



## HIPAA Compliance Policy and Legal Guidelines

The **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)** was first introduced in 1996 and becomes effective April 14, 2003. The purpose of **HIPAA** is to protect your **Private Health Information (PHI)**. Advancements in technology have made **PHI** more accessible than ever before. It is our goal to protect your **PHI** while providing you with the best eye care possible. We will use internet, fax, phone, copiers to supply and retrieve information regarding insurance and communication between facilities in order to provide treatment to our patients. All outside facilities which we communicate with are also required to be **HIPAA** compliant. **PHI** may be used without patient authorization in order to provide treatment and collect reimbursement.

### When is PHI used?

#### Education

We pride ourselves on delivering the highest standard of care and will continue to pursue educational opportunities for both Doctors and staff. **PHI** will be used to train staff, interns, associates using the minimal amount of information necessary. Identifying information will not be used or taken outside the office unless prior written authorization is received from the patient.

#### Phone Communications

Basic messages will be left using a minimal of information possible with other household members, office staff, and on answering machines in accordance with the phone numbers we have on file. We will not leave messages regarding medical test results. Kirman Eye calls include but are not limited to;

- \*Notifying when glasses or contact lenses are received.
- \* We have questions or updates regarding orders or instructions for care.
- \*Confirm, schedule and reschedule appointments.
- \*Verify and request information to provide treatment or collect reimbursement.

#### Postal Procedures

We will use the minimum amount of **PHI** necessary to send recall cards, invoices, monthly statements, and private mailings to assist in the best possible treatment of patients.

#### Family / Caregivers

At our own discretion, decisions are made to give information about our patient to family members and caregivers when it is deemed necessary for proper treatment.

#### Government Responsibilities and Legal Obligations

**PHI** may be used for licensing, certifications, audits, and credentialing. A certain amount of information must be used to qualify participation in insurance programs and maintain valid contracts with legal entities. Agencies reviewing this information must also be HIPAA compliant. Governmental requirements to report abuse, neglect, violence, crime, public health issues and needs involving national security will be honored. Kirman Eye will use ethical judgment in reports given to legal authorities using the minimum amount of **PHI** required by law.

### Patient's Rights

Requests to restrict guidelines for an individual must be made in writing. Reasonable restriction of **PHI** will be honored as long as information is not essential for patient treatment or financial reimbursement. We will amend incorrect **PHI** if deemed accurate and complete on records created within our office only. Patients have the right to review records, attain completed test results, be given valid prescriptions, access billing history and validate insurance information. A fee may be assessed for copies and transfer fees of records. Patients may deny communication between Kirman Eye and family members or request confidential information be sent through sealed communications only.

#### Grievance Policy

Written disputes concerning **HIPAA** guidelines will be handled by the Privacy Officer. Following a written dispute regarding **HIPAA**, we have 30 days to address the situation. After 30 days you may contact the Secretary of Health and Human Resources for further assistance.

### Commitment to our Patients

We reserve the right to change our office policies without notice. The Doctor's and staff of Eye are happy to help with any questions or concerns you may have regarding our office policies. We are honored that you have entrusted us with the care of your eyes and we are committed to delivering the highest standard of care.