



## **Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Raleigh, Inc.**

### **Client Rights and Responsibilities**

All clients of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Raleigh (Catholic Charities) have the Rights listed below in addition to the Rights described in the Notice of Privacy Practices (pages 3 & 4). We ask that you read the Notice of Privacy Practices and this Client Rights and Responsibilities to become informed about your Rights and Responsibilities. We encourage you to discuss with your counselor, worker, site director or regional director if you have any questions about these Rights and Responsibilities, or if you think these Rights have been violated.

#### **YOUR RIGHTS:**

As a client of Catholic Charities you have the Right:

1. To available services for which you meet eligibility requirements regardless of your race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation or physical or mental disability, and the right to referral to other service providers.
2. To competent services which adhere to generally held service principles.
3. To participate in developing a plan of service and/or treatment and to participate in ongoing review and revision of the plan.
4. To be fully informed of the expectations of all parties involved in implementing your plan.
5. To refuse services, to terminate services or to change the course of your treatment in accordance with applicable state and federal law.
6. To receive services in an environment that affords protection from harm, appropriate privacy and freedom from ridicule and verbal or physical abuse.
7. Not to be subjected to any research activities considered to be outside the routine plan of services, without your informed written consent.
8. To have your identity protected in any agency reports, statistical analyses or case summaries published by Catholic Charities.
9. To receive service and fee information at the time of the initial assessment.
10. Not to be filmed or taped without your informed written permission.
11. To access the agency's grievance procedure.
12. To confidentiality of all your records. Your consent is required prior to Catholic Charities obtaining or releasing confidential information with the exceptions noted in the confidentiality section below.

NOTE: A secure web-based record is established for each client and his or her family members. The following services may also create a paper file for clients and families: adoption, counseling, family casework/ case management and immigration. All electronic files are secured through worker-specific passwords and all paper records are secured in a locked file.

13. To access to your files for the purpose of review, correction or addition. In order to access files your files for any reason you must submit a letter requesting to do so.
  - a. You have the right to review your file within one week of a written request.
  - b. The file must be reviewed in the presence of Catholic Charities staff working with you, or supervisor of that person.
  - c. During a review of your file you may ask to add or correct any statement contained therein.
  - d. If there is discrepancy, error, or dispute regarding documentation, standards of best practice and ethical guidelines will be followed to resolve the grievance.

NOTE: Removing or deleting statements is not permitted. Catholic Charities staff or supervisor working with you will enter the addition or correction, strike through the item(s) to be removed (if any) and document that you requested the change.

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**YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. To keep your scheduled appointments or to cancel 24 hours in advance. Clients arriving over 15 minutes late may be rescheduled. If there is a fee for the service you receive, a fee may be charged for late cancellations and for no shows.
2. To pay all agreed upon fees in a timely manner. If payment is a problem, please speak with staff about it.
3. To provide us with current and accurate information regarding place of residence, and where necessary, income, and employment.
4. To be actively involved in the planning and implementation of your individualized service or treatment plan.
5. To cooperate and work with Catholic Charities to ensure your safety.
6. While interacting with Catholic Charities staff, volunteers and other clients, to behave in a manner that ensures: safety, appropriate privacy, dignity and freedom from ridicule and verbal or physical abuse for all staff, volunteers and other clients seeking service at Catholic Charities.
7. To honor confidentiality with regard to the identity of any clients seen here or any information acquired through contact with other clients at Catholic Charities.

Catholic Charities reserves the right to deny services under the following conditions: 1) if you display violent or threatening behavior or language, 2) if you are under the influence of mood altering substances when seeking or receiving services, 3) if it is your service provider's professional judgment that Catholic Charities is no longer able to meet your service needs and/or that you would be better served by another agency.

**CLIENT GRIEVANCE:**

Any client has access to the grievance process who believes he or she has:

1. Been treated in an unfair or disrespectful manner,
2. Been deprived of information about eligibility for Catholic Charities services, or
3. Had his or her rights violated (as defined in this document or the Notice of Privacy Agreement).

Any client wishing to do so will be assisted to contact the appropriate supervisor with which to express his or her concern. Upon request, clients will be provided information as to the supervisor(s) of any Catholic Charities volunteer or staff person.

**CLIENT EVALUATION OF SERVICES:**

We may request evaluations of our services from clients. This allows us to utilize your responses in assuring quality care for all clients. You may be asked to complete a survey on your experiences at Catholic Charities. If at anytime you have suggestions or problems please talk with your counselor, worker, site director or regional director.

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#### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The contents of a counseling, intake, assessment or family casework/ case management session are considered to be confidential. Neither verbal nor written records about a client can be shared with another party without the written consent of the client or the client's legal guardian. It is the policy of this agency not to release any information about a client without a signed release of information.

Exceptions to Catholic Charities ability to maintain confidentiality of records are as follows:

- **Duty to Warn and Protect:** When a client discloses intentions or a plan to harm another person, we are required to warn the intended victim and report this information to legal authorities. In cases in which the client discloses or implies a plan for suicide, we are required to notify legal authorities and make reasonable attempts to notify the family of the client.
- **Abuse of Children and Vulnerable Adults:** If a client states or suggests that they are or have knowledge or reason to suspect that someone else is abusing a child (or vulnerable adult) or has recently abused a child (or vulnerable adult), or a child (or vulnerable adult) is in danger of abuse, Catholic Charities is required to report this information to the North Carolina Department of Social Services.
- **Prenatal Exposure to Controlled Substances:** We are required to report admitted pre-natal exposure to controlled substances that are potentially harmful.
- **Court Orders:** We may disclose information about clients when a court order has been issued that requests specific information.
- **Minors/Guardianship:** Parents or legal guardians of non-emancipated minor clients have the right to access the client's records.
- **Law Enforcement:** Law enforcement reasons may include: 1) limited information requests for identification and location purposes, 2) pertaining to victims of a crime, 3) suspicion that death has occurred as a result of criminal conduct, and 4) in the event that a crime occurs at the Catholic Charities site.
- **Worker's Compensation:** We may disclose medical and mental health information about you in order to comply with workers' compensation laws.
- **Certain government functions:** We may disclose medical and mental health information about you for certain government functions, including but not limited to military and veterans' activities and national security and intelligence activities. We may also use or disclose medical and mental health information about you to a correctional institution in some circumstances.