

VERDE VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT



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.

Purpose of this Notice: Verde Valley Fire District. (VVFD) is required by law to maintain the privacy of certain confidential healthcare information, known as Protected Health Information (PHI), and to provide you with a notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to your PHI. This Notice describes your legal rights, advises you of our privacy practices, and lets you know how VVFD is permitted to use and disclose your PHI.

VVFD is also required to abide by the terms of the version of this Notice currently in effect. In most situations we may use this information as described in this Notice without your permission, but there are situations where we may use it only after we obtain your written authorization, if we are required by law to do so.

Uses and Disclosures of PHI: VVFD may use PHI for the purposes of treatment, payment, and health care operations, in most cases without your written permission. Examples of our use of your PHI:

For Treatment. Includes verbal and written information we obtain about you and use pertaining to your medical condition and treatment provided to you by us and other medical personnel (including doctors and nurses who give orders to allow us to provide your treatment). It also includes information we give to other healthcare personnel to whom we transfer your care and treatment, and includes transfer of PHI via radio or telephone to the hospital or dispatch center as well as providing

- the hospital with a copy of the written record we create in the course of providing you with treatment and transport.

- **For Payment** Includes any activities VVFD must undertake to get reimbursed for services we provide you, including organizing your PHI and submitting bills to insurance companies, making medical necessity determinations and reviews, utilization review, and collection of outstanding accounts.
- **For Health Care Operations** Includes quality assurance activities, licensing, and training programs to ensure our personnel meet our standards of care and follow established policies and procedures, obtaining legal and financial services, conducting business planning, processing grievances and complaints, creating reports that do not individually identify you for data collection purposes, fundraising, and certain marketing activities.
- **Fundraising** We may contact you when in the process of raising funds for VVFD, or to provide you with information about our annual subscription program.
- **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 for other information about alternative services we provide or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

Use and Disclosure of PHI Without Your Authorization VVFD is permitted to use PHI without your written authorization, or opportunity to object, in certain situations, including:

- For VVFD's use in treating you or in obtaining payment for services provided to you or in other healthcare operations.
- For the treatment activities of another healthcare provider.
- To another healthcare provider or entity for the payment activities of the provider or entity that receives the information (such as your hospital or insurance company).
- To another healthcare provider (i.e., the hospital to which you are transported) for the health care operations activities of the entity that receives the information as long as the entity receiving the information has or has had a relationship with you and the PHI pertains to that relationship.
- For healthcare fraud and abuse detection or for activities related to compliance with the law.
- To a family member, 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. We may also disclose health information to your family, relatives, or friends if we infer from the circumstances you would not object, i.e., we may assume you agree to our disclosure of your personal health information to your spouse when your spouse has called the ambulance for you. In situations where you are not capable of objecting (you are not present or due to your incapacity or medical emergency),

we may, in our professional judgment, determine a disclosure to your family member, relative, or friend is in your best interest. We will disclose only health information relevant to that person's involvement in your care. For example, we may inform the person who accompanied you in the ambulance that you have certain symptoms and may give that person an up-date on your vital signs and treatment that is being administered by our ambulance crew.

- To a public health authority in certain situations (i.e., reporting a birth, death, or disease as required by law) as part of a public health investigation, to report child or adult abuse, neglect or domestic violence, to report adverse events such as product defects, or to notify a person about exposure to a possible communicable disease as required by law.
- 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 healthcare system.
- 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 when there is a warrant for the request, or when the information is needed to locate a suspect or stop a crime.
- 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.
- For Workers' Compensation purposes, in compliance with Worker's Compensation laws.
- To 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 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 and health information will be released only when there is a minimal risk to your privacy and adequate safeguards are in place in accordance with the law.
- We may 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 (the authorization must specifically identify the information we seek to use or disclose, as well as when and how we seek to use or disclose it). You may revoke your

authorization at any time, in writing, except to the extent 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** You may come to our offices and inspect and copy most of the medical information about you that we maintain. We will normally provide you with access to this information within 30 days of your request. We may charge you a reasonable fee to copy any medical information you have the right to access. In limited circumstances, we may deny your access to your medical information, and you may appeal certain types of denials. We have available forms to request access to your PHI and 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 the Privacy Officer listed at the end of this Notice.
- **The Right to Amend Your PHI.** You have the right to ask us to amend written medical information 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, such as when we believe the information you have asked us to amend is correct. If you wish to request that we amend the medical information that we have about you, you should contact the privacy officer listed at the end of this Notice.
- **The Right to Request an Accounting of Our Use and Disclosure of Your PHI** You may request an accounting from us of certain disclosures of your medical information we 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 purpose 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 not required to give you an accounting of our uses of protected health information for which you have already given us written authorization. If you wish to request an accounting of the medical information about you that we have used or disclosed that is not exempted from the accounting requirement, you should contact the privacy officer listed at the end of this Notice.
- **The Right to Request that We Restrict the Uses and Disclosures of Your PHI** You have the right to request we restrict how we use and disclose the medical information we have about you for treatment, payment or health care operations, or to restrict information provided to family, friends and other individuals involved in your health care. If you request a restriction and the information you asked us to restrict is needed to provide you with emergency treatment, we may use the PHI or disclose it to a health care provider to provide you with emergency treatment. VVFD is not required to agree to any restrictions you request, but any restrictions agreed to are binding on VVFD.

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 and make the Notice available

electronically through the 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 VVFD 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 PHI we maintain. Any material changes to the Notice will be promptly posted in our facilities and to our website. You can get a copy of the latest version of this Notice by contacting the Privacy Officer identified below.

Your Legal Rights and Complaints You have the right to complain to us or 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 the government. Should you have any questions, comments or complaints, you may direct all inquiries to our privacy officer listed at the end of this Notice.

Privacy Official Contact Information:

Verde Valley Fire District
Attn: Privacy Officer
2700 Godard Road
Cottonwood, AZ 86326
Phone: 928-634-2578
FAX: 928-646-5737