

Richards, Inc. DBA The Richards Group

PO Box 820, Brattleboro, VT, 05302
Antonia Crawford, Plan Administrator, (802) 254-6016

Effective Date: June 12, 2025

HIPAA

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) requires that we notify you about important provisions in the plan. You have the right to enroll in the plan under its "special enrollment provision" provided that you meet participation requirements, if you marry, acquire a new dependent, or if you decline coverage under the plan for an eligible dependent while other coverage is in effect and later the dependent loses that other coverage for certain qualifying reasons. Special enrollment must take place within 30 days of the qualifying event. If you are declined enrollment for yourself or your dependents (including your spouse) while coverage under Medicaid or a state Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) is in effect, you may be able to enroll yourself and your dependents in this program if you or your dependents lose eligibility for that other coverage. However, you must request enrollment within 60 days after you or your dependents' Medicaid or CHIP coverage ends. If you or your dependents (including your spouse) become eligible for a state premium assistance subsidy from Medicaid or a CHIP program with respect to coverage under this plan, you may be able to enroll yourself and your dependents (including your spouse) in this plan. However, you must request enrollment within 60 days after you or your dependents become eligible for the premium assistance. To request special enrollment or obtain more information, contact the plan administrator indicated in this notice.

HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA") requires that we maintain the privacy of protected health information, give notice of our legal duties and privacy practices regarding health information about you and follow the terms of our notice currently in effect.

HIPAA regulations will be followed in administrative activities undertaken by assigned personnel when they involve protected health information (PHI) and e-PHI.

The company has adopted a policy that protects the privacy and confidentiality of PHI whenever it is used by company representatives. The private and confidential use of such information will be the responsibility of all individuals with job duties requiring access to PHI in the course of their jobs.

PHI refers to individually identifiable health information received by the company's group health plans and/or received by a health care provider, health plan or health care clearinghouse, and includes information regarding medical conditions, health status, claims experience, medical histories, physical examinations, genetic information and evidence of disability.

All information related to enrollment, changes in enrollment and payroll deductions, aiding in claims problem resolution and explanation of benefits issues, and assistance in coordination of benefits with other providers will be maintained in confidence. Employees shall not disclose PHI from these processes for employment-related actions, except as provided by administrative procedures approved by Human Resources.

The Company will consider any breaches in the privacy and confidentiality of handling of PHI to be serious, and disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with our code of conduct.

Company records that are governed by this policy will be maintained for a period of no less than six years.

Questions or issues regarding PHI should be addressed with Human Resources.

You may request a copy of the current Privacy Practices from the Plan Administrator explaining how medical information about you may be used and disclosed, and how you can get access to this information. ***As Required by Law***. We will disclose Health Information when required to do so by international, federal, state or local law.

You have the right to inspect and copy, right to an electronic copy of electronic medical records, right to get notice of a breach, right to amend, right to an accounting of disclosures, right to request restrictions, right to request confidential communications, right to a paper copy of this notice and the right to file a complaint if you believe your privacy rights have been violated.

SPECIAL ENROLLMENT NOTICE

If you are declining enrollment for yourself or your dependents (including your spouse) because of other health insurance or group health plan coverage, you may be able to enroll yourself and your dependents in this plan if you or your dependents lose eligibility for that

other coverage (or if the employer stops contributing toward your or your dependents' other coverage) provided that you meet participation requirements. However, you must request enrollment within 30 days or any longer period that applies under the plan, after you or your dependents' other coverage ends (or after the employer stops contributing toward the other coverage). In addition, if you have a new dependent as a result of marriage, birth, adoption, or placement for adoption, you may be able to enroll yourself and your dependents. However, you must request enrollment within 30 days or any longer period that applies under the plan, after the marriage, birth, adoption, or placement for adoption. To request special enrollment or obtain more information, contact the plan administrator mentioned above.

USERRA

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service or certain types of service in the National Disaster Medical System. USERRA also prohibits employers from discriminating against past and present members of the uniformed services, and applicants to the uniformed services.

Reemployment Rights

You have the right to be reemployed in your civilian job if you leave that job to perform service in the uniformed service and:

- You ensure that your employer receives advance written or verbal notice of your service;
- You have five years or less of cumulative service in the uniformed services while with that particular employer;
- You return to work or apply for reemployment in a timely manner after conclusion of service; and
- You have not been separated from service with a disqualifying discharge or under other than honorable conditions.

If you are eligible to be reemployed, you must be restored to the job and benefits you would have attained if you had not been absent due to military service or, in some cases, a comparable job.

Right to Be Free From Discrimination and Retaliation

If you are a past or present member of the uniformed service; have applied for membership in the uniformed service; or are obligated to serve in the uniformed service; then an employer may not deny you: initial employment; reemployment; retention in employment; promotion; or any benefit of employment because of this status. In addition, an employer may not retaliate against anyone assisting in the enforcement of USERRA rights, including testifying or making a statement in connection with a proceeding under USERRA, even if that person has no service connection.

Health Insurance Protection

If you leave your job to perform military service, you have the right to elect to continue your existing employer-based health plan coverage for you and your dependents for up to 24 months while in the military. Even if you don't elect to continue coverage during your military service, you have the right to be reinstated in your employer's health plan when you are reemployed, generally without any waiting periods or exclusions (e.g., pre-existing condition exclusions) except for service-connected illnesses or injuries.

Enforcement

The U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) is authorized to investigate and resolve complaints of USERRA violations. For assistance in filing a complaint, or for any other information on USERRA, contact VETS at **1-866-4-USA-DOL** or visit its **website at <http://www.dol.gov/vets>**. An interactive online USERRA Advisor can be viewed at <https://webapps.dol.gov/elaws/vets/userra/>. If you file a complaint with VETS and VETS is unable to resolve it, you may request that your case be referred to the Department of Justice or the Office of Special Counsel, as applicable, for representation. You may also bypass the VETS process and bring a civil action against an employer for violations of USERRA.

GINA

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits employers and other entities covered by GINA Title II from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, we are asking that you not provide any genetic information when responding to any requests for medical information, if applicable. 'Genetic information,' as defined by GINA, includes an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

Michelle's Law

Michelle's Law is a federal law that requires certain group health plans to continue eligibility for adult dependent children who are students attending a post-secondary school, where the children would otherwise cease to be considered eligible students due to a medically necessary leave of absence from school. In such a case, the Plan must continue to treat the child as eligible up to the earlier of:

- The date that is one year following the date the medically necessary leave of absence began; or the date coverage would otherwise terminate under the Plan.

For the protections of Michelle's Law to apply, the child must:

- Be a dependent child, under the terms of the Plan, of a participant or beneficiary; and
- Have been enrolled in the Plan, and as a student at a post-secondary educational institution, immediately preceding the first day of the medically necessary leave of absence.

“Medically necessary leave of absence” means any change in enrollment at the post-secondary school that begins while the child is suffering from a serious illness or injury, is medically necessary, and causes the child to lose student status for purposes of coverage under the Plan.

If you believe your child is eligible for this continued eligibility, you must provide to the Plan a written certification by his or her treating physician that the child is suffering from a serious illness or injury and that the leave of absence is medically necessary.

If you have any questions regarding the information contained in this notice or your child's right to Michelle's Law's continued coverage, you should contact the Plan Administrator.

Discrimination is Against the Law

The Company complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. The Company does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

The Company:

- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
 - Qualified sign language interpreters
 - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
 - Qualified interpreters
 - Information written in other languages

If you need these services, contact the plan administrator.

If your Company has fifteen (15) or more employees and you believe that The Company has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, refer to the Plan Administrator for Grievance Procedures or if you need help filing a grievance can be filed in person, by mail, fax, or

email.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201
1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)

Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

QMCSO (Qualified Medical Child Support Order)

QMCSO is a medical child support order issued under state law that creates or recognizes the existence of an “alternate recipient’s” right to receive benefits for which a participant or beneficiary is eligible under a group health plan. An “alternate recipient” is any child of a participant (including a child adopted by or placed for adoption with a participant in a group health plan) who is recognized under a medical child support order as having a right to enrollment under a group health plan with respect to such participant is an alternate recipient. Upon receipt, the administrator of a group health plan is required to determine, within a reasonable period of time, whether a medical child support order is qualified, and to administer benefits in accordance with the applicable terms of each order that is qualified. In the event you are served with a notice to provide medical coverage for a dependent child as the result of a legal determination, you may obtain information from your employer on the rules for seeking to enact such coverage. These rules are provided at no cost to you and may be requested from your employer at any time.

FMLA

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitles eligible employees of covered employers to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specific family and medical reasons if the employee has been with the company for one year, has worked at least 1250 hours during the prior 12 months and works in an area where there are at least 50 employees within 75 miles. Public agencies as well as public and private secondary schools are covered employers without regard to the number of employees employed. For additional details, visit the Department of Labor [FMLA page](#).

Notify the Company when you have a qualifying leave such as birth or adoption of a child, a serious health condition, to care for a spouse, child or parent with a serious medical

condition or for reservist or National Guard provisions related to you or an immediate family member leaving for military duty or being injured in active duty.

If you are on a qualified leave and any of the circumstances pertaining to your leave change, you must notify the company of the change.