



Clinical Assistance Center  
**Rebuilding** Futures. **Reshaping** Lives.

# Client Rights

## A Handbook for Consumers and Their Families

Provided by: Rising Hope Clinical Assistance, LLC  
510 Northgate Park Drive  
Winston Salem, NC 27106



## Client Rights

As a client you have rights.

Because you have many decisions to make, understanding your rights will you get the best possible care. Knowing your rights can help you:

- Make better decisions about your care.
- Resolve any problems that may occur.

Also, you always have the right to ask questions and get the information you need to make the best decision for you.

- **To Ask Questions and Get Answers!**
- **To Be Informed!**
- **To Choose Your Provider!**
- **To Make Decisions About Medication!**
- **To Understand Cost of Care!**
- **To Make Decisions About Housing!**
- **To Have an Advocate!**
- **To Receive Care from Qualified Providers!**
- **To Understand Cost of Care!**
- **To Own Property!**
- **To Be Treated with Dignity and Respect!**
- **To Assist with Making Plans About Your Treatment!**
- **To View Your Medical Records to Privacy!**
- **To Vote!**



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## You have the right to be treated with respect.

It's your right to:

### Be informed of your rights.

By law, we must inform you of all of your rights within the first three visits to our program (or within the first 72 hours if you're in a 24-hour facility). You also have the right to:

- Ask that printed information explaining your rights be given to you in a way that you can understand.
- Know what to do and who to call if you believe someone is trying to take away your rights. See Page 10 of this booklet for the names and telephone numbers of organizations you can call for help.



Know what is expected of you.

We must inform you about any rules you need to follow. This information should be shared with you when you begin receiving services. If this does not happen, ask someone you trust to help you get this information.

Get the best services possible.

You should receive the best care possible from professional who care about you needs.

Always be treated with respect.

Employees should be courteous, attentive and sensitive to your needs and values.



## You have the right to have information about you kept confidential



Medical records, treatment plans and any other information about (including what you say or share) must be kept private.

To be given this information, anyone not directly involved in your care, including family members, must first have your permission.

**By law, there are some situations when information about you may be shared without your permission including:**

If we transfer your care to any other county mental health program or state facility.

If you are in prison and your record needs to share with prison officials to continue your treatment.

If you have an emergency, we may need to share information with another professional who is treating you.

If a physician or professional who referred, you to our program needs information.

If you are in danger to yourself or others, or if we believe that you will commit a serious legal offense or become violent.

In emergency situations to make sure you receive needed medical care

When it is your best interest and it will not be harmful to you, your closest relative or guardian may be informed that you are a client

If you are under 18 years old, your parent or guardian may be informed that you are a client.

When a client advocate who is helping you needs to review your record.

When we are ordered by the court to release your record

If our attorney needs to see your file because of a lawsuit or other legal action.

If you have been committed to an institution and we need to share information about you in order to manage your care.

If we suspect abuse or neglect.



## You have the right to live as freely as possible.

It's your right to:

### Live in the best environment for you,

You have the right to live and receive services in area that is safe, comfortable and suitable to your special needs. This may include receiving assistance such as a wheelchair ramp or reserved parking space for handicapped individuals,

### Live as independent as possible.

Our responsibility is to help you achieve greater independence. For example, that may mean helping you to learn how to cook, find a job or obtain your own apartment, depending on your needs and interests.



## You have the right to informed consent

“Informed consent” means having all of the information you need before you make a decision about your care.

Except during an emergency, informed consent is always your right. Before you give your approval for any service or treatment, be sure you have all of the information you need to make the decision to accept treatment or services.

### Your service plan.

It's your right to be involved in developing and reviewing your service plan. This plan must be in use no later than 30 days after your services start.

### Your choices.

Before you agree to your plan, you must be informed of the advantages and risks of the services you will receive. You must also be informed about all of the different kinds of services that are available to you in your community as well as the qualified providers in your area.





## Client Rights

*It's your right to:*

### Understand your medication.

You have the right to know the possible side effects of medication and to be free from unnecessary medication. Medication cannot be used as a punishment or for the convenience of staff

### Accept or refuse services.

By law, you can accept or refuse any procedure, medication, test or treatment. The only times you can be treated without your permission are during an emergency, when it is court-ordered, or if you are under 18 years old and your parent or guardian has given permission.

### Exercise your rights as citizen.

As a citizen, you have many rights. These include buying or selling property, signing a contract, registering to vote and voting, and marrying or getting a divorce. Unless you have been declared incompetent by the court, you will always have these rights.

### Keep in touch with family and friends.

You can spend time with your friends or anyone you choose as long as they are willing.

### Say how you want to be cared for when you are unable to make decisions for yourself with a form called an advance directive.

You have the right to prepare a written plan for your health care, known as an advance directive, that says how you want to be cared for if you ever become unable to decide or speak for yourself.

Your plan may also include a "health-care proxy." This lets you name another person to make decisions about your care if you become unable to do so.

For help in preparing these plans, we recommend that you speak with someone you trust. For example, this person can be a staff member, family member or a minister. You can also contact the agencies listed on Page 10 for assistance.

## Client Rights



## You also have other rights.

As permitted by law, it's your right to:

### Review your medical records

In general, you have the right to review information in your medical records, which includes your service plan. The only time you cannot see your records is if more than one professional determines that it would be harmful for you or someone else.

### See a medical doctor, nurse, dentist or other health care provider.

If you are sick or need medical help, you have the right to receive medical treatment.

#### **Be aware of when seclusion and restraints are allowed.**

These should be used only as a last resort. They may be used in a medical emergency or in situations where a client is in danger of hurting himself or herself or others, or of damaging property.

Seclusion and restraints must NOT be used as a punishment or for the convenience of staff. You should be informed about any interventions or restrictions that may be used where you receive

#### **Know the costs of services.**

Fees for services should be discussed with you at your first visit. You should also receive the brochure "Clients Fees: Questions and Answers," which explains how fees are charged and what you can expect to pay.

#### **Take part in discharge planning.**

A discharged plan provides recommendation for your care after you complete your treatment with a provider. Be sure to discuss what your needs are with a staff person before leaving the agency.

#### **Contact a private professional at your own expense.**

You have the right to contact professionals outside of any agency that you are currently receiving services from, such as your lawyer, at your own expense.

#### **Be accepted for treatment.**

Your services cannot be denied, interrupted or reduced without good cause.

If you are a Medicaid client (or if you are eligible to be one) and your treatment is denied, interrupted, reduced or stopped, you can appeal the decision by following instructions given to you when you are notified of the change in services.



## You have the right to express your concerns

*If you feel someone is taking away your right or if you are dissatisfied with services, we urge you to take the following steps:*

1. First, talk to your assigned staff person. Most concern can be resolved by discussing them with staff and staff supervisor.
2. If you choose not to talk directly to your assigned staff person, ask the receptionist about how to contact his or her supervisor.
3. If this is not helpful, contact the Service Manager or Coordinator.
4. If this does not resolve your concerns, the Manager or Coordinator will send a report to the Client Rights Coordinator. If necessary, the Clients Committee, made up of citizen volunteers, will help reach a fair solution.
5. At any time, you may request outside assistance by calling any advocacy organization you choose.
6. If your concern involves physical or sexual abuse, you should call the local Sheriff's Department or Social Services.



## **WITH RIGHTS, COMES RESPONSIBILITY.**

### **You have the responsibility to:**

- Provide complete information about the reason for services, including past illnesses, hospitalizations, all medicines, and other matters relating to your health.
- Ask questions about any part of your care that you do not understand.
- Follow hospital rules affecting patient care and conduct.
- Be considerate of the rights of other patients, visitors, and staff. Guardians and visitors should also be considerate of others and conduct themselves appropriately.
- Not smoke or use tobacco products anywhere on the property.
- Pay attention to the care you are receiving and make sure you are getting the right care and medications by the right staff member.
- Educate yourself about your condition and care. Ask someone to be your advocate.
- Not bring medications to the program, unless needed during the time you are in service. We cannot accept responsibility for them.
- If you have an Advanced Directive, provide the agency with a current copy.

To file a complaint while you are in the program, you can speak with any representative. The person will take your information, and document it in our Complaint Management System. Your complaint will be shared with a manager. If you would rather file your complaint after you are discharged, call 336.276.2076 and leave a message. A representative will call you back and gather your information.



## Contact an advocate, if desired.

Advocates can help to protect your rights and resolve conflicts. Listed below are a few of organizations you can call to get in touch with an advocate.

### Rising Hope Clinical Assistance, LLC.

CORPORATE OFFICE:  
510 Northgate Park Drive  
Winston-Salem, NC 27106  
PHONE: (336) 276-2076  
FAX: (336) 293-8843

**National Alliance on Mentally Ill (NAMI) –North Carolina**  
(919) 788-0801

**Cardinal Innovations Crisis & Access Line:**  
**1-800-939-5911**

Clients Rights Handbook  
Revised February 2019  
**Rising Hope Clinical Assistance**



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**Concern/Complaint Form**

RHCA is committed to the protection of clients’ rights and to the provision of quality services. RHCA is responsible for receiving and responding to complaints concerning rights violations or the provision of public Mental Health, Developmental Disability, and Substance Abuse Services by our agency. Complaints are viewed as vital information for continuous quality improvement of our services.

If you have a concern or complaint about a client’s rights violation or the provision of public services by our agency, please complete this form and send it to the following: Rising Hope Clinical Assistance, Attention: Chief Operations Officer, 510 Northgate Park Drive, Winston-Salem, NC 27106. You can also call in your complaint at (336) 276-2076 or fax it to us at (336) 293-8843.

<b>Name of Person Providing Service:</b>	<b>Your Name:</b>
<b>Service That You Are/Were Receiving:</b>	<b>What is your phone number?</b>
<b>Are you the client?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> No, I am a service provider for the client. <input type="checkbox"/> No, I am the client’s legal guardian. <input type="checkbox"/> I am no relation to the client.	

Concern/Complaint in your own words – (use back of form if more space is needed):

Who have you talked to about your concerns?

What was the result?

What would you suggest to resolve your concern/complaint?

Today’s Date \_\_\_\_\_ Complainant’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_