

**Rutland Mental Health Services
Community Access Program
Consumer Rights Handbook**

This handbook has been designed to help you understand your rights. If you need more information or have further questions, please speak with your case manager.

Your Rights

Rutland Mental Health Services (RMHS) is committed to maintaining the dignity and worth of all individuals seeking services. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, sex, sexual orientation, or disability. As a consumer of the Community Access Program, you have the same rights warranted to all citizens under State and Federal Law. In addition, you have specific rights as outlined in the Developmental Disabilities Act of 1996. Your rights include the following:

- To receive services that are responsive to your age, gender, social supports, cultural orientation, psychological characteristics, sexual orientation, physical situations, and spiritual beliefs.
- To receive services in a setting that is free from physical or psychological abuse or exploitation.
- To receive ethical services as determined in the RMHS statement of professional Code of Conduct. A copy of this can be obtained from your case manager or other RMHS staff. In addition, if you are receiving services from a person licensed or certified by the State of Vermont, you will be given a copy of the Code of Ethics governing your clinician's profession.
- To receive services, rehabilitation, and/or educational services appropriate for your situation and according to commonly accepted professional standards.
- To exercise control over your own actions, decisions, wishes, and desires as any other person of comparable age. You will not be exposed to rules or regulations that are excessive or inappropriate.
- To be informed about the progress you are making on your goals.
- To have your record and all information about you kept confidential except where state law or court order requires that information to be released. Release of information will be in accordance with Rutland Mental Health Services' policy on privacy and confidentiality. This policy is available from your case manager.
- To privileged (confidential) communication with those who work with you. Information provided during evaluation, treatment, or service, may not be disclosed without your consent or appropriate court order, except in cases where a significant danger exists to yourself, others, or property. In addition, we are required by law to report any suspected abuse of a child, an elderly person, or mentally disabled adult.
- To meet with your treatment team at your request.
- To be free of unnecessary or excessive medication. If you agree to take medication, you have the right to have appropriate information on purpose, dose, side effects, and duration of medication so you can make an informed decision.
- To not be subjected to experimental research without your and/or your guardian's expressed and informed consent. If consent is given, either you or your guardian may withdraw it at any time.

- To be informed of your rights and procedure for grievance and complaints in a manner that you are able to understand. You (or guardian if applicable) will acknowledge, in writing, your receipt of the rights information discussed in this pamphlet.
- To examine your bill.
- To assistance with access and referral to guardianship services, self-help groups, advocacy services, and legal advocacy services.
- To be free from aversive procedures, devices, and treatments.
- To privacy, dignity, confidentiality, and humane care.
- To associate with individuals of both genders.
- To communicate in private by mail and telephone.
- To communicate in one's primary language and primary mode of communication.
- To be free from retaliation for voicing a complaint, exercising rights, or recommending policy changes.
- To maintain family contact, except when contact is restricted by court order.
- To refuse or terminate services, except when services are required by court order.
- To read and to challenge information in one's records.

Rights and Responsibilities

As with most things in life, your right to do things and to have things carries with it responsibilities that you have to yourself and others. For example, you have the right to be treated with respect. You also have the responsibility to treat others with respect. The following is a list of some of your rights with a list of some of your responsibilities.

Your Rights	Your Responsibilities
You have the right to be informed of rules and regulations outlined by Rutland Mental Health Services.	You have the responsibility to follow the rules and regulations outlined by Rutland Mental Health Services.
You have the right to be treated with consideration and respect.	You have the responsibility to treat others with consideration and respect.
You have the right to be informed of your rights and expect that your rights will be protected.	You have the responsibility not to violate the rights of others.
You have the right to privacy in your own home.	You have the responsibility to respect the privacy of others.
You have the right to be protected from harm or injury.	You have the responsibility not to hurt or harm others.
You have the right to tell people what you do not like or what you are unhappy about.	You have the responsibility to let other people express their concerns and what they are not happy about.
You have the right to live in a clean and safe home.	You have the responsibility to do your part in keeping the home safe and clean.
You have the right to expect that your things are treated with care and respect by others.	You have the responsibility to ask permission to use other people's things and treat them with care.
You have the right to take an active part in the development of your program plan.	You have the responsibility to do your part in carrying out any part of the program that you agree to.

You have the right to come and go as you please in your home.	You have the responsibility to inform your staff where you are going and when you plan to return home.
You have the right to make and receive private phone calls.	You have the responsibility to permit others the same courtesy.

Grievance/Appeals

It is the policy of RMHS that any grievance/appeal regarding services and support raised by you, your guardian, or person acting on your behalf will be responded to in a timely and professional manner.

If you wish to make an appeal or grievance, please contact your case manager or Intake Coordinator who will provide you with the Appeal or Grievance Guide. In addition, your case manager or intake coordinator is available to assist you in this process.

Questions?

If you have any other questions or would like more information about our services, please speak with your case manager or Community Access Program representative.

We are always trying to improve the quality of our services. If you have any suggestions on how we can better serve you, please feel free to share them with us.

It is the policy of RMHS to provide equal opportunity and employment to all staff, applicants, and recipients of our services.

Access to Services

If you believe you are a person with a developmental disability or are a family member or guardian of a person you believe has a developmental disability, you may call the Intake Coordinator at the Community Access Program at (802) 775-0828 to apply for services. The Intake Coordinator will give you information on the application process, the rights of consumers, eligibility criteria, and services offered at the Community Access Program. He or she will help you through the entire intake process.

Community Access Program
P. O. Box 222
Rutland, Vermont 054702-0222
(802) 775-0828
Fax: (802) 747-7692
24-hour crisis line: 775-1000
TTY/TTD line: (800) 253-0191
www.rmshccn.org