

Consumer Rights

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect the rights of persons receiving services from 2-1-1 by establishing specific rights of consumers and procedures for impartial resolution of consumer grievances. Grievance Report is available upon request, see Appendix A.

Policy

Consumers have certain rights that should not be taken away from them unless for reasons listed below under Reasons for Restricted Access.

Consumer Rights

Consumers are entitled to the following rights:

- Exercise all rights without reprisal in any form including continued uncompromised access to service.
- Not to be discriminated against in the provision of service on the basis of religion, race, color, creed, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, physical, mental, political beliefs or developmental disability, or inability to pay.
- Know the cost of services.
- Be fully informed of all rights.
- Be verbally advised of (at a minimum) their immediate pertinent rights during a crisis or emergency.
- Be treated with consideration and respect of personal dignity, autonomy, and privacy.
- Consent to or refuse any service upon full explanation of the expected consequences. (A parent or legal guardian may consent to or refuse any service on behalf of a minor, which is any person 17 years or younger.)
- Be advised of and refuse observation by techniques such as one-way vision mirrors, tape recorders, televisions, movies, or photographs.
- Can consult with independent treatment specialist or legal counsel, at *one's own expense*.
- Confidentiality regarding all forms of communications. (This includes all identifying information within the limitations and requirements for disclosure of various funding and/or certifying sources, both state and federal. This can be challenged if the release of information is specifically authorized by the consumer, parent, or legal guardian of a minor or court appointed guardian of a minor.)
- Have access to one's own records unless access is restricted.
- Receive an explanation for the reason of denial of services.
- File an appeal or grievance when services are denied.
- Receive oral and written instructions for filing a grievance.

All recipients of agency services may have a copy of the 2-1-1 Consumer Rights Policy upon request. A copy of the Consumer Rights Policy is posted on the walls of the rooms where consumers are met.

Reasons for Restricted Access

The following items are reasons for restricting consumer access:

- Information provided by a 3rd party, other than consumer or employee (family member, friend, or other such as community support provider).
- Consumer presents imminent risk of harm to self/other if information is provided.
- The Executive Director cannot be present to explain/discuss.

Guidelines for Restricting Access

- Reasons to restrict must be written in the file at or prior to request.
- When a file is requested, a written response must be given to the consumer.
- Information from 3rd parties (as indicated above) and data pertaining to self-harm or possible harm to others is restricted. The remainder of the file must be made available to the consumer.
- Restriction must be reviewed and renewed annually to remain in effect.

Procedure for Filing Consumer Grievance

The following is the procedure for a consumer to file a grievance against a 2-1-1 associate or volunteer. Any questions regarding this procedure should be directed to the 2-1-1 Executive Director.

1. Upon a verbal complaint, the consumer will be asked to state in written form the date, time, location, names of those involved, and a brief narrative of the incident. The complaint shall be signed, dated, and filed by the person making the allegation within twenty (20) working days of the incident. The Executive Director will be immediately informed that a complaint has been made.
2. If needed, assistance with filing a grievance will be given to the consumer by the Consumer Rights Officer (see contact information below). Within 24 hours of filing, the Executive Director shall report the grievance to the Fairfield County ADAMH Board. Investigation of the grievance on behalf of the consumer and a representative for the consumer will occur at a hearing by the Consumer Rights Officer, if so desired by the consumer.
3. The Consumer Rights Officer will investigate and render a decision within twenty (20) working days. If the consumer is not satisfied, a meeting will be arranged with the Executive Director or designee within twenty (20) working days after the original decision. An investigation and decision will be given within five (5) working days after the meeting with the Executive Director or designee.
4. Written notification and explanation will be given to the consumer at each stage of the grievance process within the time frame as stated in number three (3).
5. The consumer shall also be given a list of outside entities if he/she wishes to initiate a complaint with someone other than the agency:

ADAMH Board

108 W. Main Street, Suite A
Lancaster, Ohio 43130
(740) 654-0829

Ohio Department of Mental Health

30 E. Broad Street, Suite 1180
Columbus, Ohio 43227-0414
(614) 466-2596

Ohio Disability Rights Ohio

200 S. Civic Center Dr. #300
Columbus, Ohio 43215
(800) 282-9841

U. S. Dept of Health and Human Services

Office for Civil Rights, Region V
300 S. Wacker Avenue
Chicago, IL 60606

6. Upon written request by the complainant for the release of information, all relevant organizations with whom the griever has initiated a grievance are notified.
7. Upon request, a copy of the grievance procedure will be given to representatives of all agencies noted above and any consumer upon request.
8. The Consumer Rights Officer is the person designated by this agency to receive any grievance filed by a consumer or any other person or agency on behalf of a consumer. If the Consumer Rights Officer is unavailable or is the subject of the grievance, an alternate Consumer Rights Officer shall be designated.

Consumer Rights Officer Miranda Grey Consumer Advocate 108 W. Main St., Suite A Lancaster, Ohio 43130 (740) 475-0402 M-F 9:00-5:00	Alternate C.R.O. Jeannette Curtis Executive Director 2-1-1 108 W. Main St., Suite C Lancaster, Ohio 43130 (740) 687-0501 M-F 8:00-4:30
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9. Upon completion of an investigation, information regarding the complaint, follow-up measures and resolution shall be placed in the employee file for the remainder of their employment with 2-1-1.
10. All employees and volunteers at 2-1-1 shall be familiar with the consumer rights and grievance procedure and shall be able to explain the process upon request. Information on consumer rights and the grievance procedure shall be given on an annual basis to current employees and volunteers, and as needed to new employees and volunteers.
11. A copy of the grievance procedure must be posted in a location accessible for all customers to acknowledge, for example, posted on the walls of the rooms where consumers frequent.
12. The Consumer Rights Officer is responsible for compliance with this policy. An annual review shall be conducted and reported to the Policy and Procedure Committee.
13. Agency records related to consumer rights and grievances will be made available for review by the Fairfield County ADAMH Board and Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHAS) upon request.
14. 2-1-1 will submit quarterly summary reports to the Fairfield County ADAMH Board including number of grievances received, type of grievances, and resolution status of grievance.