



Inland Empire Health Plan

*Live Wholeheartedly.*

# 2025 Provider Manual Compliance Training

**Compliance  
Fraud, Waste and Abuse (FWA)  
HIPAA Privacy and Security**

*Presented by IEHP Compliance  
Department*

# Agenda

## **Welcome to Compliance Training for Providers, Subcontractors, and Delegated Subcontractors**

- Compliance Program
  - Seven Elements of an Effective Compliance Program
- Ethics: Doing the Right Thing
- Non-Compliance
- Fraud, Waste, & Abuse (FWA)
- HIPAA Privacy & Security
- Reporting Requirements



# Training Objectives

- Understand why you need Compliance Training and how Compliance affects everyone
- Recognize how a Compliance Program operates
- Learn about FWA
- Learn about HIPAA/Privacy & Security
- Know how to Report Issues & Understand Reporting Requirements



# Compliance Training: Overview

## Where do I fit in?

- A person providing health care or administrative services to Medi-Cal/Medicare enrollees or
- An employee, intern, resident, fellow, or of an IEHP Provider, Subcontractor, or Delegated Subcontractor.

## Why Do I Need Training?

- Compliance is everyone's responsibility!
  - The health care or administrative services that are provided to Medi-Cal and Medicare enrollees through IEHP potentially affects these enrollees
- Every year, billions of dollars are improperly spent because of FWA. It affects everyone—including **you**. This training will help teach you how to detect, prevent, and deter FWA. ***You are part of the solution.***



# Compliance Program

## Compliance Program Requirements

- IEHP Regulators require that we implement and maintain an effective compliance program. Hence, we at IEHP require the same of our Providers, Subcontractors, and Delegated Subcontractors including the workforce that supports them. An effective compliance program must:
  - Articulate and demonstrate an organization's commitment to legal and ethical conduct.
  - Provide guidance on how to handle compliance questions and concerns.
  - Provide guidance on how to identify and report compliance violations.



# Compliance Program

## What is an Effective Compliance Program?

- An effective compliance program fosters a culture of compliance within an organization, at a minimum:
  - Prevents, detects, and corrects non-compliance;
  - Is fully implemented and is tailored to an organization's unique operations and circumstances;
  - Has adequate resources;
  - Promotes the organization's standards of conduct;
  - Establishes clear lines of communication for reporting non-compliance.
- An effective compliance program is essential to detect, prevent and deter fraud, waste, and abuse including correction of issues of non-compliance. It must, at a minimum, include the seven core elements of an effective compliance program.

For more information go to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) website:

<https://oig.hhs.gov/compliance/compliance-resource-portal>



# Compliance Program

## **Seven Elements of an Effective Compliance Program:**

1. **Written Policies, Procedures, and Standards of Conduct**
  - These articulate the commitment to comply with applicable Federal and State standards and describe compliance expectations according to the Standards of Conduct.
2. **Compliance Officer, Compliance Committee and High-Level Oversight**
  - There must be a designated Compliance Officer and a Compliance Committee; who are accountable and responsible for the activities and status of the Compliance Program, including: issues identified, investigated, and resolved by the Compliance Program.
  - Senior Management and Governing Body must be engaged and exercise reasonable oversight over the Compliance Program.
3. **Effective Training and Education**
  - This covers the elements of the Compliance Plan as well as preventing, detecting and reporting FWA. The training and education are to be tailored for the different employees and their roles and responsibilities.



# Compliance Program

4. **Effective Lines of Communication**
  - Make effective lines of communication accessible to all, ensure confidentiality, and provide methods for anonymous and good-faith compliance issues reporting.
5. **Well-Publicized Disciplinary Standards**
  - Enforce Standards through well-publicized disciplinary guidelines.
6. **Effective System for Routine Monitoring, Auditing, and Identifying Compliance Risks**
  - Conduct routine monitoring and auditing of operations to evaluate compliance with requirements, as well as the overall effectiveness of the Compliance Program.
7. **Procedures and System for Prompt Response to Compliance Issues**
  - Use effective measures to respond promptly to non-compliance and undertake appropriate corrective action.





# Compliance Program

## Operating an Effective Compliance Program

- Create a proactive Compliance Program vs. reactive
- Develop processes to evaluate and measure Compliance Program Effectiveness:
  - Develop benchmarks and goals in the team with the Compliance Committee, Board, and department leadership,
  - Determine the performance metrics,
  - Train your staff and test knowledge,
  - Encourage Compliance Staff education and networking internally and externally,
  - Solicit feedback,
  - Maintain visibility,
  - Enforce Policies and Procedures,
  - Act promptly when issues arise,
  - Take and document corrective action.



# Ethics: Do the Right Thing!

As a Provider, Subcontractor, and/or Delegated Subcontractor of IEHP, you must conduct yourself in an ethical and legal manner. It's all about doing the right thing!

- Act fairly and honestly,
- Adhere to high ethical standards in all you do,
- Act with integrity, transparency, and accountability,
- Comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and regulatory agency requirements
- Report suspected violations.

IEHP requires delegated entities to develop & implement a Code of Conduct or to adopt IEHP's Code of Business Conduct and Ethics, which can be found on IEHP.org.

The Code of Conduct states IEHP's compliance expectations and our operational principles and values. Reporting Code of Conduct violations and suspected non-compliance is everyone's responsibility.



# Non-Compliance

## What is Non-Compliance?

- Non-compliance is conduct that does not conform to the law, State, or Federal health care program requirements, or the ethical and business policies.

## Know the Consequences of Non-Compliance

- Failure to follow the requirements can lead to serious consequences including:
  - Financial Sanctions,
  - Contract Termination,
  - Criminal Penalties,
  - Exclusion from participating in all State and/or Federal health care programs.
- Additionally, disciplinary standards for non-compliance behavior are required.



# Examples of Non-Compliance

## Examples of Non-Compliance

“My co-worker changed a date on a member’s authorization request to avoid getting in trouble for being late. I know this is wrong, but it only happened once, so I won’t say anything.”

“One patient needed a doctor’s office visit on December 29th. He stated his insurance would not be effective until January 1<sup>st</sup>. My co-worker wanted to help the patient and changed the date of service in the medical record to January 2<sup>nd</sup> to ensure the patient’s insurance covers the visit.”

## Explanation

*Covering up unethical behavior is wrong. While you intended to protect your co-worker, you allowed harm to occur to the member.*

*Knowingly entering inaccurate information in a record to ensure compensation is fraud and is a crime under the Federal False Claims Act. If you know or suspect fraud is occurring, you must report it immediately to management or compliance.*



# High Risk Areas for Non-Compliance

- Appeals and grievance review (for example, coverage and organization determinations)
- Beneficiary notices
- Conflicts of interest
- Claims and Utilization Management processing
- Credentialing and provider networks
- Documentation and Timeliness requirements
- IT System access and safeguards
- Ethics
- FDR oversight and monitoring
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- Marketing and enrollment
- Pharmacy, formulary, and benefit administration
- Quality of care
- Claims and Utilization Management documentation manipulation



# Examples of Non-Compliance in High Risk Areas

## Documentation and Timeliness Requirements

### Examples of Non-Compliance

“We received a request from a member to access their medical records. Our co-worker who handles these requests is out on medical leave for at least 2 more months. Due to our shortage of staff, can these types of requests wait until our co-worker returns?”

### Explanation

*No. It is the law that medical records be provided within 30 days of the request.*

“The mailroom where we send out denial letters has been having issues. We have not told anyone, even though outgoing mail has been delayed for at least 2 days. This should not be an issue, right?”

*This is an issue because denial letters have sensitive timelines. Delays in mailing should be reported immediately.*



# Examples of Non-Compliance in High Risk Areas

## Claims Documentation Manipulation

### Examples of Non-Compliance

“Our patient wants a procedure not covered by his insurance as it is not considered medically necessary. A Physician Assistant knows the procedure would be covered by insurance for treatment of a specific diagnosis and adds this diagnosis to the insurance claim to ensure the procedure is covered.”

### Explanation

Knowingly entering inaccurate information in a record to ensure compensation is fraud and is a crime under the Federal False Claims Act. If you know or suspect fraud is occurring, you must report it immediately to management or Compliance.



# Examples of Non-Compliance in High Risk Areas

## Conflict of Interest

### Examples of Non-Compliance

“A pharmaceutical representative has given our office tickets to a highly coveted sporting event in appreciation of all the business that we do with them. We know these are expensive and hard to come by – can we accept the tickets?”

### Explanation

No. This would be a conflict of interest and may create the perception that business is only conducted with those pharmaceutical companies that provide perks, and not those in the best interest of the member/enrollee.





# Reporting Non-Compliance

Reports of suspected non-compliance may be made anonymously and are kept confidential to the extent allowed by law.

A **whistleblower** is a person who exposes information or activity that is deemed illegal, dishonest, or violates professional or clinical standards.

Whistleblowers and persons who report in good-faith any suspected violations or issues, are protected from retaliation and intimidation.

## Examples of Non-Compliance

“After I reported irregularities in my department, my manager began excluding me from meetings and moved me to an undesirable location in the office.”

## Explanation

*Retaliation or intimidation is not tolerated. The manager’s behavior is unacceptable and should be reported to management or to Compliance.*



# Anonymity vs. Confidentiality

Remaining **anonymous** means that your identity will not be known and will not be attempted to be known. Reports made anonymously should include as much detail as possible, including any examples, so that investigations can be made thoroughly.

Regardless if you choose to remain anonymous, information shared will be kept **confidential**. This means that the information about the person who made the report (if not anonymous), and any details about the situation/issue will only be shared with persons on a need-to-know basis and only **to the extent allowed by law**.



# What Happens After Non-Compliance is Detected?

Non-compliance must be investigated immediately and corrected promptly. Internal monitoring and auditing should ensure:

- No recurrence of the same non-compliance,
- Ongoing CMS/DMHC compliance requirements,
- Efficient and effective internal controls,
- Protected enrollees.

**Internal monitoring** activities include regular reviews confirming ongoing compliance and taking effective corrective actions.

**Internal auditing** is a formal review of compliance with a particular set of standards (for example, policies, procedures, laws, and regulations) used as base measures.



# Reporting Non-Compliance

## Reporting Options

- IEHP's Compliance Toll Free Hotline: 866-355-9038
- Email: [compliance@iehp.org](mailto:compliance@iehp.org)
- Fax: (909) 477-8536
- Mail:  
IEHP Compliance Officer  
Inland Empire Health Plan  
P.O. Box 1800  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91729
- Online Form: [Compliance Incident Report Form](#)



# FWA Training

## Objectives

- Understand the definitions and examples of FWA
- Learn about the FWA laws
- Understand your role for identifying and reporting FWA issues



# FWA

## Defining FWA

- **Fraud** is knowingly and willfully executing or attempting to execute, a scheme or artifice to defraud a health care benefit program, or to obtain, by means of fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises, any of the money of property owned by, or under the custody or control of, any health care benefit program.
- **Waste** includes overusing services, or other practices that, directly or indirectly result in unnecessary health care costs. Waste is generally not considered to be caused by criminally negligent actions but rather by the misuse of resources.
- **Abuse** applies to practices that are inconsistent with sound fiscal, business, medical or recipient practices that result in unnecessary cost to a health care program, or in reimbursement for services that are not medically necessary or that fail to meet professionally recognized standards for health care. Mistakes that are repeated after discovery or represent an on-going pattern could constitute abuse.

*One of the primary differences between FWA is intent and knowledge.*



# FWA

## Examples of FWA

- Actions that may constitute **Fraud** include:
  - Knowingly billing for services not furnished or supplies not provided,
  - Billing for nonexistent prescriptions,
  - Knowingly altering claims forms, medical records, or receipts to receive a higher payment.
- Actions that may constitute **Waste** include:
  - Conducting excessive office visits or writing excessive prescriptions,
  - Prescribing more medications than necessary for treating a specific condition,
  - Ordering excessive laboratory tests.
- Actions that may constitute **Abuse** include:
  - Unknowingly billing for unnecessary medical services,
  - Unknowingly billing for brand name drugs when generics are dispensed,
  - Unknowingly excessively charging for services or supplies,
  - Unknowingly misusing codes on a claim, such as upcoding or unbundling codes.



# FWA

Navigating the FWA Laws - To detect FWA, you need to know the laws:

- Civil False Claims Act,
- Health Care Fraud Statute,
- Criminal Health Care Fraud,
- Anti-Kickback Statute,
- Stark Statute (Physician Self-Referral Law),
- Exclusion from all Federal and State health care programs,
- California State Laws,
- Knox-Keene Act.





# FWA

## Civil False Claims Act (FCA)

- Civil provisions of the FCA make a person liable to pay damages to the Government if he/she knowingly:
  - Conspires to violate FCA,
  - Carries out other acts to obtain property from the Government by misrepresentation,
  - Conceals or improperly avoids or decreases an obligation to pay the Government,
  - Makes or uses a false record or statement supporting the false claim,
  - Presents a false claim for payment or approval.
- Example:
  - The owner-operator of a medical clinic in California used marketers to recruit individuals for medically unnecessary office visits. They also promised free, medically unnecessary equipment or free food to entice individuals. They charged Medicare more than \$1.7 million for the scheme. They were sentenced to 37 months in prison.



# FWA

## **Civil False Claims Act (FCA) continued**

Any person who knowingly submits false claims to the Government is liable for three times the Government's damages caused by the violator plus a penalty.

- Whistleblowers – Person who exposes information or activity that is deemed illegal, dishonest, or violates professional or clinical standards,
- Protected – Persons who report false claims or bring legal actions to recover money paid on false claims are protected from retaliation,
- Rewarded – Persons who bring a successful whistleblower lawsuit receive at least 15% but not more than 30%, of the money recovered.

*For more information, refer to 31 United States Code (USC) §§ 3729-3733*



# FWA

## Health Care Fraud Statute

- “Whoever knowingly and willfully executes or attempts to execute a scheme or artifice to defraud any health care benefit program...shall be fined under this title or imprisonment not more than 10 years, or both.”
- Conviction under the statute does not require proof the violator had knowledge of the law or specific intent to violate the law.
- Example:
  - A Pennsylvania pharmacist submitted claims to a Medicare Part D plan for non-existent prescriptions and drugs not dispensed. They plead guilty to health care fraud and received a 15-month prison sentence and was ordered to pay more than \$166,000 in restitution to the plan.

*For more information, refer to 18 USC §§ 1346-1347.*



# FWA

## **Criminal Health Care Fraud**

- Persons who knowingly make a false claim may be subject to:
  - Criminal fines up to \$250,000,
  - Imprisonment up to 20 years.
- If the violations resulted in death, the individual may be imprisoned for any term of years or for life.

### Example

- Several doctors and medical clinics conspired to defraud by submitting claims for medically unnecessary power wheelchairs.

*For more information, refer to 18 USC § 1347.*



# Red Flag Examples

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## Red Flags

Obstructing an investigation or audit by withholding or delaying information or documentation

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A medical group alters documents to pass an audit by changing dates on a case file to give appearance of compliance to timeframes

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A nurse writes a verbal denial for a decision that was not made by the doctor

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## **Anti-Kickback Statute**

Prohibits knowingly and willfully soliciting, receiving, offering, or paying remuneration (including any kickback, bribe, or rebate) for referrals or services that are paid, in whole or in part under Federal health care program.

Penalties include, but are not limited to:

- Exclusion from participation in Federal health care programs,
- Fine of up to \$50,000 per kickback,
- Imprisonment.

## **Example**

- From 2012 through 2015, a physician operating a pain management practice in Rhode Island conspired to solicit and receive kickbacks for prescribing a highly addictive version of the opioid Fentanyl. They reported that patients had breakthrough cancer pain to secure insurance payments. They received \$188,000 in speaker fee kickbacks from the drug manufacturer. The kickback scheme cost Medicare and other payers more than \$750,000. The physician must pay more than \$750,000 restitution and is awaiting sentencing.

*For more information, refer to 42 USC § 1320a-7b(b).*



## **Stark Statute (Physician Self-Referral Law)**

Prohibits a physician from making referrals for certain designated health services to an entity when the physician (or a Member of his or her family) has:

- An ownership/investment interest,
- A compensation agreement.

Penalties include, but are not limited to:

- Overpayment/refund obligation,
- Civil monetary penalties,
- Exclusion from participation in Federal health care programs.

Examples –

- A California hospital was ordered to pay more than \$3.2 million to settle Stark Law violations for maintaining 97 financial relationships with physicians and physician groups outside the fair market value standards of that were improperly documented as exceptions.
- A provider refers a patient for a designated health service to a clinic where the physician (or an immediate family member) has an investment interest.

*Exceptions may apply. For more information refer to 42 USC § 1395nn.*



# FWA

## Civil Monetary Penalties Law

- The Office of Inspector General (OIG) may impose civil penalties for several reasons, including:
  - Arranging for services or items from an excluded individual or entity,
  - Providing services or items while excluded,
  - Failing to grant OIG timely access to reports,
  - Knowing of and failing to report and return an overpayment,
  - Making false claims,
  - Paying influence referrals.
- Penalties depend on the specific violation and are subject to three times the amount:
  - Claimed for each service or item,
  - Of remuneration offered, paid, solicited or received.
- Example-
  - A California pharmacy and its owner agreed to pay \$1.3 million to settle allegations that they submitted unsubstantiated claims to Medicare Part D for brand name prescription drugs the pharmacy could not have dispensed based on inventory records.

*For more information, refer to 42 USC § 12320a-7a and § 1128A(a) of the Social Security Act.*





# FWA

## Exclusion

- No Federal health care program payment may be made for any item or service furnished, ordered, or prescribed by an individual or entity excluded by the OIG. The OIG has authority to exclude individuals and entities from federally funded health care programs and maintains the List of Excluded Individuals and Entities (LEIE).
- The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) administers the System for Award Management (SAM), which contains debarment actions taken by various Federal agencies, including the OIG. Access to the EPLS is available through the System for Award Management (SAM) website.
- Medi-Cal maintains the Suspended and Ineligible (S&I) Provider List of health care Providers and entities that have been barred from participation in the Medi-Cal program.
- When looking for excluded individuals or entities, check all the LEIE, EPLS and the S&I lists, since they may not be the same.



## Exclusion Example

A pharmaceutical company pleaded guilty to two felony counts of criminal fraud related to failure to file required reports with the U.S. FDA concerning oversized morphine sulfate tablets. The pharmaceutical firm executive was excluded based upon the company's guilty plea.

A hospital employs an excluded nurse who provides items or services to Federal health care program beneficiaries, even if the nurse's services are not separately billed and are paid as part of a Medicare diagnosis-related group payment the hospital receives

The excluded nurse violates their exclusion thereby causing the hospital to submit claims for items or services they provide



# FWA

## **Exclusion, continued**

IEHP does not contract or employ anyone excluded from participation in Federal and/or State health care programs.

Per Provider Manual policies, Medicare DualChoice MA\_24E and Medi-Cal MA\_24E, Delegated entities must implement a screening program for employees, Board Members, contractors, and business partners to avoid relationships with individuals and/or entities that tend toward inappropriate conduct.

For more information refer to 42 USC § 1320a-7 and 42 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 1001.1901.



## California State Laws

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**Welfare  
Institutions Code  
14107  
[False Claims]**

Prohibits claim submission with intent to defraud to obtain greater compensation than legally entitled.

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**Welfare  
Institutions Code  
14107 (a-b)  
[Anti-Kickback]**

Solicits or receives any kickback, bribe or rebate to either refer or promise to refer person(s) for service or merchandise

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**CA Penal Code  
550(a)(6-7)  
[False claims]**

Imposes liability to knowingly make or cause to be made any false or fraudulent claim for health care benefit or which was not used by or on behalf of the claimant

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## Knox-Keene Act

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**CA H&SC 1341 (a)** DMHC to ensure that health care service plans provide enrollees with access to quality health care services and protect and promote the interests of enrollees.

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**CA H&SC 1386 (b) (7)**  
[Fraud] Prohibits conduct that constitutes fraud or dishonest dealing or unfair competition, as defined by Section 17200 of the Business and Professions Code

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**CA H&SC 1371.37**  
[Claim payment] A health care service plan is prohibited from engaging in an unfair payment pattern

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**CA H&SC 1367.02**  
[Economic Profiling] Medical decisions are rendered by qualified medical providers, unhindered by fiscal and administrative management. Prohibits fraud of concealing or restricting costly specialists from network unless economic profiling policies disclosed to the DMHC

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# FWA

## Combating FWA

Take Action against FWA by following 3 steps:

1. Comply with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, including implementing an effective compliance program,
2. Report any compliance concerns, including suspected or actual violations of which you may be aware,
3. Conduct yourself in a manner that aligns with the Code of Conduct.



# FWA

## How Do You Prevent FWA?

- Look for suspicious activity,
- Conduct yourself in an ethical manner,
- Ensure accurate and timely data and billing,
- Ensure coordination with other payers,
- Know FWA policies and procedures, standards of conduct, laws, regulations and CMS' guidance,
- Verify all received information.



# FWA

## Report FWA

Everyone must report suspected instances of FWA. The Code of Conduct should clearly state this obligation. There should also be a zero-retaliation clause for good faith reporting of these instances,

A mechanism for reporting should be readily available for employees and FDRs with the capability for the reporter to remain anonymous,

Potential FWA instances should be reported to the appropriate regulatory entity, as well as IEHP.





# FWA

## Correction of FWA

Once FWA is detected, promptly correct it. Correcting the problem saves money and ensures compliance with the regulatory requirements.

Develop a plan to correct the issue. Ask your organization's compliance officer about the development process for the corrective action plan. A general action plan should:

- Design the corrective action to correct the underlying problem that results in FWA program violations and to prevent future non-compliance,
- Tailor corrective action to address particular FWA, problem, or deficiency identified. Include timeframes for specific actions,
- Document corrective actions addressing non-compliance or FWA committed by the employee and include consequences for failure to satisfactorily complete the corrective action,
- Monitor corrective actions continuously to ensure effectiveness.



# FWA

## Indicators of Potential FWA

Now that you know about your role in preventing, reporting, and correcting FWA, let's review some key indicators to help you recognize the signs of someone committing FWA.

Here are some questions to ask yourself in the different areas –

- **Member/Patient Issues**
  - Does the prescription, medical record, or laboratory test look altered or possibly forged?
  - Does the Member's/Patient's medical history support the services requested?
  - Have you filled numerous identical prescriptions for this Member/Patient, possibly from different doctors?
  - Is the person receiving the medical service the Member/Patient (identity theft)?
  - Is the prescription appropriate based on the Member's/Patient's other prescriptions?



## Indicators of Potential FWA, continued

- Provider Issues
  - Are the Provider's prescriptions appropriate for the Member's/Patient's health condition (medically necessary)?
  - Does the Provider bill the Plan for services not provided?
  - Does the Provider write prescriptions for diverse drugs or primarily for controlled substances?
  - Is the Provider performing medically unnecessary services for the Member/Patient?
  - Is the Provider prescribing a higher quantity than medically necessary for the condition?
  - Does the Provider's prescription have their active and valid National Provider Identifier on it?
  - Is the Provider's diagnosis for the Member/Patient supported in the medical record?



# FWA

## Indicators of Potential FWA, continued

- Pharmacy Issues
  - Are drugs being diverted (drugs meant for nursing homes, hospice, and other entities being sent elsewhere)?
  - Are the dispensed drugs expired, fake, diluted, or illegal?
  - Are generic drugs provided when the prescription requires dispensing brand drugs?
  - Are Health Plans billed for unfilled or never picked up prescriptions?
  - Are proper provisions made if the entire prescription is not filled (no additional dispensing fees for split prescriptions)?
  - Do you see prescriptions being altered (changing quantities or Dispense As Written)?



# Reporting FWA Issues

## Reporting Options

- IEHP's Compliance Toll Free Hotline: 866-355-9038
- Email: [compliance@iehp.org](mailto:compliance@iehp.org)
- Fax: (909) 477-8536
- Mail:  
IEHP Compliance Officer  
Inland Empire Health Plan  
P.O. Box 1800  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91729
- Online Form: [Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Report Form](#)



# HIPAA Privacy & Security Training

## Objectives

- Review HIPAA Privacy & Security
- Review key terms and definitions
- Understand when it is appropriate to access Member/Patient Information
- Understand your role for identifying and reporting HIPAA Privacy & Security issues



# Protecting Information

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)

Creates greater access to health care insurance, protection of privacy of health care data, and promotes standardization and efficiency in the health care industry.

Provides safeguards to prevent unauthorized access to protected health care information.

As a Provider, Subcontractor, and/or Delegated Subcontractor with access to PHI of our Members/Patients, you are responsible for complying with the HIPAA guidelines.

Violations may result in civil monetary penalties. In some cases, criminal penalties may apply.



# Protecting Information

- Health care entities must take steps to ensure that Member/Patient protected health information (PHI) is not viewed by anyone without “**a business need to know**,” is not stolen, lost, or accidentally destroyed.
- Members/Patients be provided with rights over the use and disclosure of their own PHI.
- HIPAA covers health information in any form, including information that is stored or transmitted electronically.





# Protecting Information

## Understanding PII and PHI

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is information that can either identify the Member/Patient or there is reasonable basis to believe that the information can be used to identify the Member/Patient.

- For example- Name, Date of Birth, address, full Social Security number\*, medical identification numbers, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, photographic images, driver's license number, etc.
  - \*While a complete SSN can be used to identify an individual and is considered PII, the last 4 digits alone cannot be used to identify an individual, so it is not classified as PII.

Protected Health Information (PHI) is health information that relates to a Member's/Patient's past, present or future physical or mental health or condition, including the provision of his/her health care, or payment for that care **AND** contains PII.



# Protecting Information

## Privacy and Security Terms

Minimum Necessary – All reasonable efforts should be made to access, use, disclose and request only the minimum amount of PHI needed to accomplish the intended purpose of the access, use, disclosure or request.

Access – Ability to view, acquire or use Member/Patient PHI through authorized access to business systems, facilities or through any other means where PHI is available.

Authorization – Must obtain Member's/Patient's written authorization for any use or disclosure of PHI that is not for treatment, payment, or operations or otherwise permitted or required by regulations and/or statutes.

Privacy Breach – A privacy breach is defined as unauthorized acquisition, access, use, or disclosure of PHI which compromises the security or privacy of such information.



# Accessing PHI

The Law allows access and disclosure of Member/Patient PHI when a request or need for information falls under Treatment, Payment or Operations (TPO).

## (T) Treatment

PHI is used in the treatment of the Member/Patient.

Example- A nurse reviews a Member's/Patient's immunization record to assess which vaccines they will need at an upcoming visit.

## (P) Payment

PHI is needed to provide payment for services a Member/Patient received.

Example- A request from IEHP to a Provider to obtain medical records in order to remit payment.

## (O) Operations

PHI is needed to carry out health administration operations.

Example- A compliance investigator accessing authorizations for a Member/Patient when conducting a fraud investigation.



# Protecting Information

## Appropriate vs. Inappropriate Access

### Questions to ask yourself

- Do I have a business need or purpose to access this information?
- Do I need to access this information to do my job?
- Am I allowed through Treatment, Payment, or Operations (TPO) to use or disclose this information?
- Am I taking all necessary actions to safeguard PHI that I use?

### Answers that may indicate inappropriate access

- It's easier to look this information up for my friend/family member rather than them having to call Member Services at IEHP.
- I've been asked to verify an address about one of our Members/Patients.
- This Member/Patient is my neighbor and I'm concerned about their care.
- My family member gave me permission to view their record.



# Protecting Information

## Common PHI Breaches

- Unauthorized access
  - Family/Friends Accounts,
  - Viewing Member information without a “business need to know.”
- Misdirected documents
  - Sending documents to an incorrect fax number,
  - Mailing / handing documents by mistake to the wrong Member/Patient.
- Unauthorized verbal disclosure
  - In person – Use discretion near others who are in close proximity and may overhear,
  - Phone,
  - Voicemail.
- Lost, missing or stolen mobile devices that contain unencrypted data (e.g. phones, laptops, tablets),
- Improper disposal of documentation, computers or other materials (e.g. throwing in regular trash),
- Unsecured E-Mail containing Member information,
- Web access creating data security risks (social media).



# Protecting Information

## Your responsibilities as a Provider, Subcontractor, and/or Delegated Subcontractor

- Never discuss PHI where you may be overheard,
- Access Member/Patient PHI only when it pertains to your job tasks,
- Securely destroy PHI,
- Confirm phone number and fax numbers prior to use,
- Pick up PHI from fax machines as they are received,
- Confirm you are speaking with the Member/Patient or authorized representative before discussing PHI,
- Treat Member/Patient PHI as you would expect your own PHI to be treated by others,
- Secure/Lock PHI when leaving your work area and lock any other office equipment that may contain PHI/PII.



# Protecting Information

## Information Security

Health care organizations are particularly vulnerable to cyber attacks. They house personal health, payment and organizational proprietary information.

### Your Role?

- Email Security- Always think before you click,
- Be cautious when transmitting sensitive information- Use secure mail procedures, if available, and verify recipient information prior to sending,
- Report any information security issues related to IEHP Members to IEHP's Compliance Department.



# Protecting Information

## What to Report

- Conduct that does not conform to the law or State and Federal Health Care Programs,
- Unethical behavior that does not conform to IEHP's Code of Conduct;
- Potential Fraud, Waste and Abuse (FWA),
- Potential privacy issues/breaches.

## Reporting Facts

- Reports can be made anonymously,
- To the extent that the law allows, reports are confidential,
- Reporters are expected to participate in any investigation, as necessary,
- Zero tolerance of intimidations/retaliation for reporters.





# Reporting Compliance Issues

## Reporting Options

- IEHP's Compliance Toll Free Hotline: 866-355-9038
- Email: [compliance@iehp.org](mailto:compliance@iehp.org)
- Fax: (909) 477-8536
- Mail:  
IEHP Compliance Officer  
Inland Empire Health Plan  
P.O. Box 1800  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91729
- Online Form: [Privacy Incident Online Report Form](#)



## Notice

This training was prepared by the IEHP Compliance Department as a service to our Providers, Subcontractors, and Delegated Subcontractors. The training may contain references, statutes, regulations or other policy materials. The information provided is only intended to be a general summary. It is not intended to take place of either the written law or regulations. We encourage you to review the specific statutes, regulations, and other interpretive materials for a full and accurate statement of their contents.



## Doing what's right, together

Thank you for participating and expanding compliance program effectiveness by ensuring you and your organization incorporate the information into your individual compliance program and business practices.

IEHP's Compliance Program is your resource for questions or concerns related to compliance, FWA, and Privacy & Security. We can be reached at [compliance@iehp.org](mailto:compliance@iehp.org).

*We are here to help you do the right thing.*

*Live Wholeheartedly.*