

# Your Rights While Receiving Mental Health Services

*The following rights are guaranteed to you under Florida law. These rights will be fully explained to you upon admission to this facility.*

## Individual Dignity

- ✓ You have the right to be treated respectfully and to not be abused.
- ✓ You have the right to move freely within this facility unless your safety is at risk or your movement has been restricted by a judge.
- ✓ You have the right to reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

## Designation of a Representative

- ✓ You will be asked to identify a person that we can contact in case of emergency.
- ✓ You may identify a person to receive notice that you are here in this facility.
- ✓ If you do not, or cannot, choose a representative, one will be selected for you.

## Communication

- ✓ You have the right to talk privately by phone and during visiting hours, and can receive and send private mail. This facility is required to develop reasonable rules about visiting hours, mail and the use of telephones.
- ✓ If your access to the phone, mail, or visitation is restricted, you will be given a written notice that includes the reasons for the restriction. The restriction must be reviewed by the physician at least every 7 days.
- ✓ You have the right to contact your attorney at any time.
- ✓ You have the right to use a phone at any time for the purpose of reporting abuse to the Florida Abuse Hotline, or to Disability Rights Florida.

## Confidentiality of Information and Records

- ✓ Information about your stay in this facility is private and may not be released without your consent (or the consent of your guardian, guardian advocate, or health care surrogate/proxy, if you have one) except under certain instances.
- ✓ You have the right to see your clinical record, unless this is determined to be harmful to you by your physician.

## Treatment

- ✓ You have the right to receive the least restrictive, most appropriate and available treatment in this facility.
- ✓ You will get a physical exam within 24 hours of arrival.
- ✓ You will be asked to help develop a treatment plan that meets your needs.

## Complaints

- ✓ You have the right to file an internal complaint and to receive a response within 24 hours of the conclusion of the investigation (may take up to 7 days).

## Advance Directives

- ✓ You have the right to prepare a document, when competent to do so, that lists the mental health care that you want or don't want, and to name a person that can make decisions for you if you are unable to make those decisions for yourself.

## Informed Consent

- ✓ Before treatment begins, you will be given information about the purpose of the treatment, the common side effects of medication you receive, alternative treatments, and the approximate length of stay at this facility.
- ✓ You (or your guardian, guardian advocate, or health care surrogate/proxy) may withdraw your consent to treatment at any time.

## Clothing and Personal Effects

- ✓ You have the right to keep your clothing and personal belongings unless they are removed for safety or medical reasons.
- ✓ If your belongings are taken from you, an inventory of the items will be prepared and given to you to sign. Your items will be returned to you or your representative upon your discharge or transfer from this facility.

## Right to Contact the Court

- ✓ You, or your representative, have the right to ask the Court to review the following:
  - The reason and legality of your detention in this facility.
  - A denied legal right or privilege.
  - A procedure that is not being followed.

## Voting

- ✓ You have the right to register to vote and to cast your vote in any election unless the court has removed this right from you.

## Discharge

- ✓ If you request discharge (and you are voluntarily admitted), your doctor will be notified and you will be discharged within 24 hours from a community facility, or within 3 working days from a state hospital, unless you change your mind or you meet the criteria for involuntary placement.
- ✓ You must be released within 72 hours of arrival at the facility unless you are on voluntary status. If you meet the criteria for involuntary placement, a petition must be filed with the court within 72 hours of arrival, or 2 working days of your transfer from voluntary to involuntary status.
- ✓ You have the right to seek treatment from the professional or agency of your choice after your discharge from this facility.

*If you believe your rights have been violated, you can contact:*

**Florida Abuse Hotline**  
1-800-96-ABUSE  
1-800-962-2873 (Voice)  
1-800-453-5154 (TTY /TTD)

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**  
1-800-514-0301 (Voice)  
1-800-514-0383 (TTY)

**Disability Rights Florida**  
1-800-342-0823 (Voice)  
1-800-346-4127 (TTY/TTD)