical examiner. This may be necessary, for example, to identify a deceased person or determine the cause of death. We may also release medical information about patients to funeral directors, as necessary to carry out their duties.

**National Security and Intelligence Activities.** We may release your protected health information to authorized federal officials for intelligence, counterintelligence, and other national security activities authorized by law.

**Inmates.** If you are an inmate of a correctional institution or are in the custody of a law-

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enforcement official, we may disclose your protected health information to the correctional institution or law-enforcement official if necessary: (1) for the institution to provide you with health care; (2) to protect your health and safety or the health and safety of others; or (3) for the safety and security of the correctional institution.

**Research.** We may disclose your protected health information to researchers when:

- the individual identifiers have been removed; or
- when an institutional review board or privacy board has reviewed the research proposal and established protocols to ensure the privacy of the requested information, and approves the research.

## Required Disclosures

The following is a description of disclosures of your protected health information we are required to make.

**Government Audits.** We are required to disclose your protected health information to the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services when the Secretary is investigating or determining our compliance with the HIPAA privacy rule.

**Disclosures to You.** When you request, we are required to disclose to you the portion of your protected health information that contains medical records, billing records, and any other records used to make decisions regarding your health care benefits. We are also required, when requested, to provide you with an accounting of most disclosures of your protected health information if the disclosure was for reasons other than for payment, treatment, or health care operations, and if the protected health information was not disclosed pursuant to your individual authorization.

## Other Disclosures

**Personal Representatives.** We will disclose your protected health information to individuals authorized by you, or to an individual designated as your personal representative, attorney-in-fact, etc., so long as you provide us with a written notice/authorization and any supporting documents (i.e., power of attorney). Note: Under the HIPAA privacy rule, we do not have to disclose information to a personal representative if we have a reasonable belief that:

- you have been, or may be, subjected to domestic violence, abuse, or neglect by such person; or
- treating such person as your personal representative could endanger you; and
- in the exercise of professional judgment, it is not in your best interest to treat the person as your personal representative.

**Spouses and Other Family Members.** With only limited exceptions, we will send all mail to the employee. This includes mail relating to the employee's spouse and other family members who are covered under the Plan, and includes mail with information on

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the use of Plan benefits by the employee's spouse and other family members and information on the denial of any Plan benefits to the employee's spouse and other family members. If a person covered under the Plan has requested Restrictions or Confidential Communications (see below under "Your Rights"), and if we have agreed to the request, we will send mail as provided by the request for Restrictions or Confidential Communications.

**Authorizations.** Other uses or disclosures of your protected health information not described above will only be made with your written authorization. For example, in general and subject to specific conditions, we will not use or disclose your psychiatric notes; we will not use or disclose your protected health information for marketing; and we will not sell your protected health information, unless you give us a written authorization. You may revoke written authorizations at any time, so long as the revocation is in writing. Once we receive your written revocation, it will only be effective for future uses and disclosures. It will not be effective for any information that may have been used or disclosed in reliance upon the written authorization and prior to receiving your written revocation.

## Your Rights

You have the following rights with respect to your protected health information:

***Right to Inspect and Copy.*** You have the right to inspect and copy certain protected health information that may be used to make decisions about your Plan benefits. If the information you request is maintained electronically, and you request an electronic copy, we will provide a copy in the electronic form and format you request, if the information can be readily produced in that form and format; if the information cannot be readily produced in that form and format, we will work with you to come to an agreement on form and format. If we cannot agree on an electronic form and format, we will provide you with a paper copy.

To inspect and copy your protected health information, you must submit your request in writing to the individual listed at the end of this Notice. If you request a copy of the information, we may charge a reasonable fee for the costs of copying, mailing, or other supplies associated with your request. We may deny your request to inspect and copy in certain very limited circumstances. If you are denied access to your medical information, you may request that the denial be reviewed by submitting a written request to the individual listed at the end of this Notice.

***Right to Amend.*** If you feel that the protected health information we have about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for the Plan. To request an amendment, your request must be made in writing and submitted to the individual listed at the end of this Notice. You must provide a reason that supports your request.

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We may deny your request for an amendment if it is not in writing or does not include a reason to support the request. In addition, we may deny your request if you ask us to amend information that:

- is not part of the medical information kept by or for the Plan;
- was not created by us, unless the person or entity that created the information is no longer available to make the amendment;
- is not part of the information that you would be permitted to inspect and copy; or
- is already accurate and complete.

If we deny your request, you have the right to file a statement of disagreement with us and any future disclosures of the disputed information will include your statement.

***Right to an Accounting of Disclosures.*** You have the right to request an "accounting" of certain disclosures of your protected health information. The accounting will not include (1) disclosures for purposes of treatment, payment, or health care operations; (2) disclosures made to you; (3) disclosures made pursuant to your authorization; (4) disclosures made to friends or family in your presence or because of an emergency; (5) disclosures for national security purposes; and (6) disclosures incidental to otherwise permissible disclosures.

To request this list or accounting of disclosures, you must submit it in writing to the individual listed at the end of this Notice. Your request must state the time period you want the accounting to cover, which may not be longer than six years before the date of the request. Your request should indicate in what form you want the list (for example, paper or electronic). The first list you request within a 12-month period will be provided free of charge. For additional lists, we may charge you for the costs of providing the list. We will notify you of the cost involved and you may choose to withdraw or modify your request at that time before any costs are incurred.

***Right to Request Restrictions.*** You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on your protected health information that we use or disclose for treatment, payment, or health care operations. You also have the right to request a limit on your protected health information that we disclose to someone who is involved in your care or the payment for your care, such as a family member or friend. For example, you could ask that we not use or disclose information about a surgery that you had. Except as provided in the next paragraph, we are not required to agree to your request. However, if we do agree to the request, we will honor the restriction until you revoke it or we notify you.

We will comply with any restriction request if (1) except as otherwise required by law, the disclosure is to a health plan for purposes of carrying out payment or health care operations (and is not for purposes of carrying out treatment); and (2) the protected health information pertains solely to a health care item or service for which the health care provider involved has been paid in full by you or another person. To request restrictions, you must send your request in writing to the individual listed at the end of this notice.

In your request, you must tell us (1) what information you want to limit; (2) whether you

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want to limit our use, disclosure, or both; and (3) to whom you want the limits to apply- for example, disclosures to your spouse.

***Right to Request Confidential Communications.*** You have the right to request that we communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location. For example, you can ask that we only contact you at work or by mail. To request confidential communications, you must make your request in writing the individual listed at the end of this notice. We will not ask you the reason for your request. Your request must specify how or where you wish to be contacted. We will accommodate all reasonable requests.

***Right to Be Notified of a Breach.*** You have the right to be notified in the event that we (or a Business Associate) discover a breach of unsecured protected health information.

***Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice.*** You have the right to a paper copy of this notice. You may ask us to give you a copy of this notice at any time. Even if you have agreed to receive this notice electronically, you are still entitled to a paper copy of this notice.

To obtain a paper copy of this notice, contact the individual listed at the end of this notice.

## Complaints

If you believe that your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with the Plan or with the Office for Civil Rights of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. To file a complaint with the Plan, contact to the individual listed below. All complaints must be submitted in writing.

You will not be penalized, or in any other way retaliated against, for filing a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights or with us.

## HIPAA Contact

**Daniel Rubio**  
**Payroll & Benefits Technician**  
**1280 Santa Anita Court, Suite 100**  
**Woodland, CA 95776**  
**(530) 668-3778**  
**[www.ycoe.org](http://www.ycoe.org)**

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