

FRONTIER HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Email Communication Agreement



This agreement is written on behalf on Frontier Health and Wellness and its Contracted Providers

As a supplement to your in-office appointments, Frontier Health and Wellness (FHW) and its contracted providers can use email to communicate. Set forth below are policies outlining when and how email should be utilized to maintain your privacy and to enhance communication as well as a place for you to acknowledge your consent for its use. Your decision to utilize email is strictly voluntary and your consent may be rescinded at any time. Email will be accessible by all staff members associated with FHW and its contracted providers. Email is typically reviewed **once daily during business days**. Email can be used to relay information but the preferred method of communication is through your patient portal messaging system. When communicating through email, please include a clearly identified question if you would like a response. Not all emails will be responded to. FHW and its contracted providers reserve the right to use clinical judgment regarding the response to any given email and the need to provide a response (for example, in some cases a response may be postponed because the next appointment is close enough that the response may be considered redundant).

WHEN MAY I USE EMAIL TO COMMUNICATE?

EMAIL MAY BE USED FOR:

- Medication refill requests (Please refer to our website FHWAK.com or your client portal for a refill request submission for this when possible)
- Appointment requests (Please refer to your client portal for scheduling changes when possible)
- Other matters not requiring an immediate response

Please note - FHW and its contracted providers do not suggest email be primary method of communication due to the security risks. The preference is for patients to utilize their secured patient portal and or the telephonic communication to reach their providers as this is secure and maintains your confidentiality.

WHEN SHOULD I NOT USE EMAIL TO COMMUNICATE?

EMAIL SHOULD NEVER BE USED:

- In an emergency
- If you are experiencing any desire to harm yourself or others
- If you are experiencing a severe medication reaction
- If you need an immediate response

WHAT ARE MY OBLIGATIONS?

- I agree to let Frontier Health and Wellness (FHW) and/or my provider know immediately if my email address changes.
- If I do not receive a response from FHW or my provider within my expected time frame, then I will contact FHW or my provider by telephone if a response is needed.
- I will use email communication only for the purposes stated above.
- I will advise FHW and/or my provider in writing should I decide that I would prefer not to continue communicating via email
- I understand that email may only be used to supplement my appointments with my provider and not as a substitute for them.
- To avoid possible confusion, I will not use internet slang or short-hand when communicating via email
- There is a billing protocol that exists for email and phone communication. Under most circumstances emails and phone calls are a billable forms of communication.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES TO USING YOUR PATIENT PORTAL OR EMAIL?

- Unlike trading voicemail messages, email allows you to see exactly the question the doctor is responding to and to have a written record of that exchange for future reference.
- The patient portal messaging system or email allows for the rapid transmission of forms or other paperwork such as information regarding your medications/condition.

FOR CLIENT RECORDS



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WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF USING EMAIL?

RISKS OF COMMUNICATING VIA EMAIL INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Email may be seen by unintended viewers if addressed incorrectly.
- Email may be intercepted by hackers and redistributed.
- Someone posing as you could access your information.
- Email can be used to spread computer viruses.
- There is a risk that emails may not be received by either party in a timely matter as it may be caught by junk/spam filters.
- Emails are discoverable in litigation and may be used as evidence in court.
- Emails can be circulated and stored by unintended recipients.
- Statements made via email may be misunderstood thus creating miscommunication and/or negatively affecting treatment.
- There may be an unanticipated time delay between messages being sent and received.

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY EMAILS?

- Emails will be printed out and maintained as a permanent part of your medical record.
- As part of your permanent record, they will be released along with the rest of the record upon your authorization or when the doctor is otherwise legally required to do so.
- Messages may be seen by FHW staff or their contracted providers for the purpose of filing or carrying out requests (e.g., appointment scheduling) or when your provider is away from the office.

WHAT STEPS HAS FRONTIER HEALTH AND WELLNESS TAKEN TO PROTECT THE PRIVACY OF MY EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS?

- Frontier Health and Wellness (FHW) and its contracted providers have security software installed on all office computers.
- All office computers are password protected.
- FHW staff and contracted providers have educated on the appropriate use and protection of email.
- FHW staff and contracted providers do not access patient email from public Wi-Fi hotspots.
- FHW staff and contracted providers do not allow family members access to personal work computers.
- FHW staff and contracted providers will not forward patient email to third-parties without your express consent.
- FHW staff and contracted providers will verify email addresses before sending messages.

WHAT STEPS CAN I TAKE TO PROTECT MY PRIVACY?

- Do not use your work computer to communicate with Frontier Health and Wellness or its contracted providers as your employer has a right to inspect emails sent through the company's system.
- Do not use a shared email account to transmit messages.
- Log out of your email account if you will be away from your computer.
- Carefully check the address before hitting "send" to ensure that you are sending your message to the intended receiver.
- Avoid writing or reading emails on a mobile device in a public place.
- Avoid accessing email on a public Wi-Fi hotspot.
- Make certain that your email is signed with your first and last name and include your telephone number and date of birth to avoid possible mix up with patients with same or similar names.

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CONSENT TO EMAIL USE

Frontier Health and Wellness (FHW) and its contracted providers initiate email communication only with your permission and only for, scheduling, administrative and billing purposes unless we have made another agreement. That means that email exchanges with FHW or its contracted providers should be limited to matters such as setting and changing appointments, billing matters and other related issues. The preferred and recommended method of any of these topics is through your patient portal as that is the only way to ensure your messages are secure. Emails to our providers regarding clinical matters should be avoided as they are not secure. If the client chooses to send an email regarding a clinical matter, then the email can be saved for reference during the next appointment. If the client chooses to include a clinical question in their email, then these questions will typically be answered via email, however, it is understood that email communication is not a secure medium and that sending a question through this medium authorizes FHW or its contracted providers to provide our reply through the same medium (unless a request not to reply is included in the body of that email). It is also understood that email does not allow for the degree of precision and effective communication that face to face encounters do. Further it is understood that email communication can be easily misinterpreted or misunderstood, that questions cannot be fully answered and answers cannot cover all possible risks or outcomes. If you need to discuss a clinical matter with your provider, please feel free to call us so we can discuss it on the phone or wait to discuss it during your next appointment. A telephone or face-to-face conversation is a much more secure mode of communication. There is a billing protocol in place for email and phone call responses.

Electronic correspondence, phone calls, refill requests and associated correspondence are all tasks that require time and resources, as such they are often billable services.

Note: Insurance coverage of these types of services is inconsistent. Please check with your insurance company to determine what level of coverage you have regarding these types of online, remote and non-face-to-face services.

By signing below, I consent to the use of email communication between myself and contracted providers/staff at Frontier Health and Wellness (FHW). I recognize that there are risks to its use, and despite FHW's and its contracted providers best efforts, they cannot guarantee confidentiality. I understand and accept those risks and the policies for email use outlined in this form. I further agree to follow these policies and agree that should I fail to do so, FHW and/or its contracted providers may cease to allow me to use email as a means of communication regarding my care/account. I also understand that I may withdraw my consent to communicate via email at any time by notifying FHW or my provider in writing.

Patient Name (print)

Date

Guardian (print) - When applicable

Date

Patient/Parent/Guardian (signature)

Email Address