

# Client Rights & Grievances

## Your Rights, Your Voice. How to Voice Concerns.

FOR NORTHERN RIVERS FAMILY OF SERVICES AND MEMBER AGENCIES

Northern Rivers Family of Services provides services to children, adults, and families of protected status. The personal dignity of each client will be respected and we will provide the care and services that are needed. Clients have the right to receive services free from any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical ability.

We are committed to ensuring your clients rights are met and address any concerns you may have about the services you received at Northern Rivers.

### You have the right to:

- Decline services or treatment offered
- Receive services by trained staff
- Privacy and confidentiality related to all aspects of care including privacy of your case records
- Be treated with respect, dignity and compassion
- Be informed about any treatment plans and/or use of medications and side effects
- Access your record
- Participate, review and carry out any treatment plan of service(s) that meets you and your family's needs
- Be provided treatment in the least restrictive environment that gives you freedom and community involvement
- Use the Client Rights and Grievance Procedure for expressing concerns or grievances about services you received
- Be provided interpretation services and accommodations necessary to participate in your care
- Be free from retaliation by Northern Rivers for filing a good-faith report against the organization

### You have the responsibility to:

- Respect the rights of others to privacy, confidentiality, safety, and well-being
- Participate in developing and carrying out your individualized treatment plan
- Engage with services staff and provide correct medical history, legal, contact information, and updates when information changes
- Ask questions if directions or procedures are not clearly understood

### How you can file a grievance:

At times, you may become dissatisfied with the program services you received. We are committed to resolving matters quickly and fairly with respect and dignity. You will continue to receive services uninterrupted during the grievance process.

**Step 1.** Share your concern with your primary staff or program supervisor. Although you may share your concerns verbally, we encourage you to express your concerns in writing.

- Staff will provide you with a form and assistance in completing it.
- Staff will respond to your grievance within 7 business days.

**Step 2.** If you are not satisfied with the staff response to your grievance, you may then contact our Quality Management department (QM) to file a formal grievance.

- Again, we encourage you to express your grievance in writing. You may forward your grievance directly to QM or program staff will do so for you.
- Your grievance may be filed verbally if you prefer. Staff will provide you with the QM contact name and phone number.

### What will Quality Management do to resolve your concerns?

- QM will send you a letter letting you know the grievance was received and will provide you contact information within 15 business days from when we receive your grievance.
- QM will conduct a review of the grievance.
- QM will respond to the grievance within 45 business days and will respond to you in writing.

### Still have concerns?

Northern Rivers participates in a variety of programs that are regulated by state, federal, and community partners. If you are not satisfied with our response to your concerns, please feel free to reach out to any of the following organizations for additional support:

NYS Education Department  
518.474.3852

NYS Office of Mental Health  
800.597.8481

NYS Office of Family and Child Services  
518.473.7793

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
800.368.1019

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Interpreters  
877.696.6775

Disability Rights of New York  
518.432.7861  
[www.drny.org](http://www.drny.org)

NAMI Helpline  
800.950.NAMI (6264)  
[www.NAMI.org](http://www.NAMI.org)

NYS Mental Hygiene Legal Services  
518.451.8710

If you have any questions, please contact:

**Susanne Alterio**  
**Senior Director of Compliance**  
**[Susanne.Alterio@northernrivers.org](mailto:Susanne.Alterio@northernrivers.org)**  
**518.426.2600**

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