

# PATIENT INFORMATION GUIDE

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# ALVARADO HOSPITAL

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## WELCOME

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Welcome to Alvarado Hospital. We are an independent, physician-owned 306-bed general acute hospital, which also operates the premier Advanced Spine Institute and the San Diego Rehabilitation Institute, one of the largest acute and outpatient rehabilitation centers in the region.

When we changed ownership a little more than two years ago, our vision was to build a unique hospital that blends outstanding medical care, leading-edge technology and highly personalized service.

Our medical staff features many world-class physicians who are easily accessible. We also continually strive to provide personalized attention with everyone involved in your stay – from the physicians and nurses to our food service and housekeeping staff.

Alvarado's 450 physicians, 1,000 employees and 400 volunteers dedicate ourselves to treating each patient as a valued guest, and are proud to offer a number of comprehensive medical services and specialties. In addition to general surgery, a dedicated emergency department, MRI, full lab and radiology services, we also offer specialty services that include cardiac services, medical services, neuroscience, orthopedics, oncology, rehabilitation, general surgical services, sexual medicine, skull base surgery, spine care, vascular services and surgical weight reduction.

This booklet is intended to help prepare and familiarize you and your loved ones with Alvarado Hospital. Please keep the guide with you throughout your stay as it will be a valuable resource.

On behalf of the medical staff and employees of Alvarado Hospital, we promise to provide our best efforts and look forward to serving you.

Thank you,

Harris F. Koenig

Chief Executive Officer

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## ABOUT ALVARADO HOSPITAL

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Conveniently located just off the I-8 and adjacent to SDSU, Alvarado Hospital is an acute care hospital, which also houses the Advanced Spine Institute & Minimally Invasive Spine Center and the San Diego Rehabilitation Institute. The fully accredited, 306-bed medical center offers more than 450 on-staff physicians, 1,000 employees and 400 volunteers who provide quality care to San Diegans. Alvarado Hospital has many nationally renowned programs.

### Services

- Advanced Spine Institute
- Ambulatory Surgery Center
- Bariatrics (Weight-Loss Surgery)
- Cancer Program
- Cardiac Services/Heart Surgery
- Emergency Services
- Endoscopy Center
- General Surgery
- Imaging Services/Radiology
- Medicine Services
- Neurosurgery
- Orthopedic Surgery
- Primary Care (Internal Medicine and Family Practice)
- San Diego Rehabilitation Institute
- Skull-base/ENT Surgery
- Sexual Medicine
- Sleep Center
- Stroke Program
- Urology
- Vascular Surgery

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## Milestones

- San Diego County STEMI (heart attack) receiving center
- American Heart Association "Get With the Guidelines"-certified heart program
- Joint Commission "Gold Seal of Approval" stroke program (one of only 150 hospitals)
- American Stroke Association-certified stroke program
- American College of Surgeons' Commission-certified community cancer center (only one-fourth of the nation's cancer programs receive this designation)
- Site of one of the nation's leading skull-base programs
- Regional referral site for rehabilitation services
- Region's leading vision rehabilitation program
- Center of Excellence designation for bariatric surgery by Anthem Blue Cross, Medicare, Health Net, Cigna and United Resource Network
- World's only multi-disciplinary sexual medicine program
- First East County facility to offer telemedicine capability (UCSD affiliated)
- Site of one of the first open-heart procedures in San Diego
- Site of the world's first laparoscopic gastric bypass surgery
- Site of one of San Diego's first board-certified endovascular surgeons
- Site of one of the region's first interoperative neurologist
- Nearly 20% of core medical staff have been named "Top Doctors" by *San Diego Magazine*
- Clinical trial site for new stroke inhibitor (TNK)
- Clinical trial site for heart, stroke, oncology, ENT/otolaryngology, orthopedics, pathology and urology

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

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### Preparing for Hospitalization

Thank you for entrusting your care to your doctors and nurses at Alvarado Hospital. The list below will help you prepare for your hospital stay. We dedicate ourselves to a higher level of service and should you forget to bring important items from home or have additional special needs, our nursing staff will be available to help you with your requests, as well as the needs of your family and guests.

### What to Bring:

- Valid driver's license, passport or other valid form of identification
- A list of medications you are taking, including dosages and directions
- Personal hygiene items
- Comfortable clothing for your arrival and discharge
- Eyeglasses, hearing aids or dentures
- Any personal items you'll want with you during your stay, such as books or writing materials
- Not more than \$20 cash
- Credit card number and expiration date, NOT the card itself
- Calling card number
- Your health insurance card, or your spouse's, if applicable
- All insurance forms and pre-authorization paperwork
- Advanced Directive document, if you have completed one

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## What not to Bring:

- Credit cards
- Jewelry
- Valuables
- More than \$20 in cash
- Medications from home, unless otherwise instructed by your physician

Alvarado Hospital cannot be responsible for valuables brought to our hospital. Should you bring an item of value to the hospital, we recommend that you give the item to a family member to take home. You can request for valuables to be locked in our safe. Our staff will help you and will provide you with a receipt so that you can claim your items upon discharge.

## Parking

Free covered parking for patients and their guests is available in the hospital parking garage, located behind the main hospital entrance between the main hospital building and the West Tower. Other parking is located behind the West Tower and the medical office buildings east of the main hospital on Reservoir Drive. **Parking is free.**

## Admitting Department

Our admitting office is open from 5:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday. After hours, Sundays or on holidays, admitting will be done through our emergency department.

You may pre-register for your hospital stay or outpatient services by calling (619) 229-3120.

When you arrive for your hospital appointment, you will be asked to show your identification and insurance card. You also will be asked about your Advanced Directive and asked to sign consent-for-treatment forms giving us permission to treat you. If there is any money due for your care (e.g., co-payment), you will be asked to pay at the time of admitting.

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To make the admission process faster and more efficient, we encourage you to do pre-admission prior to arriving at the hospital, including advance payment. In compliance with federal law, you will receive separate bills from the hospital and the physicians involved in your care.

To ensure patient safety and accurate patient identification, you will be given an identification wristband. This wristband must be worn at all times while you are a patient at Alvarado Hospital.

Should you have any questions about the admissions process or online registration, please call (619) 229-3120.

## Visiting Hours

- Visiting hours in most areas of the hospital are from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Visiting hours in critical care units are 10 a.m., 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.
- We recommend that you call for specific visiting information before seeing a patient.

Children are welcome to visit family members in the hospital; however, they must be in the company of a parent or guardian at all times and they are never to be left unattended. To protect our patients and staff members, children who may have been exposed to or have symptoms of any illness, should not be brought to the hospital. Children under the age of 12 are discouraged from visiting.

All visitors must check in at the front desk in the lobby. For questions about visiting hours, please contact the nursing administration office at (619) 287-3270.

## Security

For your safety and security all areas of Alvarado Hospital are under video surveillance. The main security number is (619) 229-4530.

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## PATIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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*As a patient, you have a right to:*

- Respectful consideration of your religious and cultural practices.
- Appropriate management of pain and discomfort.
- Speak up and ask questions about your care. If there is anything unclear or if you have questions, please do not leave them unresolved. Asking questions will help keep you informed and it will help prevent any errors. (Refer to the “Speak Up!” brochure in your admissions packet.) We love speaking with our patients and we look forward to hearing your questions and comments.
- Information about your health in a language you can understand.
- Consent – you have the right to accept or refuse care.
- Privacy and confidentiality of your personal health and your medical records.
- Advanced Directive – you have the right to designate a person to serve as your agent for medical decisions should you become disabled.

*As a patient, you have a responsibility to:*

- Actively participate in decisions about your care.
- Be as accurate as possible about your current medical history, treatments and medications.
- Let your doctor or nurse know if you are concerned about treatment or cannot follow a certain treatment plan.
- Follow your doctor’s advice regarding your level of activity, diet and other healthcare requirements.
- Be considerate of other patients and hospital staff, using hospital property and equipment only for their intended purposes.
- Fulfill your financial obligations and ask for an explanation if you have any questions regarding your bill.

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## PLEASE SPEAK UP! COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL

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1. What we may ask you:
  - What is your pain level?
  - Have your personal needs been met?
  - What medications do you take?
  - Do you have an Advanced Directive?
  - Do you need information/education about your disease, medication, level of activity, or anything else?
  - Do you understand the plan of care for today?
  
2. What you want to ask us:
  - What pills are these?
  - Who are you? All employees wear name badges.
  - Have you washed your hands?
  - I have a question!
  
3. You are encouraged to ask questions:
  - Speak up so that you can better participate in your care, for your safety, and if you have any concerns or questions.
  - Contact your nurse, charge nurse, administrative coordinator/manager and ask questions. We will make sure your questions are answered to your satisfaction.

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## SERVICES

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### Social Worker

Social services provides services and support to patients and their families. Social work services include counseling, crisis intervention, bereavement, referrals to community resources and coordination of discharge plans.

A social worker can be contacted Monday through Friday at (619) 229-4621. Your nurse can help you contact social services in an emergency or after hours and weekends.

### Chaplain/Spiritual Services

For those patients and family members who would like the services of a chaplain while at the hospital, arrangements can be made by dialing (619) 229-3119 or by calling social services at (619) 229-4621.

### Chapel

Alvarado Hospital offers a chapel located on the first floor of the main hospital building, just past the security desk, and across from the gift shop. Our information desk or security desk can make sure you are able to locate the chapel easily and conveniently.

### CarePages

Alvarado Hospital has teamed up with CarePages to help you stay in touch before, during and after hospitalization. CarePages are free, easy-to-use Web pages that help family and friends communicate when a loved one is receiving care. It takes just a few minutes to create a Care Web page, share it with friends and family, and build a community of support. CarePages are fully secure, password protected and comply with all patient privacy regulations. Go to [www.alvaradohospital.com](http://www.alvaradohospital.com) and click on the CarePages link on the homepage to set up your page.

### Telephone Service

Telephones are provided in each patient room. Calls will be transferred to your room at your request. All local calls are free.

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Patients are advised to bring a calling card with them for long-distance or collect calls.

## **Internet Access**

Alvarado Hospital offers wireless access for patients wanting to use their personal computers/laptops. Access is a simple three-step process:

1. Open your wireless connections
2. Connect to “AIA-CAFÉ”
3. You will then be connected.

## **Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf (TDD)**

Alvarado Hospital provides telecommunications devices for the deaf (TDD) to our patients and guests who need them. Please ask your nurse for assistance with this service.

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## Television

Your television set can be operated with your bedside remote control. You have a choice of regular network channels, local television stations and a variety of cable channels. Please keep your television volume low in consideration of others.

Channel	Line-up	Channel	Line-up
2	USA Network	35	Discovery Channel
3	ESPN4 Channel	36	The Learning Channel (TLC)
4	San Diego (Padres Baseball)	37	Fox News Channel
5	Fox 5 San Diego	38	Lifetime
6	San Diego 6 (CW)	39	MSNBC
7	KNSD-39 (NBC)	40	BET
8	KFMB-8 (CBS)	41	A&E
9	KUSI-51 (Ind.)	42	Bravo
10	KGTV-10 (ABC)	43	FX
11	KPBS-15 (PBS)	44	Court TV
12	XEWT-12 Tijuana (Televisa) EWTN (2am-6am)	45	Spike TV
13	XDTV-49 MyTV 13	46	VH-1
14	KTLA-5 (LA-WB)	47	Nickelodeon/Nick-At-Nite
15	Azteca America	48	Comedy Central
16	ITV	49	E!
17	KBNT-17 Univision (Spanish)	50	Cartoon Network
18	C-SPAN2	51	The Golf Channel
19	ABC Family	52	Disney Channel
20	XHAS-33 Tijuana (Telemundo)	53	HGTV
21	C-SPAN	54	Animal Planet
22	The Weather Channel	55	History Channel
23	Public Access/CA Channel	56	Speed Channel
24	Government Access	57	AMC
25	QVC	58	Turner Classic Movies
26	WGN	59	TV Land
27	HSN (Shopping Network)	60	Travel Channel
28	ESPN2	61	CMT
29	Fox Sports Net	62	MTV2
30	MTV	63	SCI-FI Channel
31	CNN	64	Galavisión
32	CNN Headline News	65	Versus
33	TBS	66	Shop NBC
34	TNT	67	Food Network
		70	CNBC

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## **Interpreters/Translators**

We provide translation services through language line services.

## **Food Service**

Each meal is prepared to order in our kitchen by on-site staff and is individualized. The menu will include items with only the finest, freshest ingredients. Each request is cross-referenced with doctor's orders to ensure our patients' health and safety. To call food service, dial (619) 229-3111.

## **Housekeeping**

Each day, housekeeping will clean all patient rooms. We will respect your privacy and needs as much as possible.

## **Nursing Staff**

Our staff will be easily recognizable to patients and visitors to Alvarado Hospital. Each member of our nursing staff is required to wear a uniform and be identified as a nurse on the identification badge so that our patients and others can recognize each staff member's function and feel comfortable with those providing their care and services.

## **Smoke-Free Hospital**

Alvarado Hospital is a smoke-free facility. Non-smoking areas include the entrances, exits, elevators and parking structures within the building.

## **ATM**

There is an ATM available to the public in the cafeteria on the first floor of the hospital. The information desk also can provide you information about nearby bank locations.

## **Gift Shop**

The Alvarado Hospital Auxiliary operates a gift shop on the first floor of the hospital near the main lobby. Gifts, flowers, magazines,

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toiletries and more can be purchased there. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Weekend hours vary. The gift shop can be reached at (619) 229-5601.

## Flowers and Mail

Flowers and mail delivered to the hospital for you will be brought to your room daily. Please let our staff know if you have any allergies or would like to make other arrangements for floral deliveries. The Gift Shop has several types of floral arrangements.

Flowers are not allowed in our ICU patient rooms.

## Cafeteria

There is a cafeteria located on the first floor of the hospital that is open for:

- Breakfast
  - Monday through Friday 6:45 a.m. to 10 a.m.
  - Saturday, Sunday and Holidays: 6:45 a.m. to 9 a.m.
- Lunch / Dinner:
  - Monday through Friday: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
  - Saturday and Sunday: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
  - Please note the cafeteria is closed for dinner on weekends

There are other restaurants a few blocks east of the hospital on Alvarado Road, including Marie Callender's, DZ Akins Deli and Denny's. Our information desk can help direct you to these and other restaurants or go online to [www.alvaradohospital.com](http://www.alvaradohospital.com) and click on Patient & Visitor Information tab.

## Coffee Carts

Coffee, tea and various snacks are available 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. in front of the West Tower.

## Vending Machines

There are vending machines located on each floor of the main hospital and in the cafeteria on the first floor of the hospital.

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## **Newspapers**

Local newspapers are available in coin-operated vending machines outside of the main lobby of the hospital.

## **Donating Blood**

If you would like to donate blood for an upcoming surgery for yourself or a family friend or loved one, you may call our laboratory at (619) 229-3140.

## **Non-Discriminatory Policy**

Alvarado Hospital will not discriminate against any person on the basis of gender, race, creed, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, physical or mental disabilities, sensory impairments (deaf, blind, hearing impairment, speaking impairment, etc.), age or veteran status. This policy applies, but is not limited to, the appointment of medical staff, the hiring of Alvarado Hospital employees, and the admission and treatment of patients.

## **Customer Satisfaction**

Patient satisfaction is our highest priority and we value your comments. After your discharge from Alvarado Hospital, a survey from our patient satisfaction vendor, Press-Ganey, may be mailed to your home. We hope that you will take a few minutes of your time to complete the confidential survey and return it to Press-Ganey in the envelope provided by them. Your honest appraisal will help us determine ways to improve our services, so that we may continue to provide excellent care to our patients and their families.

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## LEAVING THE HOSPITAL

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Your physician will determine when it is medically appropriate for you to leave the hospital. He or she will let you know in advance so that you may arrange for transportation. Our discharge time is 11 a.m. each day. If you need help making transportation arrangements, our nursing staff will be happy to assist you.

Before you leave, you will receive verbal and written instructions for your care once you are at home. When it is time for you to leave, a transporter or member of our nursing staff will escort you to your car.

### Things to ask before you leave the hospital:

- Do you clearly understand your physician's discharge instructions?
- Will you be on a special diet?
- What limitations are there to your daily activities?
- Are there any medications you need to take and do you understand how they are to be used, as well as any side effects you might expect?
- Do you need to arrange for any post-hospital care, such as physical therapy or other treatment?
- Do you need to make a follow-up appointment with your doctor?
- Do you have all your belongings, including any medications you brought with you?
- Did you bring any valuables that were kept in our safe while you were hospitalized?

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## TELEPHONE RESOURCE LIST

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Main Hospital Line	(619) 287-3270
Admission	(619) 229-3125
Ambulatory Surgery Center	(619) 229-3393
Chaplain/Spiritual Support	(619) 229-3119
Financial Services	(619) 229-3120
Food Service	(619) 229-3111
Housekeeping	(619) 229-5124
Medical Records/Health Information	(619) 229-3175
San Diego Rehabilitation Center	(619) 287-3270
Security	(619) 229-4530
Social Worker	(619) 229-4621
Volunteer Services	(619) 229-4619

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## ADVANCED DIRECTIVE

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An Advanced Directive (also known as a “Living Will”) is a document that you prepare in case you become unable to make decisions for yourself due to a medical condition. Its purpose is to very clearly state how you want your doctors to proceed with important, and sometimes difficult, decisions about how much lifesaving effort to exert.

California law allows you to choose another person to make healthcare decisions for you if for any reason you are unable to speak for yourself. This person will have legal authority to make decisions about your medical care if you are unconscious or otherwise unable to make decisions for yourself. In the “Individual Health Care Instruction” section you can indicate your wishes. Your agent must follow these instructions and honor any other wishes you have made known.

It is important to remember that the person you appoint as your agent has no authority to make decisions for you until you are unable to make those decisions yourself. It is not necessary to appoint an agent in order to complete an Advanced Directive.

Any California resident who is at least 18 years old, of sound mind and acting of his/her own free will can complete a valid Advanced Directive. A lawyer is not needed for a standard printed Advanced Directive form to be legally valid. The form must be properly signed, dated and either notarized or witnessed by two qualified individuals.

An Advanced Directive is valid for an indefinite period of time, unless otherwise stated on the document. Also, you can revoke or change the document at any time.

For an Advanced Directive form, additional information and assistance, please contact the social services department at (619) 229-4621.

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## **Volunteer Program**

We are extraordinarily proud of our volunteer program and of the more than 400 individuals who have dedicated so much to helping patients and their families. Alvarado Hospital welcomes the support of volunteers who provide their valuable gifts of time and ability. Alvarado provides many personal services and there are many opportunities to help us provide personalized attention to our patients and guests. If you are interested in volunteering at Alvarado Hospital, please call (619) 229-4619.

## **Employee Recognition**

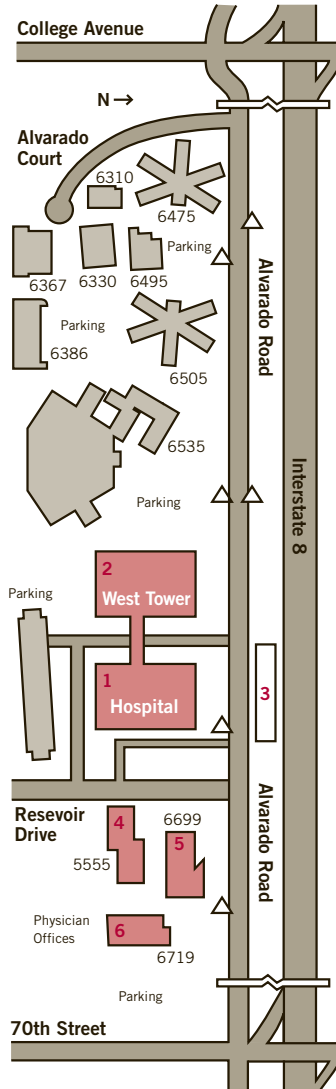
Frequently patients and guests are very appreciative of the care and attention our employees provide. Rather than gifts, Alvarado Hospital has set up an employee recognition program that is open to patients and guests. Called “Service Excellence,” this program recognizes acts of outstanding patient service. Employees will receive special recognition and are eligible for awards. If you are interested in submitting a Service Excellence form, please contact a member of our nursing staff or the nursing supervisor.

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## HOSPITAL MAP

Alvarado Hospital is conveniently located on a 27-acre campus just off Interstate 8 between College Avenue and 70th Street exits and adjacent to San Diego State University. The Alvarado Medical Center trolley stop is directly in front of the facility. Free parking is provided to patients and guests in the covered parking structure behind the hospital.

ALVARADO HOSPITAL CAMPUS MAP	
Find your destination below and refer to the building number on map.	
DESTINATION	BLDG#
Alvarado Hospital	1
Spine Institute	2
Rehabilitation Institute	2
SDT Bus Stop	▲
Trolley Stop	3
Medical Plaza I	4
Medical Plaza II	5
Medical Plaza III	6
Ambulatory	
Surgery Center	6
Cancer Resource Center	5
Community Health Resource Center	2
MRI & CT Services	1
Neurosciences Center	2



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## HOSPITAL SAFETY AND CARE

Alvarado Hospital is committed to providing a safe and caring treatment environment for our patients. Patients and their families are encouraged to contact their nurse, physician or other team member for any concerns or questions.

**If your concern is not addressed to your satisfaction, please call our patient report line at (619) 582-8349. All complaints and safety concerns are taken seriously.**

If we are unable to resolve your concern, you can also contact The Joint Commission. The Joint Commission encourages you to first bring your complaint to the attention of hospital supervisors and leaders.

If this does not lead to resolution, you may bring your complaint to them for review. The Joint Commission addresses all complaints that relate to quality of care or safety. These include issues such as patient rights, care of patients, safety, infection control, medication use and security.

The Joint Commission does not address individual billing issues and payment disputes.

**You may contact The Joint Commission one of the following ways:**

**Mail:**

**The Joint Commission  
One Renaissance Blvd.  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181**

**Phone: (800) 994-6610**

**E-mail: [complaint@jointcommission.org](mailto:complaint@jointcommission.org)**





