



## MECKLENBURG COUNTY

### Community Support Services

POLICY TITLE: Client Rights	POLICY # CR-01
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#### **Policy Statement:**

Community Support Services (CSS) is committed to treating Clients with dignity and respect, and to serve all individuals who are eligible for services without regard to any non-merit factor. CSS does not tolerate discrimination by its employees or contractors when they are serving individuals. In addition to the specific rights and protections outlined in NC GS 122C, Article III, CSS Clients have the rights and responsibilities outlined below.

#### **Position or Groups Affected:**

This policy applies to all Substance Use staff and Substance Use Clients of CSS.

#### **Procedure:**

1. Each SU Client (except those who are incarcerated) or his or her family member or guardian will be issued an English or Spanish version of the Client Rights Handbook at the point of admission into CSS. Clients remaining in services longer than a year will receive a handbook annually thereafter.
2. Clients who are incarcerated must comply with Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office Policies and Procedures. Jail Central inmates will receive a handbook from the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office depicting information regarding their rights, and how to access the Jail Central Substance Abuse Treatment Program. In addition to this handbook, Jail Central Substance Abuse Treatment Program will provide to individuals participating in their program a Client Rights brochure which is in compliance with Jail Central Policies.
3. Market analyses of populations served will determine if the handbook will be translated and made available in additional language versions.
4. The employee orienting the Client and the Client will sign the "Your Rights" Form for Clients Receiving the CSS Client Rights Handbook. The form is completed when the handbook is initially distributed and when it is annually distributed as in #1 above. The employee will document completion of this activity by making a copy of the signature page and placing it in the Client's medical record.
5. The employee providing the handbook will explain to the Client, family, or guardian the importance of keeping the handbook as it contains important information on Client rights, responsibilities, the complaint and grievance process, how to access the Client representative, and how to contact various advocacy groups.

#### **Rights:**

Clients have the right to:

1. Be treated with dignity and respect in the least restrictive safe environment.
2. Have their privacy respected and confidential information protected.

3. Have a candid discussion of appropriate treatment options regardless of cost or benefit coverage.
4. Have the right to treatment, including access to medical care and habilitation, regardless of age or degree of MH/DD/SA disability.
5. Collaborate with the practitioner in planning and deciding on a treatment course.
6. Voice complaints or appeals about policies or services provided.
7. Make suggestions regarding policies on Client rights and responsibilities.
8. Freedom from:
  - a. Sexual, Physical or Psychological Abuse.
  - b. Financial or other exploitation.
  - c. Retaliation.
  - d. Humiliation.
  - e. Neglect.

**Responsibilities:**

Clients have the responsibility to:

1. Provide information regarding any legal decision-making authority, i.e. legal guardian.
2. Provide information that the practitioners need in order to provide thorough care and services.
3. Seek to learn about their condition and understand their problems.
4. Collaborate with practitioners in developing mutually agreed upon treatment goals.
5. Follow the treatment plan agreed upon with their practitioners.
6. Report any allegation of a rights violation to the SU Client Advocate or another staff member. The Substance Use Sr. Q & T Specialist acts at the Substance Use Client Advocate.

**References:**

- CARF Behavioral Health Standards Manual
- North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disability, and Substance Abuse Services, Area Program Service Manual 95-2
- NC General Statutes 122 C, Article III

**Approved by:**

CSS Performance Improvement Council

*Stacy M Lowry per May 29, 2020 email*

Community Support Services Director

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