

policies, training, and scope of practice as recognized by HFD.

- F. Each occurrence of communication failure will be considered a breakdown in system operations and will be reviewed to determine if the occurrence was due to equipment failure or member non-compliance with department policy, procedure or guidelines.

6.04 Confidential Patient Information

- A. It is the responsibility of all HFD personnel, particularly those members who have direct contact with patient information, to ensure that patient information is kept confidential. Texas law prohibits the disclosure of any patient information to unauthorized individuals or entities.
- B. Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 773, Emergency Medical Services, Subchapter D. Confidential Communications (773.091): Records of the identity, evaluation, or treatment of a patient by EMS personnel or by a physician providing medical supervision that are created by EMS personnel or physician or maintained by an EMS provider are confidential and privileged and may not be disclosed with the following exceptions:
 1. Medical or law enforcement personnel, EMS personnel, the physician providing medical supervision, or EMS provider determines that there is a probability of imminent physical danger to any person or if there is a probability of immediate or emotional injury to the patient;
 2. Governmental agencies if the disclosure is required or authorized by law;
 3. Qualified persons to the extent necessary for management audits, financial audits, program evaluations, system improvements, or research, except that any report of the research, audit, or evaluation may not directly or indirectly identify a patient;
 4. Any person who bears a written consent of the patient or other persons authorized to act on the patient's behalf for the release of confidential information as provided by Section 773.093;
 5. The department for data collection or complaint investigation;
 6. Other EMS personnel, other physicians, and other personnel under the direction of a physician who are participating in the diagnosis, evaluation, or treatment of the patient;
 7. Individuals, corporations and/or governmental agencies involved in the payment or collection of fees for emergency medical services rendered by EMS personnel.
- C. Any other request for patient information shall be directed to the HFD Records Section. They are the official custodians of records for HFD.

6.05 Controlled Substances Accountability

- A. In order to carry and administer controlled substances (i.e. narcotics), members are required to comply with the Federal Government's daily accountability regulations for Schedule II drugs.
- B. At the beginning of each shift, the Controlled Substances Accountability Form shall be completed according to the current Controlled Substances Accountability Guideline.
- C. When there is a change in the in-charge paramedic, the Controlled Substances Accountability Form shall be completed according to the current Controlled Substances Accountability Guideline.

6.06 Documentation

- A. Documentation provides a record of what you did or did not do while additionally serving as a Medical Record and a Legal Document.
- B. Each unit involved in direct patient care shall complete the appropriate record. For quality assurance and other purposes, other EMS professionals, physicians, nurses, insurance companies, Medicare/Medicaid personnel and the legal community frequently examine these records. They are also used in court cases, grand rounds at the hospitals and reviewed by the Texas Department of State Health Services and the local media.
- C. When EMS responds to a request for service and finds individuals not meeting the definition of a patient (*Ref. Def. 3.28*), the record should be appropriately coded.