

Notice of Privacy Practices

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC

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NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Effective Date: January 1, 2026

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL AND HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

I. OUR PLEDGE REGARDING HEALTH INFORMATION

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC understands that information about your health and healthcare is personal and is committed to protecting your health information.

The practice creates and maintains records of the care and services provided to you. These records are necessary to provide quality care, coordinate treatment, operate the practice, obtain payment for services, and comply with legal and regulatory requirements.

This Notice applies to records created or maintained by Balanced Chemistry, PLLC and its authorized providers, employees, contractors, and other workforce members, as applicable.

This Notice explains:

- How Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may use and disclose your health information;
- Your rights regarding health information maintained about you; and
- The practice's legal responsibilities regarding the use, protection, and disclosure of health information.

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC is required by law to:

- Maintain the privacy and security of protected health information ("PHI") that identifies you;
- Provide you with notice of the practice's legal duties and privacy practices regarding PHI;
- Notify affected individuals following certain breaches of unsecured PHI when required by law; and
- Follow the terms of the Notice of Privacy Practices currently in effect.

When Balanced Chemistry, PLLC creates or maintains records subject to **42 C.F.R. Part 2**, the practice will also comply with applicable federal requirements governing the confidentiality of certain substance use disorder records.

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may revise the terms of this Notice. Any revised Notice may apply to all PHI maintained by the practice, including information created or received before the revised Notice became effective.

The current Notice will be available upon request, through the practice, and through other methods designated by Balanced Chemistry, PLLC.

II. HOW BALANCED CHEMISTRY, PLLC MAY USE AND DISCLOSE HEALTH INFORMATION

The following categories describe common ways in which Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may use and disclose PHI.

Not every possible use or disclosure is listed. However, permitted uses and disclosures generally fall within one or more of the categories below.

Treatment

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may use or disclose PHI to provide, coordinate, or manage your treatment and related healthcare services.

For example, the practice may disclose information to:

- Another healthcare provider involved in your care;
- A primary care provider;
- A specialist;
- A hospital or emergency department;
- A pharmacy;
- A laboratory;
- Another psychiatric or behavioral health provider;
- A consulting clinician; or
- Another healthcare professional involved in treatment coordination.

Treatment includes the coordination and management of healthcare and related services, consultation among healthcare providers, and referral of a patient from one healthcare provider to another.

Disclosures for treatment purposes may not always be subject to the HIPAA minimum necessary standard because healthcare providers may require complete and clinically relevant information to safely evaluate and treat patients.

Payment

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may use or disclose PHI as necessary to obtain payment for healthcare services.

Examples may include:

- Submitting claims to health insurance plans;
- Verifying insurance eligibility;
- Obtaining prior authorization;
- Coordinating benefits;
- Responding to payer requests;
- Conducting utilization review;
- Appealing claim denials; or
- Collecting payment for services.

Healthcare Operations

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may use or disclose PHI for healthcare operations, including activities necessary to operate and improve the practice.

Examples may include:

- Quality assessment and improvement;
- Clinical review;
- Provider supervision or consultation;
- Credentialing;
- Compliance activities;
- Auditing;
- Billing administration;
- Practice management;
- Staff training;
- Risk management;
- Legal services;
- Business planning;
- Information technology support;
- Cybersecurity;
- Record management; and
- Other operational functions permitted by law.

Business Associates

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may disclose PHI to contractors or vendors known as “business associates” that perform services on behalf of the practice and require access to PHI.

Examples may include:

- Electronic health record vendors;
- Billing companies;
- Information technology vendors;
- Secure communication platforms;
- Cloud service providers;
- Legal or accounting services;
- Document storage vendors; and
- Other organizations supporting practice operations.

When required by HIPAA, business associates must agree in writing to appropriately safeguard PHI.

Substance Use Disorder Records Protected by 42 C.F.R. Part 2

Certain records related to substance use disorder diagnosis, treatment, or referral may be subject to additional federal protections under **42 C.F.R. Part 2**.

When 42 C.F.R. Part 2 applies, use and disclosure of such information may be more restricted than disclosure permitted under HIPAA.

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC will use and disclose Part 2-protected records only as permitted by applicable law.

Information disclosed pursuant to a valid consent or other legal authority may, in some circumstances, be redisclosed by the recipient and may no longer remain protected under the same federal confidentiality standards, depending on applicable law.

Lawsuits, Disputes, and Legal Proceedings

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may disclose PHI in response to:

- A valid court order;
- An administrative order;
- A subpoena;
- A discovery request;
- A warrant;
- A summons; or
- Other lawful process,

when disclosure is permitted or required by applicable law.

The practice may take reasonable steps to determine whether required legal protections have been satisfied before disclosing information.

Records protected by 42 C.F.R. Part 2 may be subject to additional restrictions. Such records or testimony describing their contents generally may not be used or disclosed in civil, criminal, administrative, or legislative proceedings against a patient except as specifically permitted by applicable federal law.

III. CERTAIN USES AND DISCLOSURES REQUIRE YOUR WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC will obtain your written authorization for uses or disclosures of PHI when required by law.

Unless otherwise permitted by law, you may revoke an authorization in writing at any time. Revocation will not affect actions already taken in reliance on a valid authorization before the revocation was received.

Psychotherapy Notes

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may or may not create or maintain “psychotherapy notes” as that term is specifically defined by HIPAA at **45 C.F.R. § 164.501**.

Psychotherapy notes are afforded special protections and are distinct from ordinary progress notes, medication-management notes, treatment plans, diagnoses, symptoms, medication information, laboratory information, and other components of the medical record.

When psychotherapy notes exist, most uses or disclosures require written authorization unless an exception applies.

Permitted uses or disclosures without authorization may include those allowed by law, such as:

- Use by the originator of the notes for treatment;
- Certain training or supervision activities;
- Defense of the practice or provider in a legal proceeding initiated by the patient;
- Investigation by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services concerning HIPAA compliance;
- Uses or disclosures required by law and limited to the requirements of that law;
- Certain health oversight activities involving the originator of the notes;
- Disclosure to a coroner or medical examiner as authorized by law; or
- Certain disclosures necessary to avert a serious and imminent threat to health or safety.

Substance Use Disorder Counseling Notes

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may maintain certain notes documenting the contents of substance use disorder counseling encounters.

When such records are protected by applicable law, including 42 C.F.R. Part 2, separate written consent may be required for use or disclosure.

A patient may revoke consent as permitted by law, except to the extent that the practice has already acted in reliance on the consent.

Marketing

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC will obtain authorization before using or disclosing PHI for marketing purposes when authorization is required by law.

Certain communications permitted by HIPAA are not considered marketing.

Sale of PHI

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC does not sell PHI in the ordinary course of practice operations.

The practice will obtain authorization before engaging in a sale of PHI when required by law.

IV. CERTAIN USES AND DISCLOSURES MAY OCCUR WITHOUT YOUR AUTHORIZATION

Subject to applicable legal requirements and limitations, Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may use or disclose PHI without written authorization in circumstances including the following:

Required by Law

The practice may use or disclose PHI when required by federal, state, or local law.

Any use or disclosure will be limited to the relevant legal requirements.

Public Health Activities

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may disclose PHI for legally authorized public health activities, including:

- Reporting certain communicable diseases;
- Reporting adverse events when required or permitted;
- Reporting suspected abuse or neglect;
- Reporting threats to public safety; or
- Other public health functions permitted by law.

Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation

The practice may disclose information when required or permitted by law to report suspected:

- Child abuse or neglect;

- Elder abuse;
- Abuse of a person with a disability;
- Domestic violence in circumstances addressed by applicable law; or
- Other legally reportable abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Serious Threat to Health or Safety

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may use or disclose PHI when permitted by law and necessary to prevent or reduce a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public.

Health Oversight Activities

The practice may disclose PHI to authorized agencies for oversight activities, including:

- Audits;
- Investigations;
- Inspections;
- Licensing activities;
- Disciplinary proceedings; or
- Other activities authorized by law.

Judicial and Administrative Proceedings

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may disclose PHI in response to judicial or administrative proceedings when permitted or required by law.

Law Enforcement

The practice may disclose PHI for certain law enforcement purposes permitted or required by law, including in response to valid legal process or for reporting certain crimes occurring on practice premises.

Coroners and Medical Examiners

PHI may be disclosed to coroners or medical examiners as authorized by law.

Research

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may use or disclose PHI for research when permitted by HIPAA and other applicable laws.

This may include research conducted pursuant to:

- Patient authorization;
- Institutional Review Board approval;
- Privacy Board approval;
- A legally recognized waiver of authorization; or
- Other lawful authority.

Specialized Government Functions

PHI may be disclosed for certain specialized government functions permitted by law, including:

- Military and veterans' activities;
- National security;
- Intelligence activities;
- Protective services;
- Certain correctional institution functions; or
- Other authorized governmental activities.

Workers' Compensation

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may disclose PHI as authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with workers' compensation laws or similar programs.

Appointment Reminders

The practice may use PHI to contact you regarding:

- Appointments;
- Scheduling;
- Rescheduling;
- Follow-up care;
- Prescription-related matters; or
- Other treatment-related communications.

Health-Related Benefits and Services

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may use or disclose PHI to inform you about:

- Treatment alternatives;
- Health-related benefits;
- Services;
- Programs;
- Referrals; or
- Other care options that may be relevant to you.

V. CERTAIN USES AND DISCLOSURES MAY REQUIRE AN OPPORTUNITY TO AGREE OR OBJECT

Family Members, Friends, and Others Involved in Care

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may disclose relevant PHI to a family member, friend, caregiver, or other individual involved in your care or payment for care when permitted by law.

When appropriate, the practice may:

- Obtain your agreement;
- Give you an opportunity to object;
- Infer agreement from the circumstances; or
- Make a professional judgment regarding disclosure when you are unavailable, incapacitated, or experiencing an emergency.

Only information directly relevant to the individual's involvement in your care or payment for care will generally be disclosed.

Disaster Relief and Emergency Circumstances

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may disclose limited information to assist with disaster relief or emergency response activities when permitted by law.

Fundraising

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC does not routinely use PHI for fundraising.

If the practice engages in fundraising communications permitted by law, patients will be given an opportunity to opt out when required.

Records protected by 42 C.F.R. Part 2 will not be used or disclosed for fundraising except as permitted by applicable law.

VI. YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING YOUR PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION

You have certain rights regarding PHI maintained by Balanced Chemistry, PLLC.

These rights may be subject to exceptions, limitations, verification requirements, and procedures established by law.

Right to Request Restrictions

You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses or disclosures of your PHI for:

- Treatment;

- Payment; or
- Healthcare operations.

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC is generally not required to agree to a requested restriction unless applicable law requires otherwise.

If the practice agrees to a restriction, it will comply with the restriction except in certain circumstances permitted by law.

Right to Restrict Disclosure to a Health Plan for Services Paid in Full

You have the right to request that Balanced Chemistry, PLLC not disclose PHI to a health plan for payment or healthcare operations when:

- The disclosure is not otherwise required by law; and
- The PHI relates solely to a healthcare item or service for which you, or another person on your behalf other than the health plan, paid the practice in full out of pocket.

When the legal requirements are met, the practice will honor the restriction.

Right to Request Confidential Communications

You have the right to request that Balanced Chemistry, PLLC communicate with you:

- Through a particular method;
- At a particular telephone number;
- At an alternative address; or
- Through another reasonable means.

The practice will accommodate reasonable requests as required by law.

Right to Inspect and Obtain Copies of PHI

You generally have the right to inspect or obtain an electronic or paper copy of PHI maintained in a designated record set.

Certain information may be excluded from access as permitted by law, including:

- Psychotherapy notes as defined by HIPAA; and
- Certain information compiled in reasonable anticipation of, or for use in, a civil, criminal, or administrative action or proceeding.

Other restrictions may apply.

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC will respond within the time required by applicable law.

The practice may charge a reasonable, cost-based fee when permitted by law.

Right to Request an Amendment

If you believe PHI maintained by Balanced Chemistry, PLLC is incorrect or incomplete, you may request an amendment.

The practice may deny a request for reasons permitted by law, including when:

- The information was not created by the practice, unless certain exceptions apply;
- The information is not part of the designated record set;
- The information is not available for inspection; or
- The information is accurate and complete.

If a request is denied, the practice will provide a written explanation when required by law.

Right to an Accounting of Disclosures

You have the right to request an accounting of certain disclosures of your PHI.

An accounting generally does not include all disclosures. For example, certain disclosures may be excluded, including some disclosures:

- For treatment;

- For payment;
- For healthcare operations;
- Made pursuant to authorization; or
- Otherwise excluded by law.

The accounting generally covers the period required by law and no more than six years before the date of the request unless a shorter period is requested.

The first accounting within a 12-month period will generally be provided without charge. A reasonable cost-based fee may apply to additional requests when permitted by law.

Additional rights may apply to records protected under 42 C.F.R. Part 2.

Right to Receive Notice of Certain Breaches

You have the right to receive notification following certain breaches of unsecured PHI when required by law.

Right to Obtain a Paper or Electronic Copy of this Notice

You have the right to obtain a paper copy of this Notice at any time.

You may also request an electronic copy when available.

Receiving the Notice electronically does not prevent you from requesting a paper copy.

Right to File a Privacy Complaint

You have the right to file a complaint if you believe your privacy rights have been violated.

A complaint may be submitted to:

- Balanced Chemistry, PLLC; and/or
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights.

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint in good faith.

VII. ADDITIONAL PRIVACY PROTECTIONS

Certain information may receive additional protection under federal or state law.

Examples may include information related to:

- Substance use disorder treatment;
- HIV testing or treatment;
- Sexually transmitted infections;
- Genetic information;
- Reproductive healthcare;
- Minor consent services;
- Psychiatric treatment;
- Domestic violence;
- Sexual assault;
- Certain court-protected information; or
- Other specially protected categories.

When a more protective law applies, Balanced Chemistry, PLLC will follow the more protective requirement to the extent required.

VIII. ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may create, receive, maintain, transmit, or store PHI using electronic systems.

These systems may include:

- Electronic health records;
- Patient portals;
- Secure messaging platforms;

- Electronic prescribing systems;
- Telehealth systems;
- Billing platforms;
- Claims systems;
- Laboratory interfaces;
- Electronic fax systems;
- Secure cloud storage;
- Artificial intelligence-assisted documentation tools; and
- Other technology used to support treatment and practice operations.

The practice implements reasonable safeguards consistent with applicable legal requirements.

However, no electronic system can be guaranteed to be completely free from cybersecurity, privacy, technical, or operational risk.

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may use vendors and business associates to support electronic systems and will require appropriate privacy and security protections when required by law.

IX. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE-ASSISTED TOOLS

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC may use artificial intelligence-assisted or automated tools to support certain functions, including:

- Clinical documentation;
- Note organization;
- Transcription;
- Administrative workflows;
- Scheduling;
- Billing;
- Coding support;
- Data organization;
- Treatment-support functions;
- Quality improvement; or
- Other practice operations.

AI-assisted tools do not replace provider judgment.

When AI-generated content is used in clinical care or incorporated into the medical record, the treating provider remains responsible for appropriate review and validation.

Separate consent may be obtained when required for:

- Session recording;
- Audio capture;
- Transcription;
- Certain AI-assisted documentation functions; or
- Other uses requiring consent under applicable law or practice policy.

Use and disclosure of PHI through AI-assisted systems remains subject to applicable privacy, security, confidentiality, and business associate requirements.

X. QUESTIONS OR COMPLAINTS

Questions regarding this Notice or concerns about the privacy of health information may be directed to:

Balanced Chemistry, PLLC
 7 Exchange St
 Barre, MA 01005

Phone: (978) 285-9187

Website: www.balancedchem.org

Patients may also submit a complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights. Balanced Chemistry, PLLC will not retaliate against any patient for filing a privacy complaint in good faith.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"), patients have certain rights regarding the use and disclosure of protected health information.

By signing below, the patient acknowledges receipt of Balanced Chemistry, PLLC's Notice of Privacy Practices.

The patient's signature confirms receipt of the Notice and does not constitute a waiver of any privacy rights.