



Best Practices Under RI's Confidentiality of Health Care Communications and Information Act

The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) is advising providers that the [Confidentiality of Health Care Communications and Information Act](#), R.I. Gen. Laws § 5-37.3-12, § 5-37.3-12, went into effect on Jan. 1, 2022. The goal of this Statute is to ensure that all individuals have access and adequate privacy in their healthcare and documentation of healthcare services.

Many insurance companies routinely send Explanations of Benefits (EOB) to the policyholder's home address when a subscriber on the plan receives a healthcare service. The EOB describes the service and lists the service provider. By default, the EOB is sent to the policyholder's mailing address.

Under this law, health insurers (not including self-insured plans) are required to offer a confidential communications request form to be easily readable and prominently displayed on the health insurer's website. This form allows an insured person to request any medical information sent by an insurer to be communicated to an alternate address, secure email address, or alternate phone number, so it is sent directly to the patient who received the service instead of the policyholder.

Healthcare providers and staff should follow these best practices:

1. Be aware of and understand the requirements of the law.
2. Have hard-copy versions of (or links to) the standardized confidential communications request form prominently displayed and available to insured individuals or authorized representatives. Links to the respective insurance companies' request forms are below:
 - [Aetna](#)
 - [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island](#)
 - [Cigna](#)
 - [Neighborhood Health Plan](#)
 - [UnitedHealthcare](#)
3. Offer to submit the standardized confidential communications request form that has been completed by an insured individual or authorized representative to the insured individual's health insurer.

RIDOH will share additional information and opportunities to learn more about the ways that healthcare providers and staff can support patients who wish to exercise this right.