



HIPAA COMPLIANCE

SCOPE

This guideline shall apply to all members of the Stoney Point Fire Department and shall be adhered to by all members.

PURPOSE

To explain the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 and establish procedures for ensuring compliance within Stoney Point Fire Department.

DEFINITIONS

Guideline - a general rule, principle, outline of a policy

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act – (HIPAA) provides protections for protected health information and personally identifiable information

Member – any career, volunteer, staff, and auxiliary personnel affiliated with the department

Protected Health Information/Personally Identifiable Information – (PHI/PII) information that could be used to identify a patient or casualty and be misused

Shall - indicates a mandatory requirement

Policy Number

5G.004

Page 1 of 2

GUIDELINES

Stoney Point Fire Department is an all hazards emergency response organization. The majority of the emergency responses that the department conducts each year involve gathering of Protected Health Information must be kept confidential to protect the rights of our residents. This information may be verbal, written, electronic or photographic, in nature. In compliance with federal and state law, Stoney Point Fire Department prohibits the release or misuse of any patient or victim information to anyone that does not have a need to know that information. This information is restricted to:

- Stoney Point Fire Department members responsible for treatment
- Cumberland County Emergency Medical Services personnel receiving the patient
- Stoney Point Fire Department training personnel for quality control and training purposes
- Stoney Point Fire Department Emergency Medical staff for internal audits and review

Each member of Stoney Point Fire Department has a professional responsibility to respect and protect the privacy rights of all patients and victims. Any breach of patient confidentiality must be reported immediately to the Privacy Officer, which is the Emergency Medical Services Lieutenant.



Confidentiality

All members have a responsibility to comply with all confidentiality policies, procedures, regulations, and laws as a condition of their membership or employment with Stoney Point Fire Department. A breach of patient confidentiality may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of the member's employment or membership with Stoney Point Fire Department. At any time upon request, members must return all patient confidential information in their possession.

Protect Health Information and Personally Identifiable Information shall be restricted from transmission on any radio system, unless absolutely necessary, to limit inadvertent disclosure. All completed reports shall be secured in the locked cabinet in the administrative office immediately to prevent unauthorized personnel from seeing the Protected health Information.

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) rules cover all health information, regardless of form, including electronic records, paper records, and oral communication. HIPAA rules also provide healthcare consumers with control over their health information, set boundaries on medical record use and release, ensure the security of personal health information, and establish accountability for medical record use and release. Some specific points include:

- Patients have the right to review and copy their medical records
- Healthcare providers (Stoney Point Fire Department members) must inform patients to whom they are disclosing their information and how it is being used
- Healthcare providers (Stoney Point Fire Department members) shall restrict the amount of information to the "minimum necessary" to achieve the purpose of the use or disclosure

In order to comply with federal requirements, Stoney Point Fire Department shall establish business practices that are "privacy-aware" including the following:

- Training members about privacy issues
- Appointing the Emergency Medical Services Lieutenant as the Privacy Officer to implement policies and procedures, manage violations and complaints, and conduct training
- Implement safeguards to protect patient's Protected Health Information

References

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996
NC GS 122C-52

Policy Number
5G.004
Page 2 of 2