

APPOINTMENT POLICY
STATEMENT OF PATIENT RESPONSIBILITY

In 1996, Congress passed the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. The first date of implementation for this law is October 16, 2002.

HIPAA defines patient health information (known as "PHI") that is considered to be proprietary. HIPAA mandates that the health care provider, health care employees and the vendors who provide goods and services to the health care provider protect PHI from disclosure to those who do not have legitimate job related needs associated with rendering health treatment or providing appropriate administrative support to the patient.

HIPAA affects the way our practice interacts with you about your reserved appointment time. Because the existence of an appointment is considered to be protected health information, our office is not permitted to leave a message about your appointment on your voice mail, send you an e-mail about your appointment or leave a message with anyone at your household or place of employment about your appointment. **We must speak personally with you about your appointment.** The exception to this requirement is that we may speak to a custodial parent or guardian about an appointment that is scheduled for a dependent child.

Because of mandates included in HIPAA, the responsibility to remember scheduled appointment time is transferred to the patient. To help you remember, we will provide you with a written appointment card at the time you schedule your appointment. We will also make an effort to remind you by telephone.

It is important to understand that when an appointment is scheduled for you or your dependent child, you have hired a Dentist and/or a Hygienist, a Dental Assistant, a Sterilization Technician and several Administrative personnel.

When a patient misses an appointment, a number of negative outcomes result:

- The patient's treatment will be delayed. In many cases, this further complicates the patient's dental condition, adding unnecessary and easily avoided risks and increasing the cost of the patient's dental care. In some cases, the insurance carrier may deny benefit, if the delay results in more costly treatments.
- The Dentist and all staff whose time was dedicated to the care of the patient must wait for the next scheduled patient to arrive before they can resume work.
- Another patient who needed treatment could not be seen, because advance notice was not given to allow other patients in need of an appointment to be contacted.
- Zero revenue is generated, resulting in a loss to the practice, because staff members whose time was dedicated to care of the patient must still be paid a salary, whether or not the patient honors the appointment.

Gateway Dental Centre requires at least 24 hours notice for changes or cancellation of scheduled appointments. When such notice is not received, a charge of \$ 25.00 for every half hour of scheduled time will be applied to help offset losses associated with appointments that are not honored. This charge must be cleared before future appointments will be scheduled.

We appreciate your understanding and consideration regarding our appointment policy. Your signature below indicates that you have read this document in its entirety and that you understand its content. We will be happy to provide you with a copy of the document.

Signature

Date Copy to Patient: Yes No

NOTE: PURSUANT TO THE HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1996, THIS IS A PROPRIETARY DOCUMENT THAT CONTAINS PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION. THIS DOCUMENT MAY NOT BE VIEWED BY PERSONS FOR WHICH THE INFORMATION APPEARING HEREIN IS NOT LEGITIMATE JOB RELATED INFORMATION ASSOCIATED WITH RENDERING HEALTH TREATMENT OR APPROPRIATE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT TO THE PATIENT. (HIPAAAPPTPOLICY03/13/2003 10:34:41 AM).