

Confidentiality of Information

Supersedes: 03-16-98
Effective: 07-11-99

1. The Enhanced 9-1-1 system gives Dispatch Operations personnel access to caller information, both listed and unlisted. This information is entrusted for use solely to assist public safety agencies with emergencies. Appropriate use and confidentiality of this information must be ensured at all times.
 - 1.1. All Computer Aided Dispatch printouts, Enhanced 9-1-1 Call Detail records, Department telephone lists, telephone messages, incident reports or any other documents containing confidential or personal information that are no longer needed should be torn up or shredded before disposal.
2. Personnel assigned to the Dispatch Operations Center shall not divulge the contents of any message which has been directed to an individual through the EMS Dispatch Operations Center. Should a question arise concerning the confidentiality or routing of any message, it shall be referred to the Dispatch Operations Center Supervisor.
3. It is assumed that personnel will take appropriate Body Substance Isolation precautions when responding to emergency medical incidents making the transmission of a person's confidential HIV / AIDS status over an unsecured dispatch or tactical channel unnecessary.
 - 3.1. If a caller divulges that a patient is known (or suspected) to be HIV+ or has AIDS, the Boston EMS Telecommunicator shall suggest the caller report that information to the emergency personnel upon their arrival.
 - 3.2. Boston EMS Telecommunicators shall not enter a patient's known or suspected HIV / AIDS status into the incident text when processing a call for service.
 - 3.3. Boston EMS Telecommunicators shall not divulge, either directly or indirectly by using "code words", a patient's known or suspected HIV / AIDS status to responding personnel.
4. Non-department personnel who have been authorized to spend time in the Dispatch Operations Center for the purpose of observation are to sign a waiver stating that they have been informed of the Department's Confidentiality policy prior to being allowed to monitor any E 9-1-1 conversations.

See related SOP "Observer Waiver Form"; Protection of Confidential Health Information