

Ames Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines

Book: 1 – Organization
Section: VI – Rules and Regulations
Chapter: 3 – Patient Confidentiality
Date Approved: 09-25-2014 Revision No.: New Approved by: 
Review Date: 2017

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish expectations regarding patient confidentiality for all members of the department.

POLICY:

All members have a legal and ethical responsibility to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of patient health care information and to protect the privacy of patients. Patient information, including, but not limited to, personal and medical information, is confidential and privileged. One may view or use information as required to perform their job, but not for any other purposes.

PROCEDURE:

- Members shall not discuss, disclose, share, and/or release patient information in any form, except as required for direct medical care of the patient, legal requirement, peer review, internal audits, and/or quality assurance activities.
- Electronic data systems that contain patients' protected health information, including patient information found in the incident histories (FireHouse), dispatch information, and personal information from NFIRS are confidential
- Patient care reports and all other physical documents containing patient information shall be kept in a safe and secure area until no longer needed. At which time they should be properly destroyed or placed into an interoffice envelope and placed in the appropriate mail bin.
- Any incident information gathered is considered confidential and should not be discussed with anyone not directly related to the incident, unless appropriately requested through the chain of command.
- Requests for confidential information that do not pertain to the immediate treatment of the patient shall be directed to Fire Administration staff.
- Each member of the department must be familiar with patient confidentiality guidelines and sign an Ames Fire Department Patient Confidentiality Agreement form, which will be kept on file during the length of their employment with the City.

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- Computer access terminals and other remote entry devices such as tablets and laptops should be kept secure, with access by password only.

REFERENCES:

Ames Fire Department Patient Confidentiality Agreement



AMES FIRE DEPARTMENT

PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

All Ames Fire Department employees in all ranks and assignments, including students, volunteers, or ride-alongs, have a legal and ethical responsibility to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of patient health care information and to protect the privacy of patients. Patient information, including, but not limited to, personal and medical information, is confidential and privileged. You shall not discuss, disclose, share, and/or release this information in any form, except as required for the performance of your job and/or the direct medical care of the patient. You may not view or use information for any other purposes.

Any and all electronic data systems that contain patients' protected health information, including patient information found in the incident histories (FireHouse), dispatch information, and personal information from NFIRS are confidential. Only Fire Administration staff has the authorization to release these documents.

Unauthorized disclosure of patient medical information is a violation of Federal law. Any breach of these confidentiality policies without authorization may open the violator to criminal liability and will result in formal disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

By signing below, I agree:

- To comply with all confidentiality policies and procedures set in place by the Ames Fire Department;
- That I have not, and will not discuss information regarding patients to anyone at work or outside work, unless the communication is or was absolutely necessary to provide care to the patient.

Signature

Date

Name (print)

Return form to: Deputy Chief of Support Services