

RECORDS ACCESS

How to Obtain Your Personal
Medical Records



Denial of Access: When the Request is for a Minor's Record

Ordinarily, the parent or guardian of a minor patient is entitled to inspect the minor's record or obtain copies. There are three (3) exceptions to this general rule:

1. When the minor has the right to consent to treatment (*e.g. emancipated minor, married minor, prevention or care of pregnancy, substance abuse and certain communicable diseases*).
2. When Sansum Clinic determines that disclosure may have a detrimental effect on its relationship with the minor.
3. When Sansum Clinic determines that disclosure may have a detrimental effect on the minor's physical safety or psychological well-being.

Denial of Access: Psychiatric Records

HIPAA regulations and California law allow Sansum Clinic to deny a patient's access to his/her psychiatric records if it is determined there is a "substantial risk of significant adverse or detrimental consequences to the patient in seeing or receiving the copy." If access is denied, however, the patient has the right to designate a licensed physician, psychologist or clinical social worker to inspect the record or receive copies. A written authorization from the patient must be presented before it is released to the designated professional.

This is a brief summary of the laws and procedures concerning your rights to access your medical record. For more information, please contact Health Information Services, Release of Information Department at (805) 898-3188.



It's Your Right by Law

California law guarantees patients access to their own medical record information within certain limitations. Sansum Clinic can provide the information in various ways, and in some cases, can deny access to medical information. Patients have access to their own records by actually seeing the record, obtaining copies or receiving a summary report.

Medical records are the property of Sansum Clinic. We are obligated to maintain the records to support the services that we render to our patients.

How to Access Your Records

All requests must be provided in writing. Telephone requests are not valid and will not be honored.

Please obtain a "Request for Access to Protected Health Information" form from the Sansum Clinic Release of Information Department (ROI), complete it in full, and either mail it back or return it in person to the ROI Department at Sansum Clinic. *The mailing address is:* 317 W. Pueblo Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93105.

If you are unable to obtain a "Request for Access to Protected Health Information" form, please make the request in the form of a letter containing the following information:

- Date of the request
- Specify which clinic location visited (e.g. Pueblo Branch, Pesetas Branch, Hitchcock Branch, etc.).
- Patient's full name.
- Patient's date of birth.
- The extent and nature of the documents requested.
- The type of access requested (e.g. copies, summary report, inspection).
- Signature of the patient or the patient representative.

Types of Access

You may either request to inspect your own protected health information in person or obtain a copy of your medical record. Upon inspection, you may also ask that copies be made. Moreover, you may also request a summary of your medical record, which involves applicable fees.

If You Choose Inspection

If you wish to inspect your records, the inspection must be made under the supervision of a Sansum Clinic employee.

With an appointment, you may inspect your records for one hour between 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. or 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and Friday between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m., at no charge at the Pueblo Branch, 317 W. Pueblo Street in Santa Barbara, or as otherwise arranged.

For a record inspection appointment, please call the Release of Information Department, Health Information Services, at (805) 898-3188. Private inspection of your medical record is normally granted within 5 days.

If You Would Like a Copy

Copies of your record, or portions thereof, generally require a \$20.00 base fee plus 25 cents per page after the first 5 pages which is payable prior to the release of the copies. If you request inspection of your record, and decide you need copies after reviewing the record, a new request must be submitted. By law, copies will be provided within 15 days of receipt of your request.

For urgent requests and shorter time frames, additional charges may apply. Please consult with an ROI staff regarding your options.

What About X-rays, MRIs, Scans, Tracings, Mammograms, Etc.?

These are available to patients as well as the medical record. The Radiology Department is responsible for reviewing the films with patients, and a fee of \$10.00 is charged per film for copies and corresponding reports. All films requested by patients will be either mailed to the requesting physician or checked out by the patient after signing a "Request for Access to Protected Health Information" form.

Patients requesting the release of mammograms will receive the original with a copy maintained in the patient's medical record.

The duplication charge for the copy will be generated by a copy service and billed directly to the patient.

If You Choose to Obtain a Summary Report

Federal HIPAA regulations allow patients or their representatives the option of requesting a summary report in lieu of inspection or copies. A "Summary Report" is prepared normally by the primary care physician and the patient will be billed reasonable fees for the preparation of the report. The Sansum physician will normally provide the report within 10 working days, unless the report is lengthy. If this is the case, you will be notified. The maximum allowable time for furnishing the information is 30 days unless an extension is arranged. In circumstances where there is a complicated file, the provider may reduce the record's findings to a simplified form in lay terms, thereby providing a "Summary Report".

If You're Moving or Changing Providers

If the reason you are requesting medical record information is that you are moving to another area, or are employing the services of a physician outside of Sansum Clinic, simply ask your new healthcare provider to formally request your medical records. Upon receipt of your request, courtesy copies of your records for the last two years will be sent directly to your new provider at no cost to you.

Sansum Clinic is an independent nonprofit healthcare organization providing the full spectrum of quality healthcare in our community.



A Nonprofit Organization
P.O. Box 1200
Santa Barbara, CA 93102-1200

Visit www.sansumclinic.org

Sansum Clinic is a 501 (c) (3) California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation with Clinic locations from Carpinteria to Lompoc and over 150 affiliated physicians, and is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations.

Revised 11/07