

**Walton Eye Care, Inc.**  
***NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES***

Effective Date: July 6, 2000  
This Notice Was Revised on June 6, 2007

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. THE PRIVACY OF YOUR MEDICAL INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT TO US.

If you have any questions about this notice please contact our privacy officer at: (770) 267-4561

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**Our Legal Duty**

We are required by applicable federal and state law to maintain the privacy of your medical information. We are also required to give you this notice about our privacy practices, our legal duties, and your rights concerning your medical information. We must follow the privacy practices that are described in this notice while it is in effect. This notice version will remain in effect until we replace it.

We reserve the right to change our privacy practices and the terms of this notice at any time, provided such changes are permitted by applicable law. We reserve the right to make the changes in our privacy practices and the new terms of our notice effective for all medical information that we maintain, including medical information we created or received before we made the changes. Before we make a significant change in our privacy practices, we will change this notice and make the new notice available upon request.

You may request a copy of our notice at any time. For more information about our privacy practices, or for additional copies of this notice, please contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice.

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**What is Protected Health Information?**

“Protected Health Information” is information that individually identifies you and that we create or get from you or from another health care provider, health plan, your employer, or a health care clearinghouse and that relates to (1) your past, present, or future physical or mental health or conditions, (2) the provision of health care to you, or (3) the past, present, or future payment for your health care.

## **Uses and Disclosures of Medical Information**

We use and disclose medical information about you for treatment, payment, and health care operations. For example:

**Treatment:** We may use or disclose your medical information to a physician or other health care provider in order to provide treatment to you.

**Payment:** We may use and disclose your medical information to obtain payment for services we provide to you. We may disclose your medical information to another health care provider or entity subject to the federal and state Privacy Rules so they can obtain payment.

**Health Care Operations:** We may use and disclose your medical information in connection with our health care operations. These uses are necessary to make sure that all our patients receive quality care.

**Appointment Reminders/Treatment Alternatives/Health-Related Benefits and Services:** We may use and disclose Protected Health Information to contact you to remind you that you have an appointment for medical care, or to contact you to tell you about possible treatment options or alternatives or health related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

**Minors:** We may disclose the Protected Health Information of minor children to their parents or guardians unless such disclosure is otherwise prohibited by law.

**On Your Authorization:** You may give us written authorization to use your medical information or to disclose it to anyone for any purpose. If you give us an authorization, you may revoke it in writing at any time. Your revocation will not affect any use or disclosures permitted by your authorization while it was in effect. Unless you give us a written authorization, we cannot use or disclose your medical information for any reason except those described in this notice.

**To Your Family and Friends:** Unless you object, we may disclose your medical information to a family member, friend or other person to the extent necessary to help with your health care or with payment for your health care.

If you are not present, or in the event of your incapacity or an emergency, we will disclose your medical information based on our professional judgment of whether the disclosure would be in your best interest.

We will also use our professional judgment and our experience with common practice to allow a person to pick up filled prescriptions, medical supplies, or other similar forms of medical information.

**By Law or Special Circumstances:** We may use or disclose your medical information as authorized by law for the following purposes deemed to be in the public interest or benefit:

- as required by law;
- for public health activities, including disease and vital statistic reporting, child abuse reporting, FDA oversight, and to employers regarding work-related illness or injury;
- to report adult abuse, neglect, or domestic violence;
- to health oversight agencies;
- In response to court and administrative orders and other lawful processes;
- to law enforcement officials after receiving subpoenas and other lawful processes, concerning crime victims, suspicious deaths, crimes on our premises, reporting crimes in emergencies, and for purposes of identifying or locating a suspect or other person;
- to coroners, medical examiners, and funeral directors;
- to organ procurement organizations;
- to avert a serious threat to health or safety;
- in connection with certain research activities;
- to the military and to federal officials for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence, and national security activities;
- to correctional institutions regarding inmates; and
- as authorized by state worker's compensation laws.

**Health Related Benefits and Services:** We may use your medical information to contact you with information about health-related benefits and services or about treatment alternatives that may be of interest to you.

We may disclose your medical information to a business associate to assist us in these activities. We may use or disclose your medical information to encourage you to purchase or use a product or service by face-to-face communication or to provide you with promotional gifts.

**Use and Disclosure of Certain Types of Medical Information.** For certain types of medical information we may be required to protect your privacy in ways more strict than we have discussed in this notice. We must abide by the following rules for our use or disclosure of certain types of your medical information:

**HIV Information.** We may not disclose HIV information unless required by law, pursuant to an authorization or the disclosure is to you or your personal representative; to pre-hospital transport agencies and emergency personnel of a patient's condition; to funeral directors; to persons whom a physician believes is in a foreseeable, real or probable risk of HIV infection; to physicians involved in the care of the individual; in accordance with appropriate subpoena procedures; or to other persons as may be required by law.

**Alcohol and Drug Abuse Information.** We may not disclose your medical information that contains alcohol and drug abuse information except to you, your personal representative or pursuant to an authorization or as may otherwise be allowed by law.

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## **Your Rights Regarding Medical Information About You**

**Right to Inspect and Copy:** You have the right to look at or get copies of your medical information, with limited exceptions. If you request copies, we will charge you a fee for copying and postage if you want the copies mailed to you. Contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice for a full explanation of our fee structure.

We may deny your request to inspect and copy in very limited circumstances as allowed by law. If you are denied access to your medical information, you may request that the denial be reviewed. Another licensed health care professional chosen by the facility will review your request and the denial. The person conducting the review will not be the person who denied your request. We will comply with the outcome of the review.

**Disclosure Accounting:** You have the right to receive a list of instances in which we or our business associates disclosed your medical information for purposes other than treatment, payment, health care operations, as authorized by you, and for certain other activities, for six (6) years from the date of your request. You must make a request in writing to request a listing of disclosures. If you request this accounting more than once in a 12-month period, we may charge you a reasonable, cost-based fee for responding to these additional requests. Contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice for a full explanation of our fee structure.

**Restriction:** You have the right to request that we place certain restrictions on our use or disclosure of your medical information. You also have the right to request a limit on the Protected Health Information we disclose about you to someone who is involved in your care or the payment for your care, like a family member or friend. To request a restriction on who may have access to your Protected Health Information, you must submit a written request to the Privacy Officer. Your request must state the specific restriction requested and to whom you want the restriction to apply. We are not required to agree to your request, unless you are asking us to restrict the use and disclosure of your Protected Health Information to a health plan for payment or health care operation purposes and such information you wish to restrict pertains solely to a health care item or service for which you or another person has paid us "out-of-pocket" in full. If we do agree to the requested restriction, we may not use or disclose your Protected Health Information in violation of that restriction unless it is needed to provide emergency treatment.

**Confidential Communication:** You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your medical information by alternative means or to alternative locations. For example, you might request that we contact you at work or by mail. You must make your request in writing. We must accommodate your request if it is reasonable, specifies the alternative means or location, and provides satisfactory explanation how payments will be handled under the alternative means or location you request.

**Amendment.** If you feel that medical information we have about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. Your request must be in writing, and it must explain why the information should be amended. We may deny your request if we did not create the information you want amended and the individual who provided the information remains available or for certain other reasons. If we deny your request, we will provide you a written explanation. You may respond with a statement of disagreement to be attached to the information you wanted amended. If we accept your request to amend the information, we will make reasonable efforts to inform others, including people you name, of the amendment and to include the changes in any future disclosures of that information.

**Electronic Notice:** If you receive this notice on our web site or by electronic mail (e-mail), you are entitled to receive this notice in written form. You may request a copy of this Notice at any time.

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### **Questions and Complaints**

If you want more information about our privacy practices or have questions or concerns, please contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice.

If you are concerned that we may have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision we made about access to your medical information or in response to a request you made to amend or restrict the use or disclosure of your medical information or to have us communicate with you by alternative means or at alternative locations, you may complain to us using the contact information listed at the end of this notice. You also may submit a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We will provide you with the address to file your complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services upon request.

We support your right to the privacy of your medical information. We will not retaliate in any way if you choose to file a complaint with us or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**Contact:** Privacy Officer    **Telephone:** (770) 267-4561

**Address:** 517 Great Oaks Dr. Ste. 101, Monroe, GA 30655