Protecting the confidentiality of personal and health information

Blue Shield is committed to protecting the personal and health information of our members.

When members complete an application for coverage, their signature authorizes Blue Shield to collect personal and health information that includes both their medical information and information such as their address, telephone number or other individual information. As a Blue Shield member, this general consent allows Blue Shield to communicate with physicians and other providers regarding treatment and payment decisions.

Blue Shield also participates in quality measurement activities that may require us to access personal and health information and we have policies to protect this information from inappropriate disclosure. We release this information only in an aggregated or encoded format. We will not disclose, sell or otherwise use personal and health information unless permitted by law and to the extent necessary to administer the health plan. We will obtain written authorization from the member to use their personal and health information for any other purpose. For any of our prospective or current members unable to give consent, we have a policy in place to protect their rights and which permits their legally authorized representative to give consent on the member’s behalf. Blue Shield will not release personal and health information to employers without their specific authorization unless law permits such release.

Through its contracts with providers, Blue Shield has policies in place to allow members to inspect their medical records maintained by providers and, when needed, to include a written statement from the member. Members also have the right to review personal and health information maintained by Blue Shield. Prospective, current or former members that want more detailed information about Blue Shield’s privacy policy can click the “Privacy” link at the bottom of blueshieldca.com web pages. Current members also can call the customer service number on their Blue Shield member ID card. Prospective and former HMO members can call (800) 424-6521; prospective and former PPO members can call (800) 200-3242.