

Cedarville Township Volunteer Fire Department

HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practice

2025

The Cedarville Township Volunteer Fire Department (CTVFD) is required by law to maintain the privacy of Protected Health Information or PHI, and to provide notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to PHI. This notice describes your legal rights, advises you of our privacy practices and lets you know how CTVFD is permitted to use and disclose your PHI. CTVFD 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 a few instances where we may use it only after we obtain your written authorization.

CTVFD may use PHI for the purposes of treatment, and health care operations, in most cases without your written permission. Below are a few examples of how we may use your PHI:

- **Treatment.** This includes things such as verbal and written information that we obtain and use pertaining to your medical condition and treatment provided to you by us and other medical personnel. It also includes information we give to other health care personnel to whom we transfer your care and treatment. Radio or telephone contact and leaving a copy of the patient care report we create while providing you with treatment and transport are also permitted.
- **Healthcare Operations.** This includes quality assurance activities, licensing, and training programs to ensure that we continue to provide a high standard of care. MTFR is permitted to use/disclose PHI without your written authorization or opportunity to object in certain situations:
 - o treatment in other health care operations.
 - o treatment activities of another health care provider.
 - o to a family member, other relative, or close 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 fail to do so.
 - o reporting a birth, death or disease as required by law; to report child or adult abuse or 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.
 - o judicial and administrative proceedings as required by a court or administrative order, or in response to a subpoena or other legal process.
 - o to avert a serious threat to the health and safety of person or the public at large
 - o to coroners, medical examiners, and funeral directors for identifying a deceased person, determining a cause of death, or carrying on their duties as authorized by law.
 - o if you are an organ donor, we may release health information to organizations that handle organ procurement or transplantation.
 - o we may use or disclose health information about you in a way that does not personally identify you or reveal who you are.
 - o to health insurance companies for payment purposes

In situations where you are not capable of objecting, due to incapacity or medical emergency, we may determine that a disclosure to your family member, relative or friend in your best interest. Other use or disclosure of your PHI will be made only after obtaining 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.

As a patient, you have several rights with respect to the protection of your PHI, including:

- The right to access, copy or inspect your PHI. We will normally provide you with access to this information within 30 days of your request. Your request must be made in person, on the appropriate form, at the firehouse during regular business hours. In limited circumstances, we may deny you access to your medical information and you may appeal certain types of denials.
- The right to amend your PHI. You have the right to ask us to amend your written medical information. You will receive notification of the decision to amend or not within 90 days of our receiving your request. If we believe that the information you have asked us to amend is, in fact, correct we are permitted by law to deny your request.

You also have the right to complain to us or to the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services if you believe your privacy rights have been violated. If you have any questions, comments, or complaints you may direct all inquiries to the Privacy Officer.

COMPLIANCE/PRIVACY OFFICER

The Fire Chief shall serve as the Compliance/Privacy Officer, and may appoint additional personnel to serve as Compliance/Privacy Officers.

The Compliance/Privacy Officer(s) will define, implement, monitor, and enforce our compliance program and the HIPAA privacy regulations. Specifically, the Compliance/Privacy Officer(s) are responsible for ensuring that an appropriate level of compliance activity exists within the organization, patient records and information are maintained in a secure area, and confidentiality is maintained.

The CTVFD Compliance/Privacy Officers are:

- Chief Kyle E. Miller and
- Asst Chief Kevin M. Brown

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMPLIANCE/PRIVACY OFFICER

The Compliance/Privacy Officer shall access and may delegate functions to personnel within the Moraine Fire Division or appropriate consultants when necessary. The Compliance/Privacy Officer(s) will establish procedures for all Moraine Fire Division employees and seek clarifications or make suggestions about the operational effectiveness of the compliance program and all privacy issues. The Compliance/Privacy Officer(s) will administer the program; however, they will rely upon the medical director/advisor and legal advisor for guidance and support.

COMPLIANCE/PRIVACY REPORTING:

All members of the CTVFD shall follow related policies, procedures, and SOGs related to HIPAA. We will enforce a strict compliance/privacy program to detect, prevent, and eliminate any violations of the law. Auditing will be periodically conducted to identify any potential abusive or illegal practices. All members of the CTVFD shall report known violations. Each report will be confidential and no penalty or corrective action will be taken against any employee reporting suspected violations. Remember, “When in doubt, report it” All violations should be addressed to the Fire Chief.

PATIENT’S RIGHTS:

The following basic patient rights shall be honored:

- EACH PATIENT IS TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT, UNDERSTANDING, AND WITH FULL RECOGNITION OF HUMAN DIGNITY AND INDIVIDUALITY.
- EACH PATIENT HAS DIFFERENT NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS.
- EACH PATIENT SHALL RECEIVE SERVICES, TREATMENT, AND CARE THAT IS ADEQUATE, APPROPRIATE, AND IN COMPLIANCE WITH ALL STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS, RULES, AND REGULATIONS.
- EACH PATIENT HAS A RIGHT TO FULL PRIVACY, AND THIS RIGHT SHALL NOT BE COMPROMISED AT ANY TIME.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

The protection of CTVFD information is the responsibility of every member. We all share a common interest – to make certain that no disclosure is made accidentally or improperly. Never discuss any confidential information with anyone that does not work for the CTVFD. Such a conversation would be a direct violation of the patient’s rights.

ACCESS / SECURITY:

No employee or member of the public shall have access to patient’s PHI except as provided in this SOG. The CTVFD prohibits the release of PHI to anyone outside the organization unless required for purposes of treatment, payment, or health care operations, or as otherwise required by law. Discussions of PHI within the organization should be limited. Acceptable uses of PHI include, but are not limited to, exchange of patient information needed for the treatment of the patient, billing, and other essential healthcare operations, peers review, internal audits, review and approval of run sheets, and quality assurance activities. Access to PHI shall be limited to those who need access to PHI to carry out their duties. By way of example, the following employees shall have access to PHI, and paper records, for the purposes of records maintenance or EMS billing: Fire Chief, or his/her designee; Asst. Chief, or his/her designee; EMS Captain and EMS Lieutenant. The following employees shall have access to PHI only as necessary to electronically enter or otherwise submit run sheets: EMT’s, Paramedics, Firefighters.

PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION (PHI)

The run sheets will be stored in a secured box at the station until they are reviewed for state reporting and processed for medical billing purposes. All EMS run sheets will be stored in a locked file cabinet at the Station. EMS run sheets will include all related documentation, EKG strips, refusal forms, pictures, and any other documentation related to the patient.

The following employees shall have access to the records for the purpose of records maintenance or EMS billing:

- Fire Chief
- Asst. Chief
- EMS Captain
- EMS Lieutenant
- Employees as specifically designated by the Fire Chief or Asst. Fire Chief

RECORDS REQUEST AND RELEASE FOR FIRE & EMS RUN REPORTS:

All requests for EMS and Fire run reports shall be directed to the Fire Chief. Identity or medical status of any patient must be kept confidential by law. WITHOUT A SIGNED RELEASE STATEMENT BY THE PATIENT, REQUEST OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY OR COURT ORDERED SUBPOENA, RELEASE OF INFORMATION SHALL NOT BE MADE (UNLESS THE REQUESTING AGENCY HAS A SIGNED BUSINESS AGREEMENT (BA) ON FILE). If the patient is a minor child, the release must be signed by a parent or guardian; documentation (such as a birth certificate or court order) demonstrating the relationship to the child must be attached to the request. If the patient is a relative of the person requesting the information, the person requesting the records must sign the request; provide proof of medical power of attorney, show a driver's license and all must be attached to the request. In addition, authorizations for the release of information not signed in the presence of the Clerk of Council must be notarized. Only information that may be transferred to an emergency physician or other provider for the patient as a result of the delivery of the patient to any medical care facility. Any request that is made in person, a copy of the requestor's driver's license will be attached to the request along with a signature on the request form. The Fire Chief will keep a log of all records released and to whom and ensure that all information released is in accordance with the established CTVFD HIPAA Policy and Federal law

Approved:
April 10, 2025

Date: _____

Kyle E. Miller
Fire Chief
Cedarville Township Volunteer Fire Department