



## **Privacy Notice: 999 Calls and Emergency Incidents**

At South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) we are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy. This privacy notice is designed to help you understand how and why your information is processed during an emergency call and response.

SYFR is a registered Data Controller with the Information Commissioner and you are welcome to contact our Data Protection Officer by emailing [dataprotection@syfire.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@syfire.gov.uk), by calling 0114 2532456 or by writing to Data Protection Officer, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, 197 Eyre Street, Sheffield, S1 3FG

### **Who our department is and what we do:**

Our 999 call handlers are here to take your emergency calls to assist with our duty to protect and preserve life and deal with incidents that cause or are likely to cause harm to the environment.

### **What type of information we collect from you:**

The personal information we are likely to collect during a 999 call or at an incident;

- Caller's name and telephone number where required;
- We may need to know a caller's name and address. This can be used as a guide to where the incident has been seen from and to enable the crew to locate the original caller if there are any difficulties locating the incident.
- We would also ask a caller's name if they were the one trapped by fire or involved in another incident;
- The address of the incident, which may be the address of your property;
- Injured parties name, injuries, and details of any medical support given, age, ethnicity and gender.
- What is on fire, or what other emergency you have, to enable us to decide what our response will be, for example, how many fire engines we will send

We can then gather other valuable information from the caller which will be passed on to the operational crew while they are en-route to the incident. This further information may include things such as do you know if anybody is trapped and their whereabouts? Whether there are hazards such as an oil tank or gas cylinders near the fire or incident? How many vehicles are involved in the collision?

All calls that are made in and out of our control room are recorded, including 999 calls. This will therefore capture all information discussed as identified above.

Calls are recorded so that they can be played back if clarification is needed and are sometimes used as evidence in court cases. No warning is given that the calls are recorded at the time of making the call as this would obviously cause delay in an emergency situation. We believe it will not adversely affect you and we think you would expect it

When you call 999 it is vital that your number is recorded by fire control, so that we can contact you again, if we need further information from you during the incident or for the purposes of fire investigation.

Even if you have barred the 'calling line identity' facility, your telephone number will be displayed to the telephone exchange operator. This is a safety feature to enable us to ascertain an approximate location of the emergency.

### **Our legal basis for processing your information**

Processing this information is necessary for compliance with our legal obligations which are:

UK GDPR Article 6(1)(c) Legal Obligation. Under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) have a statutory duty to extinguish fires and protect life and property in the event of fires and road traffic collisions. We also have a responsibility, where necessary, to attend emergencies other than fires and road traffic collisions. It is a legal obligation for us to make arrangements for dealing with emergency calls for help and summoning personnel.

UK GDPR Article 6(1)(d) processing information is necessary in order to protect the vital interests of a person/s.

UK GDPR Article 6(1)(e) processing information is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in SYFR

### **Why do we need your personal information?**

In order to make arrangements to respond to an incident we are required to obtain certain information. When you call 999 we collect and use your details and information regarding the incident to assist with our duty to protect and preserve life and deal with incidents that cause or are likely to cause harm to the environment.

We also have powers to investigate causes of fires, and any information gathered during the emergency call could be used during the investigation.

During a response to an incident, information may be passed to partner agencies who are also in response, such as another emergency service. We may collect medical information to support the ambulance service in providing care to you, in order to protect your vital interests.

If we reasonably believe a fire is about or has broken out, we can enter the building, by force if necessary, without the consent of the owner for the purpose of extinguishing or preventing the fire or protecting life or property.

After the incident, certain information is entered into an Incident Recording System (IRS). The information is recorded against an incident number not an individual's name.

The information gathered is used to manage our performance, inform our Integrated Risk Management Plan which is a requirement of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, and report to Government and auditors (i.e. HMICFRS).

### **How we will collect your personal information:**

The 999 call is directed to SYFR control room, and the caller is asked numerous questions regarding the incident throughout the entirety of the conversation which will include whilst operational crew are en-route to the incident.

## **Who will have access to your information?**

The information gathered during the incident is stored on the Control mobilising system(s), with access restricted to those SYFR personnel who need it to perform their role.

## **Why we may need to share your information:**

There may be occasions where it is identified that a multi-agency response is required, and relevant details about the incident may be disclosed to other parties to enable their emergency response such as police or the ambulance service.

Information regarding the incident is shared with SYFR operational crews to help assist with deployment and their response. Verbal and electronic messages will continuously be relayed between operational crews and control to ensure an effective response to the incident is provided.

In regards to the information within the Incident Recording System (IRS), this is accessed by those within SYFR who have a role requirement to access the system and also the Home Office. For more information about the Home Office please click [here](#). The Home Office Privacy Notice can be viewed [here](#).

We will not pass on your information to third parties without first obtaining your consent, unless the law and/or our policies allow us to do so for example, in the following circumstances:

- The law states that we can
- There is a risk of serious harm or threat to life
- We are directed by a court of law

There may be occasions whereby the information we have gathered regarding an incident, including our response, is disclosed to other agencies. For example, the police may be investigating the cause of an incident and they require certain information for the prevention and detection of crime or apprehension of an offender, this could include the details of the caller. In relation to hoax or malicious callers, information may be used to request the disconnection of telephone lines.

The Health and Safety Executive may be investigating an incident and require the information. In the unfortunate circumstances of a fatality, the Coroner will request that we disclose certain information for them to take into consideration during a Coroner's inquest.

We do get requests for copies of the incident reports and fire investigation reports, and these are disclosed to coroners, insurance companies and loss adjusters who are acting on behalf of the owner/occupier of an affected property or vehicle. Necessary identification will be requested to ensure information is not disclosed inappropriately.

We may also use general incident information (anonymised, depersonalised) to support community safety messages, and for research and statistical purposes.

## **How long will your information be kept?**

We will collect, process and retain your information in accordance with data protection legislation and our policies on data retention – this varies according to statutory requirements and other legitimate business reasons.

How long we retain this information depends on the purpose it was collected for. We keep:

- Call recordings for current year plus 3 years;
- Incident data for current year plus 12 years;
- The Home Office will retain incident data for 70 years, allowing them to publish statistics. This data is also shared between other Government departments and for academic research.

Information about fire investigation is included within that specific privacy notice linked above

## **What will happen if you fail to provide the information?**

If we did not collect and use this information, we would not be able to effectively provide an emergency response.

## **How to access and control your personal information**

SYFR have a Data Protection framework in place to ensure the effective and secure processing of your information. For details on how we maintain the security of this and your rights to access the information we hold about you, please refer to our website at [www.syfire.gov.uk](http://www.syfire.gov.uk).

You can find out more about your personal data rights at the Information Commissioners Office Website, or contact them on 0303 123 1113 or by post at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.