



CONFIDENTIALITY OF PATIENT INFORMATION

APPROVED:

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EMS Medical Director

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EMS Administrator

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To describe the policy on disclosure of patient identity and/or health information to include photographic or video records.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. Health Information: Any information possessed by a healthcare provider regarding a patient's medical history, mental or physical condition, or treatment, or the specific circumstances surrounding a specific patient identifiable incident (e.g. suspected child/elder abuse).
- 2.2. Protected Health Information (PHI): Individually identifiable health information that is held or transmitted in any form or media, whether electronic, written, spoken, printed, digital, recorded or photographic, which can be linked to an individual or there is a reasonable basis to believe it can be used to identify an individual.

3. Policy

- 3.1. Persons receiving healthcare services have a right to expect that confidentiality of PHI is reasonably preserved. Therefore:
 - 3.1.1. No paramedic or emergency medical technician or public safety personnel shall disclose medical information or images regarding a patient without first obtaining an authorization from the patient or the patient's legally authorized representative, except when such disclosure is permitted or required by law.
 - 3.1.2. Paramedic communication shall be limited to information that is relevant to the prehospital care of the patient.
- 3.2. All prehospital provider agencies and receiving hospitals shall have policies in place regarding the disclosure and documentation of PHI release.
- 3.3. PHI may be disclosed by a paramedic, emergency medical technician or public safety personnel to the following in accordance with the agency or hospital-specific policy

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related to the release of health information.

- 3.3.1. Healthcare providers involved in the care of the patient
 - 3.3.2. EMS Agency
 - 3.3.3. Patient, legal guardian or others authorized by the patient
 - 3.3.4. Law enforcement officers when the health care provider believes, in good faith, that the information requested is related to the investigation of a crime.
 - 3.3.5. Provider agency's billing department, as needed for billing purposes
 - 3.3.6. In response to a properly noticed subpoena, court order or other legally authorized disclosure
- 3.4. Any prehospital records or images used for training or continuing education purposes must be edited to remove identifying patient/incident information.

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