



Privacy Practices

Brewster Ambulance Service, Inc. is required by law to maintain the privacy of certain confidential health care information, known as Protected Health Information or PHI, and to provide you with a notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to your PHI.

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

For Treatment: This includes such things as verbal and written information that 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 treatment to you). It also include 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: This includes any activities we must undertake in order to get reimbursed for services we provide to you, including such things as organizing your PHI and submitting bills to insurance companies (either directly or through a third party billing company), management of billed claims for services rendered, medical necessity determinations and reviews, utilization review, and collection of outstanding accounts.

For Healthcare Operations: This includes quality assurance activities, licensing, and training programs to ensure that 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.

Brewster Ambulance Service is permitted to use PHI without your written authorization, or opportunity to object in certain situations, including:

- For Brewster Ambulance Service's use in treating you or in obtaining payment for services provided to you;
- To another health care provider (such as the hospital for which you are transported) for 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 health care fraud and abuse detection or for activities related to compliance with the law;
- To a family member, other relative, 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 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 that you would not object. For example, 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 (because you are not present or due to your incapacity or medical emergency), we may, in our professional judgement, determine that a disclosure to your family member, relative, or friend is in your best interest. In that situation, 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 we may give that person an update on your vital signs and treatment that is being administered by our ambulance crew;
- 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 suspected 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;
- 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 health care system;
- For judicial and administrative proceeding 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, and in compliance with worker's compensation laws;
- To coroners, 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 or transplant;
- 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. 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 information.

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

You are invited to come to our offices and inspect and copy the medical information about you that we maintain. We will normally provide you with access to this information within three (3) business days of your request. We may also charge you a reasonable fee for you to copy any medical information that you have a right to access. In limited circumstances, we may deny you access to your medical information, and you may appeal certain types of denial. We will provide a written response if we deny you access and let you know your appeal rights.

You have the right to ask us to amend written medical information that we may have about you. We will generally amend your information within thirty (30) business 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, like when we believe the information that 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 notify our Privacy Officer.

You may request an accounting from us of certain disclosures of your medical information that we have made in the last 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 the purposes of treatment, payment, or healthcare 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 also not required to give you an accounting of our uses of protected health information for which you have already given us written authorization.

You have the right to request that we restrict how we use and disclose your medical information that we have about you for treatment, payment, or healthcare operations, or to restrict the information that is provide to family, friends, and other individuals involved in your health care. But if you request a restriction and the information you asked us to restrict is needed to provide you with emergency treatment, then we may use the PHI or disclose the PHI to a healthcare provider to provide you with emergency treatment.

If we maintain a Web site, we will post a copy of this notice on our 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 this Notice. We reserve the right to change the terms of this notice at any time, and the changes will be effective immediately and will apply to all protected health information that we maintain. Any material changes to the notice will be posted on our Web site.

You have the right to complain to us, or to the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services if you believe your rights have been violated. You will not be retaliated against in any way for filing a complaint.

Contact Information:

Privacy Officer
 Brewster Ambulance Service, Inc.
 25 Main Street
 Weymouth, MA 02188