

# CITY OF WILMINGTON, NC FIRE DEPARTMENT NOTICE OF RELEASE OF INFORMATION & PATIENT'S RIGHT TO ACCESS MEDICAL REPORTS

This Notice is effective on July 23, 2019

**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.**

We are required by law to protect the privacy of medical information about you and that identifies you. This medical information may be information about health care we provide to you or payment for health care provided to you. It may also be information about your past, present, or future medical condition.

## **WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU IN SEVERAL CIRCUMSTANCES.**

We use and disclose medical information about persons who receive emergency medical services from the City of Wilmington, NC Fire Department as needed. This section of this Notice explains in some detail how we may use and disclose medical information about you in order to provide health care improvements and operate our department efficiently. For more information about any of these uses or disclosures, or about any of our privacy policies, please review the City of Wilmington HIPAA policy by following this link: S:\\_City Policies-Directives\Procedures\HIPAA

### **1. Treatment**

We may use and disclose medical information about you to provide health care treatment to you. In other words, we may use and disclose medical information about you to provide or coordinate your health care and related services. This may include communicating with other health care providers regarding your treatment and coordinating your health care with others.

### **2. Health care operations**

We may use and disclose medical information about you while performing a variety of EMS training activities. These training activities allow us to improve the quality of care we provide. For example, we may use or disclose medical information about you in performing the following activities:

- Reviewing and evaluating the skills, qualifications, and performance of health care providers who have taken care of you.
- Providing training programs for students, trainees, health care providers to help them practice or improve their skills.
- Cooperating with outside organizations that evaluate, certify or license health care providers, staff or facilities in a particular field or specialty.
- Reviewing and improving the quality and efficiency of care that we provide to you and others.
- Cooperating with outside organizations that assess the quality of the care others and we provide, including government agencies and private organizations.
- Planning for our organization's future operations.

### **3. Persons involved in your care**

We may disclose medical information about you to a relative, close personal friend or any other person you identify and consent to -if that person is involved in your care and the information is relevant to your care. If the person receiving services is a minor, we may disclose medical information about the minor to a parent, guardian or other person responsible for the minor. For more information on the privacy of minors' information, please review the City of Wilmington HIPAA policy by following this link: S:\\_City Policies-Directives\Procedures\HIPAA

#### 4. Required by law

We will use and disclose medical information about you whenever we are required by law to do so. There are many state and federal laws that require us to use and disclose medical information. For example, state law requires us to report gunshot wounds and other injuries to the police and to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services. We will comply with those state laws and with all other applicable laws.

#### 5. National priority uses and disclosures

When permitted by law, we may use or disclose medical information about you without your permission for various activities that are recognized as “national priorities.” In other words, the government has determined that under certain circumstances (described below), it is so important to disclose medical information that it is acceptable to disclose medical information without the individual’s permission. We will only disclose medical information about you in the following circumstances when we are permitted to do so by law. Below are brief descriptions of the “national priority” activities recognized by law. For more information on these types of disclosures, please review the City of Wilmington HIPAA policy by following this link: [S:\\\_City Policies-Directives\Procedures\HIPAA](S:\_City Policies-Directives\Procedures\HIPAA)

- **Threat to health or safety:** We may use or disclose medical information about you if we believe it is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat to health or safety of others.
- **Public health activities:** We may use or disclose medical information about you for public health activities. Public health activities require the use of medical information for various activities, including, but not limited to, activities related to investigating diseases, reporting child abuse and neglect, monitoring drugs or devices regulated by the Food and Drug Administration, and monitoring work-related illnesses or injuries. For example, if you have been exposed to a communicable disease (such as [measles](#) ~~sexually transmitted disease~~), we may report it to the State and take other actions to prevent the spread of the disease.
- **Abuse, neglect or domestic violence:** We may disclose medical information about you to a government authority (such as the Department of Social Services) if you are an adult, [child or infant](#) and we reasonably believe that you may be a victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence.
- **Health oversight activities:** We may disclose medical information about you to a health oversight agency – which is basically an agency responsible for overseeing the health care system or certain government programs. For example, a government agency may request information from us while they are investigating possible insurance fraud.
- **Court proceedings:** We may disclose medical information about you to a court or an officer of the court (such as an attorney) [if so ordered by the court](#). ~~For example, we would disclose medical information about you to a court if a judge orders us to do so.~~
- **Law enforcement:** We may disclose medical information about you to a law enforcement official for specific law enforcement purposes. For example, we may disclose limited medical information about you to a police officer if the officer needs the information to help find or identify a missing person.
- **Coroners and others:** We may disclose medical information about you to a coroner, medical examiner, or funeral director or to organizations that help with organ, eye and tissue transplants.

#### 6. Authorization

Other than the uses and disclosures described above (#1-5), we will not use or disclose medical information about you without the “authorization” – or signed permission – of you or your personal representative.

#### 7. Obtaining Your Report(s)

You may obtain/view report(s) at the Wilmington Fire Department Headquarters (801 Market St. Wilmington, NC 28401) from the Administrative Support Specialist. Please call ahead to expedite the process of finding and printing your report (910-341-7846).

- **Picking up your reports:** Please bring a photo ID when you come pick up your records.
- **If you are picking up records for someone else:** Bring an original signed authorization letter from the requester and a photo ID.
- **If you are an authorized legal representative or Administrator of an Estate:** Bring the appropriate legal documents along with a photo ID.