Providers must be aware that all UPMC Health Plan policies and procedures include information that ensures the Health Plan’s compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations, as well as the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, to which the Health Plan is also subject.

As providers subject to HIPAA, hospitals and physician practices will already have had training and education concerning their requirements under the HIPAA Privacy Regulations. UPMC Health Plan has also provided training to its staff on HIPAA and HIPAA compliance.

UPMC Health Plan is committed to informing its contracted providers about how the Health Plan has addressed the requirements of federal privacy regulations in its overall compliance program. The Health Plan has incorporated into all of its corporate and department policies and procedures measures to ensure that potential, current, and former members’ personal health information, individually identifiable health information, and personally identifiable financial information are maintained in a confidential manner, whether that information is in oral, written, or electronic format. UPMC Health Plan employees will use and disclose this information only for those purposes permitted by the federal legislation: treatment, payment, and health care operations — or when such use or disclosure are authorized in writing by the member, or are required for release by law. UPMC Health Plan has developed its authorization form in compliance with the core elements and required statements contained in the HIPAA Privacy Rules.

Members have received a Privacy Statement and Notice of Privacy Practices from UPMC Health Plan in their welcome kit materials, and also will receive a copy of the privacy information annually. These two documents clearly explain to our members their rights concerning the privacy of their individual information — including the processes established to provide them with access to their protected health information, as well as to request to amend, restrict use, and have accounting of disclosures. We have also informed our members of the precautions that we have in place to assure that employers do not have access to individual health information.

UPMC Health Plan’s Notice of Privacy Practices is separate and distinct from the Notice of Privacy Practices that providers are also required under HIPAA to provide to their patients.