

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical provides ambulance service and is required by law to maintain the privacy of your individually identifiable health care information, known as Protected Health Information or PHI, and to provide you with a notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to your PHI. Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical is also required to abide by the terms of the version of this Notice currently in effect. This Notice is intended to provide you with the following information: (i) how we may use and disclose your PHI, (ii) your privacy rights in your PHI, and (iii) our obligations regarding the disclosure of your PHI.

If you have questions regarding this notice or the subjects covered in it, you may contact our Privacy Officer:

Privacy Officer Contact Information:

**Mark F. Bradford, Deputy Chief
Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical
1911 Stewart Ave.
Lawrence, Kansas 66046**

Phone: (785) 830-7000

Fax: (785) 830-7090

Email: mbradford@lawrenceks.org

Uses and Disclosures of PHI: Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical may use PHI for the purposes of treatment, payment, and health care operations. The following describes each of these categories. Please note, however, that each particular use or disclosure is not listed below. Examples of our use of your PHI:

For treatment. We may use and disclose your PHI to treat you. This includes such things as obtaining verbal and written information about your medical condition and treatment from you as well as from others, such as doctors and nurses who give orders to allow us to provide treatment to you. We may give your PHI to other health care providers involved in your treatment, and may transfer your PHI via radio or telephone to the hospital or dispatch center.

For payment. We may use and disclose your PHI in order to bill and collect payment for the services and items you may receive from us. This includes any activities we must undertake in order to get reimbursed for the services we provide to you, including such things as submitting bills to insurance companies, making medical necessity determinations and collecting outstanding accounts.

For health care operations. We may use and disclose your PHI in order to operate our service. This includes quality assurance activities, licensing, and training programs to ensure that our personnel meet

our standards of care and follow established policies and procedures, as well as certain other management functions.

Reminders for Scheduled Transports and Information on Other Services. We may also contact you to provide you with a reminder of any scheduled appointments for non-emergency ambulance and medical transportation, or to provide information about other services we provide.

Additional Uses and Disclosures of PHI: Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical is permitted to use PHI *without* your written authorization, or opportunity to object, in certain situations, and unless prohibited by a more stringent state law, including:

- For the treatment, payment or health care operations activities of another health care provider who treats you.
- To the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services in order for the Secretary to investigate or determine our compliance with the privacy regulations.
- To a family member, other relative, or close personal friend or other individual involved in your care if we obtain your verbal agreement to do so or if we give you an opportunity to object to such a disclosure and you do not raise an objection, and in certain other circumstances where we are unable to obtain your agreement and believe the disclosure is in your best interests.
- For public health activities such as, generally,
 - To prevent or control disease, injury or disability;
 - To maintain vital records, such as births and deaths;
 - To report child abuse, or neglect;
 - To notify a person regarding potential exposure to a communicable disease;
 - To notify a person regarding a potential risk for spreading or contracting a disease or condition;
 - To report reactions to medications or problems with products; or
 - To notify people of recalls of products they may be using.
- For health oversight activities including audits or government investigations, inspections, disciplinary proceedings, and other administrative or judicial actions undertaken by the government (or their contractors) by law to oversee the health care system.
- We may disclose your PHI to a government authority if we believe you are the victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence. If we make such disclosure, we will inform you of it, unless we think that informing you places you at risk or serious harm, or, unless we would be informing your personal representative rather than you, and we think doing so would not be in your best interest.
- For judicial and administrative proceedings as required by a court or administrative order, or in some cases in response to a subpoena or other legal process.
- For law enforcement activities in limited situations, such as (i) when responding to a warrant; (ii) to identify or locate a suspect, material witness, fugitive or missing person; (iii) in an emergency, to report a crime, including the location or victim(s) of the crime or a description, identity or location of the perpetrator of a crime; (iv) in response to a court order, subpoena, summons or similar process; (v) to report a death we believe may be the result of a criminal conduct; (vi) to

report criminal conduct at our offices; (vii) to report a victim of a crime if under certain limited circumstances, we are unable to obtain the person's agreement.

- For military, national defense and security and other special government functions.
- To avert a serious threat to the health and safety of a person or the public at large. Any disclosure would only be to someone able to help prevent the threat. For example, we may disclose PHI about you in a proceeding regarding the licensure of a physician.
- For workers' compensation purposes, and in compliance with workers' compensation laws.
- To coroners, medical examiners, and funeral directors for identifying a deceased person, determining cause of death, or carrying on their duties as authorized by law.
- If you are an inmate in a correctional institution or under the custody of law enforcement officials, to the correctional institution or law enforcement officials if it is necessary for (i) the institution to provide you with health care, (ii) to protect your health and safety, or the safety of others, or (iii) for the safety and security of the correctional institution.
- If you are an organ donor, we may release health information to organizations that handle organ procurement or organ, eye or tissue transplantation or to an organ donation bank, as necessary to facilitate organ donation and transplantation.
- For research projects, but this will be subject to strict oversight and approvals.
- We may also use or disclose health information about you in a way that does not personally identify you or reveal who you are.

Any other use or disclosure of PHI, other than those listed above will only be made with your written authorization. You may revoke your authorization at any time, in writing, except to the extent that we have already used or disclosed medical information in reliance on that authorization.

Patient Rights: As a patient, you have a number of rights with respect to your PHI, including:

The right to access, copy or inspect your PHI. This means you may inspect and copy most of the PHI about you that we maintain. We will normally provide you with access to this information within 30 days of your request. We may also charge you a reasonable cost-based fee for you to copy any PHI that you have the right to access. In limited circumstances, we may deny you access to your PHI, and you may appeal certain types of denials. We have available forms to request access to your PHI, and we will provide a written response if we deny you access and let you know your appeal rights. If you wish to inspect and copy your medical information, you should contact our Privacy Officer.

The right to amend your PHI. You have the right to ask us to amend PHI information that we may have about you. We will generally amend your information within 60 days of your request and will notify you when we have amended the information. We are permitted by law to deny your request to amend your medical information only in certain circumstances, like when we believe the information you have asked us to amend is correct.

If you wish to request that we amend the PHI that we have about you, you should contact our Privacy Officer.

The right to request an accounting. You may request an accounting from us of certain disclosures of your PHI that we have made in the six years prior to the date of your request. We are not required to give you an accounting of information we have used or disclosed for purposes of treatment, payment or health care operations, or when we share your health information with our business associates like our billing company or a medical facility from/to which we have transported you. We are also not required to give you an accounting of our disclosures of protected health information (i) to you about your own PHI, (ii) prior to April 14, 2003; or (iii) based on your written authorization. If you wish to request an accounting, contact our Privacy Officer. Your request should indicate a time period to be covered in the accounting (which may not be longer than six years and may not include dates prior to April 14, 2003) and should indicate in what form you want the list of disclosures (for example, in electronic form or by mail). The first accounting you request within a 12 month period is free. For additional accountings, we may charge you the reasonable cost of providing the accounting.

The right to request that we restrict the uses and disclosures of your PHI. You have the right to request that we restrict how we use and disclose your medical information that we have about you. Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical is not required to agree to any restrictions you request, but any restrictions agreed to by the Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical in writing are binding on the Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical.

The right to request confidential communications. We will accommodate all reasonable requests by you that we communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location. For example, you may request that we only contact you at work or by telephone and, if we conclude that the request is reasonable, we will accommodate you. A request for confidential communications must be made in writing to our Privacy Officer. Your request should specify the method of contact and/or location where you wish to be contacted. You are not required to provide a reason for the request.

Internet, Electronic Mail, and the Right to Obtain Copy of Paper Notice on Request. We will prominently post a copy of this Notice on our web site. If you allow us, we will forward you this Notice by electronic mail instead of on paper, and you may always request a paper copy of the Notice.

Revisions to the Notice: Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical reserves the right to change the terms of this Notice at any time, and the changes will be effective immediately and will apply to all protected health information that we maintain. Any material changes to the Notice will be promptly posted in our facilities and posted to our web site.

You can get a copy of the latest version of this Notice by contacting our Privacy Officer.

Your Legal Rights and Complaints: You also have the right to complain to us, or to the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services if you believe your privacy rights have been violated. You will not be retaliated against in any way for filing a complaint with us or to the government. Should you have any questions, comments, or complaints, you may direct all inquiries to our Privacy Officer.

Effective Date of the Notice: April 14, 2003

“Committed to Saving and Protecting Lives and Property”