NOTICE OF 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.

Pima County is required by law to take reasonable steps to ensure the privacy of personally identifiable health information and to inform individuals about:

- Pima County’s uses and disclosures of Protected Health Information (PHI)
- Your rights with respect to your PHI
- Pima County’s duties with respect to PHI
- Your right to file a complaint with Pima County and to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- The identification of the person or office to contact for further information about Pima County’s privacy practices.

If you have any questions about this Notice please contact Pima County’s Privacy Officer at 520-724-8028.

This Notice of Privacy Practices describes how Pima County may use and disclose your protected health information to carry out treatment, payment, or manage health care operations, and for other purposes permitted or required by law. It also describes your rights to access and control your protected health information.

“Protected Health Information” (PHI) means information about you (including demographic information), that may identify you and pertains to your past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition and related health care services. Pima County is required by the privacy regulations issued under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) to maintain the privacy of PHI, provide individuals covered under Pima County’s group health plan with notice of Pima County’s legal duties and privacy practices concerning PHI and to abide by the terms of this Notice of Privacy Practices. Pima County may change the terms of this notice in the future. The new notice will be effective for all PHI that Pima County maintains at that time. Pima County will provide you with any revised Notice of Privacy Practices upon request. You may request a revised version by accessing the Pima County Human Resources website, or calling the Privacy Officer and requesting that a revised copy be sent to you in the mail. Pima County will not use or disclose your PHI without a signed authorization except as outlined below. Pima County will not use genetic information to decide whether we will give you coverage, and genetic information will not be used to affect the price of coverage. You have the right to revoke that authorization in writing except to the extent that Pima County has taken action in reliance upon the authorization. If the authorization was obtained as a condition of obtaining coverage under the group health plan, Pima County has the right to contest a claim under the coverage or the coverage itself.

USES AND DISCLOSURES OF YOUR PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION TO CARRY OUT TREATMENT, PAYMENT AND HEALTH CARE OPERATIONS

The following categories describe different ways that Pima County may legally use and disclose PHI. For each category of uses and disclosures, an explanation will be provided. Not every use or disclosure in a category will be listed; however, all of the ways Pima County is permitted or required to use and disclose PHI will fall within one of the following categories.

Treatment: Pima County may use and disclose your PHI to provide, coordinate, or manage your health care and any related services; including consulting with other health care providers about your health care or referring you to another health care provider for treatment including physicians, nurses, and other health care providers involved in your care. Pima County may use and disclose your PHI to inform you of alternative treatments.

Payment: Pima County may use and disclose your PHI as necessary for payment purposes. Pima County may use information regarding the medical procedures and treatment to process and pay claims. Pima County may also disclose your PHI for payment purposes to a health care provider or a health plan. Pima County may use or disclose your information to send a bill to you, your health insurer, or your family member. The information on or accompanying the bill may include information identifying you and your diagnosis, as well as services rendered, any procedures performed and supplies used.

Health Care Operations: Pima County may use and disclose your PHI as necessary for health care operations. For example, activities relating to the creation, renewal, or replacement of your Group Health Plan coverage, reinsurance, compliance, auditing, rating, business management, quality improvement and assurance, or other functions related to your Group Health Plan. Pima County may share your PHI with third party “business associates” that perform various activities (for example, billing or transcription services). Pima County maintains written contracts containing terms that will protect the privacy of your PHI with all business associates.

Business Associates: Pima County may use outside persons or organizations to help provide you with the benefits of your Group Health Plan. Outside persons or organizations might include vendors that help process your claims.

USES AND DISCLOSURES THAT REQUIRE YOU BE GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO AGREE OR DISAGREE PRIOR TO USE OR DISCLOSURE

Disclosure of PHI to family members, other relatives, and your close friends is allowed when the information is directly relevant to the family or friend’s involvement with your care or payment for that care, and you have either agreed to the disclosure or have been given an opportunity to object and have not objected. If you are unavailable or incapacitated and Pima County determines that a limited disclosure is in your best interest, Pima County may share limited PHI with individuals mentioned above. Pima County may disclose PHI to your spouse or domestic partner concerning the processing of a claim. The PHI of minor children may be disclosed to their parents or guardians unless such disclosure is otherwise prohibited by law.

OTHER PERMITTED AND REQUIRED USES AND DISCLOSURES THAT MAY BE MADE WITHOUT YOUR AUTHORIZATION OR OPPORTUNITY TO AGREE OR OBJECT

Required By Law: Pima County may use or disclose your PHI if that the use or disclosure is required by state or federal law. The use or disclosure will be made in compliance with the law and will be limited to the relevant requirements of the law. You will be notified, if required by law, of any such uses or disclosures.

Public Health: Pima County may disclose your PHI for public health activities and purposes to a public health authority permitted by law to collect or receive the information. A disclosure may be made for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease, injury or disability.

Communicable Diseases: Pima County may disclose your PHI if authorized by state or federal law to a person who may have been exposed to a communicable disease or may otherwise be at risk of contracting or spreading the disease or condition.

Health Oversight: Pima County may disclose your PHI to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by state or federal law, such as audits, investigations, and inspections. This includes uses or disclosures in civil, administrative or criminal investigations, inspections, and licensure or for disciplinary actions (for example, to
You have the following rights regarding medical information Pima County gathers about you:

Access To Your PHI: You have the right of access to copy and/or inspect your PHI. Pima County maintains in designated records. Your request for access to your PHI must be in writing, stating that you want access to your PHI and must be signed by you or your representative (preferably with a Power of Attorney). Pima County may charge you a fee for copying and postage.

Amend Your PHI: You have the right to request an amendment to medical information you feel is incorrect or incomplete. A request to amend must be made in writing and submitted to Pima County’s Privacy Officer. Your request to amend the information may be denied. You have a right to submit a statement about your request to amend that will be maintained in your file.

Accounting for Disclosures of Your PHI: You have the right to receive an accounting of certain disclosures made by Pima County of your PHI. Dislosures that Pima County is required to account for include those to state insurance departments, pursuant to valid legal processes, or for law enforcement purposes. Pima County may charge a fee for accounting requests.

END OF PRIVACY PRACTICES