

# Shared Custody Statement

Pediatric Health Care Alliance, P.A. ("PHCA") is dedicated to the health and well-being of our patients. Because our patients are children, we rely on parents, legal guardians, and other supportive adults to assist us in their care. Given the sensitive nature of the unique challenges that can arise when children of divorced or separated parents need medical care, we want to share PHCA's philosophy with you to help navigate these sensitive areas and avoid misunderstandings during the treatment process.

In general, we ask that parents NOT place our office in the middle of family disagreements. We do not believe this is the best interest of patients and rely on parents to keep our practice atmosphere calm, professional and caring for the children we serve.

1. State and federal privacy laws provide that both parents, custodial or non-custodial, have a right to the child's medical record and information about their care unless a court has determined otherwise. If either parent requests information, we will honor that request. If a Court Order has been issued that restricts either parent's role, please provide a copy of the Court Order to our office.
2. Step-parents are not generally authorized under the law to consent to medical treatment for a child. If a step-parent will be bringing the child in, they must be listed on the permission to treat form to be seen. Please assist us by keeping your paperwork current.
3. We may communicate about a patient's care with one parent, based on who is involved in the patient encounter. We rely on parents to communicate with each other about the child's visit, dates of appointments, treatment recommendations, and other relevant issues, rather than calling both parents separately to discuss the visit due to lack of communication between parents.
4. The parent who brings the child in for an appointment is responsible for co-pays or insurance deductible payments at the time of service, even if the other parent is responsible for medical insurance. Please do not ask our office to collect payments from a parent who is not at or may be unaware of the visit.
5. Both parents are attending the appointment- in a non-urgent situation, if parents disagree about medical treatment (e.g., to vaccinate or not vaccinate) we will postpone recommended treatment until there is an agreement between both parents.
6. If there is an urgent situation and the child is extremely ill, we will do what we feel is in the best interest of the child in a manner provided for under applicable law.
7. Other situations that are not in the best interest of your child and will not be tolerated and may lead to dismissal from PHCA:
  - a. One parent makes appointments, and the other one cancels them.
  - b. A parent who asks us to write or say negative things about the other parent.
  - c. Parents who fight or create conflict in our offices.
  - d. Any other behaviors which interfere with our ability to provide excellent medical care to all of our patients in a warm and peaceful environment.
  - e. Changing demographics, email address or portal username/password without notifying the other parent.

*We sincerely appreciate your trust in us, and ours in you, to work together in the best interest of children's health.*