

VIMALA D. VONTELA, DDS

IDENTITY THEFT DETECTION AND RESPONSE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

I. Policy

This office has adopted an Identity Theft Detection and Response Policy and Procedures Program ("Program") pursuant to the Federal Trade Commission's Red Flag Rules. The purpose of the Program is to assist in detecting, preventing, and mitigating instances of possible identity theft in connection with patients in our practice. It does so by (a) requiring us to verify the identity of all new patients, (b) establishing certain "red flags" that could indicate possible identity theft and (c) requiring follow-up on any incident which triggers a red flag. The Program must be observed by all employees of this practice, including the professional, administrative, and clerical staff.

II. Red Flags that may indicate identify theft

1. An individual falsely claiming to be someone else who is know to the office staff.
2. Unexplained discrepancies between the patient's medical records and the patient's physical condition.
3. A report by a patient know to the office staff that he or she has been the victim of identity theft in connection with oral health care services provided by the practice.

III. Responding to Red Flags

An employee of this practice who encounters a red flag situation or any other activity that may indicate identity theft should report the situation to the doctor or the office manager. That person will followup as appropriate and will record the incident and its handling in a red flags log kept in this office.

Possible responses to a red flag situation include the following:

a. Patient notification

The practice may notify the patient if a red flag is encountered that involves that patient's identity. Notification may be provided by mail, by telephone, or in-person - as the practice deems appropriate. The notification may include verification that the patient has not been victimized by identity theft in connection with any visits to the practice.

In some instances, additional specific action will be required. If notice of an actual identity theft is received, we will immediately cease any collection efforts that are related to the identity theft.

b. Notification of Legal Authorities

If the practice obtains specific information pertaining to a person committing identy theft, we will provide that information to law enforcement to the extent permitted under HIPAA and other privacy rules. We may seek advice of legal counsel on the issues involved.

Of course, if a red flag is triggered but we determine that there clearly has been no identity theft, no action will be taken.

IV. Plan Administration and Updates

All employees of this practice will receive a copy of this policy and will be instructed as to its procedures. We will ask each employee to sign an acknowledgement of receipt and understanding. We will evaluate our Program annually and update it in light of experience. Any questions about this policy should be addressed to Vimala D. Vontela, DDS or the Office Manager.

Response Date: