

ARTICLE 1

It is understood that any dispute as to medical malpractice, that is, as to whether any medical services rendered under this contract were unnecessary or unauthorized or were improperly, negligently or incompetently rendered, will be determined by submission to arbitration as provided by California law, and not by a lawsuit or resort to court process except as California law provides for judicial review or arbitration proceedings. Both parties to this contract, by entering into it, are giving up their constitutional right to have any such dispute decided in a court of law before a jury, and instead are accepting the use of arbitration.

ARTICLE 2

a. Parties To The Agreement. The term "Patient" as used in this Agreement includes the undersigned individual, his or her spouse, children (whether born or unborn), and heirs, assigns, or personal representatives. The individual signing this Agreement signs it on behalf of the foregoing persons, and intends to bind each of them to arbitration to the full extent permitted by law.

The term "Provider" as used in this Agreement includes the undersigned doctor, nurse practitioner, nurse midwife, or other health care provider and his or her professional corporation or partnership, and any employees, agents, successors-in-interest, heirs, and assigns of the foregoing individuals or entities. The provider signing this Agreement signs it on behalf of all the foregoing individuals and entities, and intends to bind each of them to arbitration to the full extent permitted by law.

b. Treatment Covered. Patient understands and agrees that any dispute of the sort described in Article 1 between Provider and Patient will be subject to compulsory, binding arbitration.

c. Other Providers (If Applicable). Patient understands that he or she may at times receive treatment from one or more health care providers who take call for, render medical services by arrangement with, or otherwise substitute for the undersigned Provider. It is understood and agreed that any dispute of the sort described in Article 1 between Patient and such health care providers will also be subject to compulsory, binding arbitration.

d. Coverage of Prenatal Claims (If Applicable). Patient understands and agrees that, if Provider treats her during pregnancy, any dispute of the sort described in Article 1 as to medical treatment rendered to or affecting the unborn child will be subject to compulsory, binding arbitration.

ARTICLE 3

a. Informal Resolution of Disputes. In the event Patient feels that an issue has arisen in connection with the medical care rendered by Provider, Patient will promptly notify Provider so that the parties may have an opportunity to resolve the matter informally.

b. Method of Initiating Arbitration. If the issue cannot be resolved informally, Patient may initiate arbitration by sending a written demand to the Provider briefly describing the nature of his or her claim. Patient and Provider shall each designate an arbitrator to act as their respective party arbitrators. If more than two parties participate in the arbitration, parties aligned with Patient shall select one party arbitrator, and parties aligned with Provider shall select the other party arbitrator. The two party arbitrators shall select a third person to serve as a neutral arbitrator, and the decision of the three arbitrators shall be final and binding upon the parties.

c. Applicable Law. The arbitration shall be conducted pursuant to the California Arbitration Act (C.C.P. 1280-1296). The arbitrators shall, in addition, have authority to order such other discovery as they deem appropriate for a full and fair hearing of the case. A determination on the merits shall be rendered in accordance with the law of the State of California which shall apply to the same extent as if the dispute were pending before a superior court of this State.

d. Interpretation of Agreement. If any part of this Agreement is held unenforceable, it shall be severed and shall not affect the enforceability of the remainder. This Agreement supersedes and replaces any previous arbitration agreement between Provider and Patient and applies to all care previously rendered by Provider to Patient.

ARTICLE 4

a. Rescission. Once signed, this Agreement governs all subsequent medical services rendered by Provider to Patient until or unless rescinded by written notice within 30 days of signature. Written notice may be given by a guardian or conservator of Patient if Patient is incapacitated or a minor.

NOTICE; BY SIGNING THIS CONTRACT, YOU ARE AGREEING TO HAVE ANY ISSUE OF MEDICAL MALPRACTICE DECIDED BY NEUTRAL ARBITRATION AND YOU ARE GIVING UP YOUR RIGHT TO A JURY OR COURT TRIAL. SEE ARTICLE 1 OF THIS CONTRACT.

Patient's Name (Please Print): _____

Dated: _____ Signed: _____

Provider's Name (Please Print): _____

Dated: _____ Signed: _____

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SAMPLE