

LFS Mission: *Lutheran Family Services expresses God's love for all people by providing quality human care services that build and strengthen individual, family and community life*

Client Rights and Responsibilities

Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska, Inc. (LFS) believes that our clients have certain rights and expects all staff to respect these rights. LFS also believes that our clients have certain responsibilities about which they must be informed at the time they begin to receive services. This handout is a part of the organization orientation process. We hope you will take a few minutes to become familiar with this information.

LFS Service Philosophy

LFS works with individuals, couples and families to develop goals during treatment and services to help people function more effectively in their everyday lives. Services and treatment at LFS are seen as a partnership between staff and the clients who seek the organization's services.

To the extent possible, clients are expected to do as much as they can to address their problems. Clients are encouraged to share information as openly as possible so their therapist or service provider will have a full understanding of the clients' needs and the best ways to offer help.

Services Available

Depending upon the local resources, a range of services may be available to clients throughout the organization. Services may include: family, individual and marital counseling, mental health therapy, substance use counseling, home-based counseling and support, gambling addiction counseling, group therapy, foster care, adoption and pregnancy counseling. Office hours vary by location.

Right to Receive Treatment

Clients have the right to receive treatment without the approval of others, except in the case of minor children or adults under guardianship as prescribed by law. All clients of LFS have the right to receive services without regard to race, color, national origin, age, disability, religion, sex, or sexual orientation. LFS clients also have the right to be oriented to the program for which they are requesting admission.

LFS staff will assess the client's need for treatment and determine the level of care needed. The assessment will include a decision about whether LFS can meet the client's treatment needs. If LFS denies admission, the client may request a written explanation from the program supervisor. If the client has concerns about the denial of admission, he/she has the right to register a complaint.

Rights for Clients of Certified Community Behavioral Health Center Services

The Certified Community Behavioral Health Center (CCBHC) serves regardless of residence or ability to pay.

Right to Refuse Treatment

LFS offers treatment on a voluntary basis. Clients may refuse treatment services except when they are required to participate in treatment or services by court order or by the Board of Mental Health. Court



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ordered clients who refuse services may experience consequences imposed by their family or the community.

Right to Information about Fees

Fee policies and procedures are developed for each organization program and office location. Each client has a right to an explanation of the fees and the payment procedures and is required to sign a fee agreement. This documentation will be maintained in the client record. If services are to be partially or fully paid by insurance or a managed care organization, clients are advised to contact that company for information about services covered, co-payments and other terms and conditions.

Right to Examine Survey Results

The client has a right to request to examine the results of surveys completed by the Department of Health and Human Services. Requests to review survey results will be directed to the LFS Quality Improvement Manager or the Compliance Officer.

Right to be Free from Restraint

LFS is responsible for ensuring adults and children receive treatment and care in a safe environment. Some children and adults referred to LFS may exhibit difficult, argumentative and aggressive behaviors. It is the responsibility of program staff and management to assure the safety of themselves and others in the environment, particularly children and other vulnerable persons, while providing professional services that include addressing and decreasing aggressive behaviors, according to the LFS *Behavior Management Policy*.

While receiving services through LFS, the client has the right to be free from physical restraints and the right to be free from seclusion. The client has the right not to be placed in a locked room except when in emergency protective custody by a law enforcement officer. He/she has the right to be free from physical punishment and to be free from abuse, neglect or misappropriation of money or property.

Right to Request a Different Service Provider

On occasion, a client and a therapist or service provider may not work well together. Clients have the right to request a change to another therapist/worker if one is available. This request must be discussed and arranged through the Program Supervisor or Regional/Statewide Administrator. The client has the right to be free from arbitrary transfer to another provider and the right to be free from arbitrary discharge from services.

Client Responsibilities

LFS expects clients to:

- Keep scheduled appointments or give a 24-hour notice when an appointment cannot be kept;
- Work on the problems they bring to the organization by taking an active role in their resolution;
- Provide relevant information as a basis for receiving services and participating in service decisions;
- Be considerate and respectful of the rights of fellow clients and staff, and the property and furnishings of LFS;



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- Meet the financial obligation they incur for treatment;
- Respect the organization's smoke and drug free environment. No person under the age of 18 may smoke or use other tobacco products on LFS premises or at LFS sponsored functions.

Failure to meet any of these responsibilities may result in termination of services.

Right to Privacy and Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Information

Individual Rights:

- To request in writing that LFS not use or disclose information for specific treatment, payment or administrative purposes;
- To request a restriction of health information to the client's insurance plan if is a self-pay client and have paid for services in full at the time of service delivery;
- To inspect and copy protected health information, within the limits of the Nebraska statutes and regulations;
- To request an electronic copy of health information that is stored in electronic form;
- To request that health information be communicated to the client in a confidential manner, such as sending mail to an address other than home;
- To request amendments to protected health information;
- To receive an accounting of disclosures.

LFS's Duties:

- LFS is required by law to maintain the privacy of protected health information, and to provide individuals with Notice of Privacy Practices. Clients have the right, at any time, to receive a complete copy of the *Notice of Privacy Practices*. The *Notice of Privacy Practices* can also be found on our Website at www.lfsneb.org.
- LFS is required to abide by the terms of the Notice currently in effect.
- LFS reserves the right to change the *Notice of Privacy Practices* effective for all protected health information that it maintains. A new Notice will then be posted in all client areas.
- LFS is obligated to report abuse or neglect of children or vulnerable adults and has a duty to warn persons threatened to be harmed.

Complaints/Grievance

Clients, legal guardians and other stakeholders have the right to file a complaint or grievance without fear of reprisal. Anyone filing a complaint has the right to have complaints/grievances heard and reviewed by administration of LFS. Complaints may be related to issues such as: lack of respect or considerate treatment, dissatisfaction with assigned service provider, breach of confidentiality, case mishandling, confusion about procedures or policies, difficulty getting appointments or violation of legal rights.

If a client is concerned LFS has violated his/her privacy rights or disagrees with a decision LFS has made about access to records, information may requested about how to file a complaint/grievance. Clients may



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also contact the Program Supervisor or Regional/Statewide Administrator in their location of service. A

written complaint may be sent to any of the following:

Manager of Quality Improvement and Compliance
124 South 24th Street
Suite 230
Omaha, NE 68102
(402) 661-3131

At all times, you have the right to contact the following regulatory bodies to issue a complaint:

Council on Accreditation (COA)
(212) 797-3000
coainfo@coanet.org

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Health Facilities Investigations:

301 Centennial South
PO Box 94986
Lincoln, NE 68509-4986
(402) 471-0316

