



RIO RANCHO FIRE RESCUE

1526 STEPHANIE ROAD SE
RIO RANCHO, NEW MEXICO 87124

"PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY"

Rio Rancho Fire Rescue, (RRFR), in accordance with the New Mexico Inspection of Public records Act, (Section 14-6-1 NMSA 1978), provides that the release of "all health information that relates to and identifies specific individuals as patients is strictly confidential and shall not be a matter of public record or accessible to the public even though the information is in the custody of or contained in the records of a governmental agency or its agent."

Notice of Privacy Practices

IMPORTANT: THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW AUTHORIZED PERSONS CAN ACCESS THIS INFORMATION.

RRFR is committed to protecting the privacy of confidential health care information about the citizens and visitors of the City of Rio Rancho. RRFR is required by law to protect health care information that identifies individuals or could be used to identify individuals, known as Protected Health Information (PHI). Specifically, RRFR regularly generates and/or obtains PHI from patient care reports, complete and/or incomplete, and dispatch tapes when a phone assessment takes place. RRFR is required by 45 CFR 164.520 to provide this Notice, which outlines our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to PHI. RRFR is required to abide by the terms of the version of this Notice.

Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information

Under Federal Law, 45 CFR 164.520, RRFR may use or disclose PHI for the purposes of treatment, and health care operations without written permission. Following are some examples of how authorized persons may use or disclose PHI for treatment or health care operations:

Treatment: RRFR personnel may use or disclose PHI for treatment purposes. This includes disclosures to other health care personnel to whom we transfer care and treatment, and includes transfer of PHI via radio or telephone to the hospital or Dispatch center.

Health Care Operations: PHI can be used or disclosed to allow RRFR to conduct health care operations. For example we may use PHI for quality assurance activities and training programs to ensure that RRFR personnel meet Rio Rancho Fire Rescue Treatment Guidelines and the New Mexico Department of Health's standards of care.

Other Reasons We Are Permitted or Required the Use or Disclosure of PHI Without Written Consent:

RRFR may use or disclose PHI without written authorization, or opportunity to object in certain situations, including:

- *Required by Law:* RRFR may disclose PHI when required by law.
- *Required by Health and Human Services:* RRFR may be required to disclose PHI to the Secretary of Health and Human Services to investigate or determine our compliance with federal privacy laws.
- *Abuse or Neglect:* RRFR may disclose PHI when authorized by law to report information about abuse or neglect or domestic violence to a public health authority or other governmental agency that is permitted by law to collect or receive such information.
- *Public Health:* RRFR may disclose PHI to a public health authority in certain situations such as reporting a birth, death or disease as required by law, as part of a public health investigation,
- To report adverse events such as product defects, or to notify a person about exposure to a possible communicable disease as required by law.

- *Health Oversight Activities:* RRFR may disclose PHI for certain 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 health care system.
- *Judicial and Administrative Proceedings:* RRFR may disclose PHI as directed by a court or administrative order, or in some cases in response to a subpoena or other legal process.
- *Law Enforcement:* RRFR may disclose PHI for certain law enforcement purposes, such as when the information is needed to locate a suspect, stop a crime, or report certain wounds.
- *Specialized Government Functions:* RRFR may disclose PHI for military, national defense and security and other special government functions.
- *Serious Threat to Health or Safety:* RRFR may disclose PHI to avert a serious threat to the health and safety of a person or the public at large.
- *Coroners, Medical Examiners, and Funeral Directors:* RRFR may disclose PHI to coroners, medical examiners, or funeral directors for identifying a deceased person, determining cause of death, or carrying on their duties as authorized by law.
- *Research:* RRFR may use or disclose PHI 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 privacy and adequate safeguards are in place in accordance with the law.
- RRFR may disclose PHI to a family member or other individual involved in a patient's care if RRFR obtains a written agreement from an authorized person to do so or if RRFR gives the patient an opportunity to object to such a disclosure and the patient does not raise an objection. RRFR may also disclose health information to a family member or other individual involved in a patient's care if RRFR infers from the circumstances that you would not object. In situations where the patient is not capable of objecting, RRFR may, in our professional judgment, determine that a disclosure to a family member or other individual involved in your care is in your best interest.
- *Workers' Compensation:* RRFR may disclose PHI when necessary to comply with Workers' Compensation laws.

Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information Based Upon Written

Authorization:

Any other use or disclosure of PHI, other than those listed above will only be made with written authorization. The patient may revoke his/her authorization at any time, in writing, except to the extent that RRFR has already used or disclosed medical information in reliance on that authorization.

Patient Rights:

Patients have a number of rights with respect to the protection of their PHI. RRFR may ask that a patient submit a written request to exercise his/her rights. These rights include:

The Right to Access Copy or Inspect PHI. A patient may ask to inspect or obtain a copy of his/her confidential information that is included in certain records we maintain. RRFR will normally provide a patient with access to this information as soon as practical as but not later than within fifteen (15) days of request or provide the patient with a timeline to provide the requested information. A response will be sent to the requestor within three (3) days of the request. RRFR may charge you a reasonable fee to cover duplicating costs. In limited circumstances, RRFR may deny access to medical information, and the patient may appeal certain types of denials. RRFR will provide a written explanation if they deny access and will describe any appellate rights.

The Right to Request an Accounting of Certain Disclosures of PHI. The patient may request a list of the disclosures RRFR has made of your PHI. The list that RRFR provides will not include disclosures made before May 1, 2014, disclosures made earlier than six years before the date of request, disclosures for treatment, or

health care operations, and certain other disclosures that are accepted by the law. RRFRR is required to provide the list as soon as practical, but not later than within fifteen (15) days from the request or provide a timeline to supply the request. A response will be sent to the requestor within three (3) days of the request. If you request a list more than once during any 12-month period, we may charge a reasonable fee for each accounting statement after the first.

The Right to Request That AFD Restrict the Uses and Disclosures of PHI. The patient has the right to request that RRFRR restrict how it uses and discloses PHI for treatment, or health care operations, or to restrict the information that is provided to family, friends and other individuals involved in the patient's health care. RRFRR is not required to agree to any restrictions you request. If RRFRR does agree, RRFRR will abide by the patient's restriction unless RRFRR needs to use the PHI to provide emergency treatment.

The Right to Request Confidential Communications. The patient has the right to ask RRFRR to communicate PHI by alternative means or at an alternative location. RRFRR will attempt to accommodate all reasonable requests. If RRFRR determines that the request is unreasonable, RRFRR may continue to use their existing communications methods.

The Right to Receive A Paper Copy Of This Notice. If a patient would like a paper copy of this notice, contact our EMS Division listed below. Patients may also obtain an electronic copy from the following website <https://nm-riorancho2.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=681>

Revisions to The Notice: RRFRR may change the terms of this Notice at any time, and the changes will be effective immediately and may apply to all protected health information that RRFRR maintains. If RRFRR makes a change to this Notice, RRFRR will post the revised Notice on the City of Rio Rancho web site. You can get a copy of the latest version of this Notice by contacting the EMS Division listed below.

Your Legal Rights and Complaints: If an individual believes his/her privacy rights have been violated, he/she has the right to complain to RRFRR, or to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. That individual will not be retaliated against in any way for filing a complaint with RRFRR or with the Department of Health and Human Services. Should the individual have any questions, comments or complaints they may direct them to the City of Rio Rancho Ambulance Billing Department, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division Chief, or RRFRR Deputy Chief.

How to Obtain EMS / Patient Care Reports or Dispatch Tapes:

EMS Reports/Dispatch Tapes:

- Written letter of request for record or the completed form provided by the Department
- Patient – requires photo identification
- Parent may pick up a report with the birth certificate (of child) and picture ID (of parent)
- If deceased, a death certificate and proof of executor of the estate is required
- A medical release is required if an insurance company or attorney is requesting a report or Dispatch Tape