



Waterford Ambulance Service Standard Operating Guideline

Effective	March 18, 2018			
Scope:	All WAS Staff			
From:	Steven D Garvin, President WAS			
Subject:	Social Media Policy			
SOG:	Administrative	2014	005	2
	Type	Year	Number	Revision

Purpose:

To establish guidelines, expectations and basic parameters on the transmission of Waterford Ambulance Service (WAS) related information over social media. These guidelines are intended to establish expectations WAS members to conduct, while representing the Service, and are not intended to meet every possible scenario or situation.

It shall be the policy of the WAS that the President shall establish guidelines and policies for the use of social media as it pertains to the release of service information such as; emergency and service incidents/calls, personnel information, medical information governed by HIPPA, and civilian request for information.

Requirements:

The primary purpose of this policy to insure adherence to HIPPA regulations and Public Act No. 11-47, "An act concerning the unauthorized taking or transmission by first responders of images of crime or accident victims", a.k.a Joshua's Law.

Secondary purposes are to assure the informational integrity of the organization and to protect personnel from unauthorized release of questionable evaluative judgmental data.



Waterford Ambulance Service Standard Operating Guideline

Definitions:

1. **Social Media**, is defined as any electronic messaging or information sharing service such as, but not limited to; Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, AOL & Yahoo Chats, Electronic Blogs, YouTube, Periscope, and Electronic Bulletin Boards.
2. **Incident Information**, is defined as, but not limited to, pictures, oral or written statements, emails, reports, ESO data, etc.
3. **Protected Health Information, (PIO)**, any information about health status, provision of health care, or payment for health care that is created or collected by a Covered Entity and can be linked to a specific individual.

Instructions:

1. The WAS President shall designate one or more Social Media Site or Web Sites for use by the WAS.
2. Only a WAS Board Member or their designated PIO is authorized to release incident information as it pertains to a specific incident that WAS responded to or operated at.
3. It is acceptable to post discussions about the nature of a call without releasing specific details which a reasonable individual may be able to identify the patient being treated. The purposeful exchange of information such as training information and/or discussions about non-specific strategy or tactics, equipment usage, and related events is allowed and encouraged amongst authorized WAS members, so long as informational security and prudent professional guidelines are adhered to, and such information is aimed to the benefit of the individuals or the WAS.
 - a. At no point shall Personnel Health Information (PHI) be posted on any social media.
 - b. At no point during an EMS Incident or Move up shall a WAS employee post any social media content, unless approved by the President.
 - c. At a Standby assignment, is it acceptable to post that a EMT is on standby and give information about the assignment such as; Speedbowl, Football Games, Road Races, etc.



Waterford Ambulance Service Standard Operating Guideline

4. The use of WAS computer(s), network, or wireless internet connections is at the discretion of the President. Such equipment and services are provided for department use and the President and Board of Directors expect that members exercise good judgment and maturity when using WAS equipment and services.
5. No Employee of WAS shall take or post any photo, video or audio file during the time for which they are serving in the EMS role, (ambulance crew). Pictures taken for the benefit to explain/show the Mechanism of Injury to an Emergency Room physician or staff is not approved or requested by our local sponsor hospital.
6. At no time shall any photo, video or audio recording device be installed or used within a WAS ambulance. Items such as a “GoPro” or similar device, not limited to a smart phone or action camera be in use by the ambulance crew to include any non-crew responders or patient family members.
7. Should a questionable act occur that violates basic tenets of this policy, town policy, CT statute or regulation, information pertaining to the incident shall be reviewed for immediate remediation by one or more Board Members for initial actions and may be subject to further review the entire Board of Directors at their next meeting.
8. It is the responsibility of all WAS members to conduct themselves within reasonably broad professional parameters. Postings that are derogatory or appear to be a personal attack on another person are not appropriate.
9. Any social media posting in conflict with this policy may result in disciplinary actions as detailed in the WAS Progressive Discipline & Corrective Action Policy. **Because of the sensitivity, confidentiality and public trust delegated to our service, and with our access to patient health information, violations of this policy can result in higher levels of discipline up to and including immediate suspension or termination for first time offenses.**

Steven D. Garvin

President, Waterford Ambulance Service