

CLIENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **You have the right to keep your information private**

Q. *What does "confidentiality" mean?*

A. Your therapist and other staff cannot talk about your treatment, share your records, or give out any information about you to people outside of CHR unless you say it's okay. Sometimes, your therapist or service provider may talk about your case with a supervisor or in a team meeting at CHR to get advice or help. In these situations, your information is still kept private and only shared with staff who need to know to help you.

Q. *Who has the right to know I'm receiving treatment here?*

A. No one, unless you give written permission. However, there are several exceptions to confidentiality. They include:

- A. If you are in crisis that puts you or others in danger, staff may need to share information with the police, emergency room staff, your family, or others to help keep everyone safe. For example:
 - If you say you took an overdose, staff will call the police and ambulance to help you.
 - If you threaten to harm someone, staff will tell the police and warn that person.
- B. Information your insurance company needs to process your claim.
- C. Information about you may be shared with a hospital or treatment center if you are being sent there. This helps make sure you get the right medicine and that staff know about your allergies and medical issues. Staff must report child and elder abuse. If you tell us about abuse or neglect of a child in your session, staff have to inform the right authorities, such as the Department of Children and Families.
- B. Periodically our records are audited by state and federal agencies, insurance carriers and outside accreditation organizations. At those times a small number of charts are reviewed.
- C. If applicable, and depending on the services you are receiving, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) or Department of Children and Families (DCF) may access your information pursuant to state law.

Q. *What would be the reason to report suspected abuse or neglect to DCF?*

A. We must report any suspected child abuse or neglect to DCF. The law says we do not decide if the abuse or neglect really happened—we must report it no matter what. For example, if a child has a bruise and says a parent caused it, we have to tell DCF, even if we are not sure the story is true.

2. **The right to refuse to be a research subject**

Q. *Can I be included in a study without my knowledge?*

A. No. You would need to sign a specific consent before joining any research project. The form will explain the study and how it may help or harm you.

3. **The right to privacy**

Privacy means different things in different treatment settings.

- In outpatient care, it means that you have a right to a private place to discuss your treatment where others cannot hear.
- In residential settings, it means having a private place to dress, privacy for phone conversations, and a separate space to keep your personal belongings.

Q. Do children have a right to privacy in treatment?

A. Yes, children have some privacy when they get treatment. Even though parents usually have the right to see their child's records, we expect that some things children share with their therapist will stay private. Therapists will tell parents about serious risks, like self-harm or violence, but usually will not share minor problems unless the child wants help talking to their parent.

In Connecticut, there are two special cases where children have extra privacy:

- If a child gets mental health treatment on their own and meets certain rules, parents may not be told right away.
- If a child gets help for substance abuse, parents can only be told if the child says it's okay.

4. The right to respect and dignity

You have the right to be treated with respect and to be safe from abuse or threats. This also includes being listened to and having input in your treatment with us.

Q. Is there a standard for CHR employees that addresses how clients are treated?

A. All staff must follow the CHR's Code of Conduct, and any ethical standards outlined by their profession, as well as by the agency.

5. The right to see one's medical record

Q. Can I see my medical record any time I want?

A. You can ask to see your record at any time. Your provider will review it with you. You may request copies of your medical record at any time.

6. The right to see my child's medical records

Q. Can I see my child's medical record any time I want?

A. Parents can usually see their child's records, except in special cases, such as when the law protects the child's privacy.

- **WHEN A MINOR CONSENTS TO CARE:** If the parent's consent is not required by State or other applicable law, the parent cannot access the record without the minor's consent. In Connecticut, that is when children seek outpatient mental health treatment and certain conditions exist, as discussed in Section 3 above, or when they seek substance abuse treatment.
- **WHEN MINORS OBTAIN CARE AT THE DIRECTION OF A COURT:** When the parent agrees that the child and healthcare provider may have a confidential relationship.
- **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS:** May have the right to access their minor child's record unless a court orders they cannot access the records for good cause.
- **PARENTAL RIGHTS TERMINATED:** A court may terminate a parent's right to access their child's record.
- **SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE:** There are exceptions to protect the child's confidentiality if there is suspected child abuse.

7. You have the right to help plan your treatment and to have everything explained to you.

- When you first meet your therapist or service provider, they will ask questions to learn about you and your needs.
- You and your provider will talk about different treatment options, and your provider will explain them.
- If you and your provider can't agree on a plan, you can ask to see someone else or get a referral.
- You can choose if you want your family or loved ones involved in your treatment.

Q. *What is Informed Consent?*

A. Informed consent means your provider needs to tell you the risks and benefits of any treatment before you decide to try it, for you or your child (unless the law says consent is not needed).

- If you get medication, your provider should tell you what it's for and any possible side effects.
- If you don't get this information, please let us know.
- The more you know about your treatment, the better you can make decisions.

8. The right to refuse treatment

You have the right to participate in your treatment planning and have treatment options fully explained. You can say no to any treatment. If you do, we will explain the risks and other options

9. The right to needed treatment

You can choose your care, except in emergencies or if a judge decides you cannot. If you do not want certain treatments, you have the right to tell your provider you do not want them and have your requests followed.

Q. *What if the provider won't give me a particular medication, even though it helped me in the past?*

A. You have the right to get the treatment you need. If you have questions about your treatment, talk to your provider or therapist so you understand their reasons. Sometimes, there may be reasons why they cannot give you a certain medicine.

10. Freedom from sexual harassment or abuse

Q. *What do I do if another client or staff makes sexual comments that make me feel uncomfortable?*

A. Ask the person to stop. They might not be aware that their comments are offensive. If you feel unsafe talking to them, speak to a staff person or client rights officer. The agency has a clear policy regarding sexual harassment that is posted in each site. Get help if you are feeling threatened by unwanted comments or advances.

Q. *What is sexual harassment?*

A. Sexual harassment means any unwanted words or actions about sex or gender that make someone feel uncomfortable, scared, or upset. This can include things like:

- Making sexual jokes or comments.
- Touching someone in a way they don't want.
- Asking for sexual favors.
- Making someone feel unsafe or embarrassed because of their sex or gender.

11. Clients are entitled to culturally competent treatment

We respect your culture and provide care that meets your needs. You have the right to have care that is considerate and respectful.

12. The right to examine the agency's policies and procedures

Each program has specific policies in addition to those of the agency. You can ask to see our rules and policies at any time.

13. The right to a healthcare proxy

Q. *What is a healthcare proxy?*

A. A healthcare proxy is a way to make sure your medical wishes are respected, even if you can't communicate them yourself. You can choose someone to make healthcare decisions for you if you cannot. This helps you to:

- Make your treatment wishes known in advance.
 - A proxy outlines treatments you do or do not want.
- A lawyer can help you fill one out so your wishes can be followed.

14. The right to be informed of the training and credentials of your assigned staff person

Q. *How do I know if the staff person I am assigned to is qualified?*

A. You can ask about your provider's training and qualifications, and we will share them with you.

15. The right to file a formal grievance without fear of punishment, harm, hospitalization or other penalties

Q. *What will happen to me if I file a grievance against a staff member?*

A. If you have a concern, a consumer rights advocate is available to help you file a grievance.

- You may submit a complaint without fear of punishment or retaliation.
- We will provide a written response within 30 days.
- If you are not satisfied with our response, you have the right to appeal.
- Filing a grievance will not result in loss of services, hospitalization, or any harm to you.
- This process exists to protect your rights

16. The right to file a complaint

Q. How can I report concerns about safety, quality of care or potential adverse events or concern about my services outside of CHR?

A. Our goal is always to report your concerns to us so we can help you resolve them. You may at any time make a complaint to any of the following:

Where to Report Your Concerns	How to File a Complaint	Contact Information
CHR	Report your concerns directly to us for help and resolution.	Clients Rights Officers for your area, posted in public areas in our locations and on our website
Joint Commission	If you prefer, you may report safety or quality concerns to the Joint Commission.	Online: www.jointcommission.org/GeneralPublic/Complaint Email: complaint@jointcommission.org Fax: (630) 792-5636 Mail: Office of Quality Monitoring, The Joint Commission, One Renaissance Blvd., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181
Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)	You may also file a complaint directly with DMHAS using their form or by contacting them.	Phone: 1-800-446-7348 (#6933) or 860-418-6933 TTY: 888-621-3551 Mail: Office of the Commissioner, 410 Capitol Avenue, 4th Floor, PO Box 341431, Hartford, CT 06134 Client Rights Officers List: http://www.ct.gov/dmhas
Department of Children and Families (DCF)	You may also file a complaint directly with DCF by contacting the Office of Community Relations	Phone: 860-550-6301 or 1-866-637-4737 Email: Commissioner.dcf@ct.gov Mailing Address: Office of Community Relations, 505 Hudson Street, Hartford, CT 06106

OTHER RIGHTS OF PEOPLE IN ADULT RESIDENTIAL AND SUPPORTED HOUSING PROGRAMS

1. ***Q. Do I lose my right to vote because I have been hospitalized or am in a residential program?***
A. No. You have the same right as anyone else to vote. Advocates can help you register to vote. Exercise your right and actively participate. Make your vote count.
2. ***Q. Can I get mail at a residence?***
A. You don't lose the right to send or receive mail just because you're in treatment. No one can open your mail without permission and you can send mail to anyone at anytime.
3. ***Q. Can I get phone calls?***
A. You can make and receive phone calls.
4. ***Q. Can I have visitors?***
A. You can have visitors during visiting hours, and if you and staff feel that the visitor will not be harmful to you.
5. ***Q. Can I keep I keep seeing my regular medical doctor?***
A. Yes. If you don't have a doctor, staff will help you find one. Staff will also work with you to make sure you get good dental care. They will help you find a dentist if you don't have one.
6. ***Q. Can I still have sex?***
A. It's important to talk with staff or someone you trust if you're thinking about being sexually active. Sexuality is an important part of human existence. However, it's important to stay safe. Staff can connect you with a nurse or other educator to address issues of birth control, how to stay out of abusive relationships and how to protect you and your partner from sexually transmitted diseases.

Since each person in a residential program is in a different part of their own recovery, having sexual relationships with other residents in the program is not allowed. To protect each resident in the program, it is also not allowed for any sexual relationship to occur between CHR staff and residents.

7. ***Q. Do I have to take medication to be in a program?***
A. No. You have a right to refuse any treatment, but work with your doctor and therapist so you can make an informed decision. Not taking medication might make your symptoms worse, leading to decompensation.
8. ***Q. Can I participate in religious or spiritual activities and have access to the special foods I need to comply with my religious beliefs and practices?***
A. Being in a residence should not interfere with your religious/cultural beliefs and practices. Talk to staff so they can make any necessary accommodations to assist you in pursuing your religious practices.
9. ***Q. Do I have access to my money?***
A. You have total access to your money unless a court has assigned you a conservator of the estate or Social Security has assigned you a Representative Payee due to drug use, disorientation, or using your money in a way that has hurt you. In each of these cases, staff should be working with you on obstacles to you holding your own money. Steps to financial independence should be outlined in your treatment plan.



CLIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

We rely on mutual respect and cooperation to deliver the best care. Just as we have responsibilities to you, our client, you have responsibilities in your care with us

Treat Staff and Other Clients with Respect

Speak courteously and avoid abusive, threatening, or disrespectful language or behavior toward staff and other clients. Verbal or physical threats, assaults, or harassment in any form will not be tolerated.

Follow CHR's Rules and Policies

Abide by posted rules, including those about safety, privacy, and conduct (e.g., no smoking in CHR locations). Weapons of any kind are strictly prohibited.

Participate Actively in Care

Engage in treatment planning, attend scheduled appointments, and communicate openly about needs and concerns.

Provide Timely Notification

Notify staff promptly if you need to cancel or reschedule appointments (typically with 24-hour notice).

Respect CHR's Property

Treat facility property and resources with care and respect.

Resolve Conflicts Proactively and Kindly

Address disagreements or concerns using non-aggressive, nonviolent means.

Make a Good Faith Effort to Pay for Services

Pay for services at the time of care or communicate with staff about financial concerns or assistance.

Collaborate with the Treatment Team

Work together with providers and follow agreed-upon treatment plans.

Maximize Healthy Habits

Take steps to support your own health and well-being, as recommended by your care team

Failure to comply with client responsibilities may result in involuntary discharge from services.