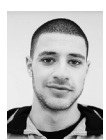




SOUTHLIGHT

LIFE WITHOUT ADDICTION



Consumer Rights Handbook





“...to eliminate addiction, abuse and misuse of drugs, including alcohol, in the communities we serve.”

Your Rights

This booklet provides information about your rights as a consumer, but does not constitute legal advice or findings with respect to those rights, and should not be considered as granting or denying any right guaranteed by law.

When You Receive Services...

Through SouthLight you have certain rights. This pamphlet will tell you about those rights and what to do if you have problems or questions.

Your Rights Are Guaranteed By Law

Unless you have been declared incompetent by a court, you have the same basic civil rights and remedies as other citizens, including the right to buy or sell property, sign a contract, register and vote, sue others who have wronged you, and marry or get a divorce. You also have other rights guaranteed by North Carolina General Statutes 122C, Article 3, including the right to dignity, privacy, humane care, and freedom from physical punishment, abuse, neglect, or exploitation. It is the responsibility of the program from which you are receiving services to provide you or your legally responsible person a written summary of your rights within your first three visits to the agency (or your first 72 hours if you are in a 24-hour facility.)

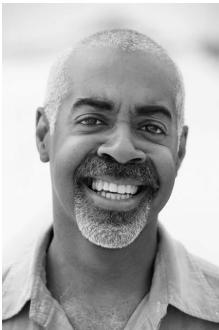


You Have The Right To A Treatment Plan

A written treatment plan, based on your individual needs, must be implemented upon your admission. You have the right to treatment in the most normal, age-appropriate, and least restrictive environment possible. You have the right to take part in the development and periodic review of this plan. You are entitled to review your treatment plan and obtain a copy of it from your therapist or our medical records department.

You Have The Right To Be Informed About Medications

You have the right to have medication administered in accordance with accepted medical standards and upon the order of a physician. When medication is needed, you have the right to receive it in the lowest possible therapeutic dose. You cannot be treated with experimental drugs or procedures without your written permission and without being informed of the risks, benefits, and alternatives. You may refuse to take medication; however, you will be informed of the risks of doing this. Medication cannot be used for punishment, discipline, or staff convenience.



You Have The Right To Refuse Treatment

Before you agree to your plan, you will be informed of the benefits or risk involved in the services you will receive. You have the right to consent to treatment and to withdraw your consent at any time. If you have asked to receive services, you always have the right to agree to or refuse any specific treatment. The only time you can be treated without your consent is in any emergency situation, when it has been court-ordered, or if you are a minor and your parents have given permission.

You Have The Right To Confidentiality

The confidentiality of your care and treatment is protected by state and federal law.

Special rules may apply if you have a legal guardian appointed, are a minor, or are receiving treatment for substance abuse.

You will be provided a separate notice that describes how medical information about you may be used and disclosed, and how you can get access to that information.

You Have The Right To Be Informed Of The Rules

You have the right to be informed of the rules that you are expected to follow in a particular facility and possible penalties for violation of the rules. This information will be provided when you enter the program.

You have the right to be free from unwarranted suspension or expulsion from programs and services. If you are discharged from a facility, you are entitled to a copy of your discharge plan.





You Have The Right To Know Your Treatment Costs

Fees for services should be discussed with you at your first visit. If this does not occur, please let us know. A listing for charges of services is available upon your request. Flexible payment options are available to help you meet your financial obligations. It is your responsibility to make arrangements to pay your bill and to satisfy any outstanding fees due.

You Have The Right To Privacy

You have the right to be free from any unwarranted search of your person or property. At the time of admission to a 24-hour facility, staff may search you and your belongings to prevent dangerous or illegal substances from being brought into the facility. The facility itself may be searched if dangerous or illegal substances are reasonably believed to be present and staff may search clients who are minors. Should search and seizure apply to a program from which you are receiving treatment, the specific procedures will be explained when you enter the program.

You Have The Right Not To Be Abused

At the time of admission to a specific program, you will be informed of the types of interventions that are approved for use by that program. The program cannot administer any potential painful procedure or stimulus to reduce the frequency or intensity of a behavior, and at no time is corporal punishment allowed. Employees must protect consumers from harm and report any form of neglect, abuse, or exploitation.

In an emergency situation, if your behavior is dangerous to yourself or others, or to property, or if we determine – based on very strict rules – that it is necessary for your care, an authorized facility may use restrictive interventions such as restraint, seclusion, or isolation time-out. A number of special safeguards must be in place when these interventions are used, and you or your guardian have the right to request that a designated person be notified. The gravity of some emergencies may require law enforcement assistance or initiation of involuntary commitment procedures. Strict compliance with regulations is also necessary when interventions such as withdrawing or delaying access to possession, taking away time, halting scheduled activities, or overcorrection are used. Facilities using protective devices to provide support or enhanced safety must comply with certain, very strict safeguards.

These interventions and devices may never be used as retaliation, for the convenience of staff, or in a manner that causes harm or undue discomfort.



You Have A Special Right If You Have Mental Retardation

If your primary need is related to the fact that you have mental retardation and are placed in a residential facility, you are entitled to assistance in finding another place to live if your original placement can no longer serve you. This right exists unless you have broken the rules you agreed to follow or if we offer another place that can meet your needs and you refuse that offer. The facility must give you, your legal guardian, and this agency 60 days advance notice if it intends to discharge you. This right does not apply if you live in a privately operated ICF-MR facility.



You Have The Right To Make Decisions For Your Treatment In Advance

In the event that you become incapacitated or unable to make decisions about your treatment, you may prepare a document which outlines your intentions for your treatment, and a person to make decisions based upon your instructions. If you are interested in exercising this right, please contact the Consumer Rights Program at (919) 787-6131.

You Have The Right To Make A Complaint

SouthLight strives to provide services of the highest quality, which are most responsive to your needs. However, if at any time you are dissatisfied with a particular service, you have the right to file a grievance to resolve the issue.

If you are dissatisfied with SouthLight's services delivered through our agency, you have the right to state a complaint or file a grievance at any time. Before submitting a written complaint, we urge you to first discuss the matter with our staff or the Division Director providing the service and allow him/her an opportunity to help resolve it. If this is unsuccessful, we encourage you to complete and forward us a complaint form, which you may request from staff of any SouthLight program. A copy of this form is located in the back of this brochure. All efforts will be made to resolve issues with staff involved or their direct supervisors.

You or your legally responsible guardian will be informed of the grievance policy at the time of admission to service. We hope this information is helpful in guiding you through the grievance process.

The information below describes the steps to be followed for the grievance process:

- You have the right to contact the Division Director. If the grievance is not resolved with program staff to your satisfaction, you may be referred to the Continuous Quality Improvement or Compliance Team to initiate a formal grievance.
- When you or your legally responsible person present a problem regarding services to a staff person, the staff will review again the grievance policy and allow you to decide which procedure to follow initially. You will be informed that use of the informal grievance procedures does not preclude formal filing of a grievance at any time.
- The staff person who initially receives your concerns will attempt to resolve the issue with you. If the grievance is not resolved

satisfactorily at this level, you may present the grievance to the staff member's direct supervisor. If you are not satisfied, you will be directed to the next level of administration appropriate to deal with the issues of the grievance.

- The Continuous Quality Improvement or Compliance Team will attempt to resolve the informal grievance. If unsuccessful, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will review the formal grievance procedure and offer to make available a staff person to assist you in filling a formal written grievance and to be your advocate in the formal grievance process. If at any time you request to go directly to the formal grievance procedure, you will be assisted in doing so.
- The formal grievance will be presented to the CEO who will obtain an authorization to release information from you in order to proceed. The grievance will then be forwarded to the Client Rights Committee.
- The Committee will review the materials and conduct a hearing at which you have the right to be present. You will also have the right to have a person of your own choosing present to advocate on your behalf. The Committee will make and forward the recommendation to the SouthLight Board of Directors (Board).
- All reviews by the Board will be done in Executive Session. All confidential information provided will be kept confidential by the Board. The Board will make the final decision. Referral to the Wake County Human Services Consumer Rights Committee will be offered if the final resolution is not satisfactory to the person filing the grievance.
- If the situation that brought about the grievance is corrected at any level of the process, you will be asked to sign a statement indicating that the issue has been resolved and how it was resolved. Staff response at each step of the grievance procedure will be in a timely manner and in any event within 10 working days. A response includes giving you an outline of the steps that will be taken, and time frames for specific information or a definite answer.
- Response at each step of the Grievance Procedure will be within 10 working days where at all possible. The CEO will be responsible for ensuring that each step of the grievance procedure has been documented and resolution reached in a timely fashion.

SouthLight's Code of Ethics

1. I will place the welfare of our consumers and families of consumers in matters affecting them above all other concerns.
2. I will deal in a kind and humane way in all of my work with all of our consumers regardless of race, color, sex, sexual preference, political or religious belief, mental or physical disability, or any other personal characteristic, condition, or status.
3. I will not participate in or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in my position as an employee.
4. I will not use my relationship with consumers to further personal, religious, political, or business interests.
5. I will under no circumstances engage in sexual activities with consumers.
6. As a clinical staff member, I will urge changes in the lives of consumers only for their benefit and in the interest of preventing chemical dependency or promoting recovery from chemical dependency.
7. I will not press consumers to adopt beliefs and behaviors which reflect my value system rather than their own.
8. I will not use or attempt to use my authority over consumers in a coercive manner to serve my own ends.
9. I will not sell, barter, or purchase goods or services from a consumer.
10. As a clinical staff member, I will not promote dependence on me but will help consumers to empower themselves.
11. I will abide by the letter and spirit of all federal and state confidentiality regulations assuring the consumers' right to confidential treatment.
12. I will serve consumers with devotion, loyalty, determination, and the maximum application of skill and competence.

13. I will remain aware of my own skills and limitations. I will not attempt to counsel or advise consumers. I will seek the advice and counsel of colleagues and supervisors or refer the consumer to another program or individual when it is in their best interest.
14. As a clinical staff member, I will accept responsibility for my continuing education and professional development as part of my commitment to providing quality care for those who seek my help.
15. When making public statements, I will accurately and objectively state my professional qualifications, affiliations, and functions, as well as those of the institutions or organizations I represent. In public statements that provide information or professional opinions about the addiction field, I will base my statement on scientifically acceptable findings and techniques with full recognition of the limits of such evidence.
16. I will provide consumers with accurate and complete information regarding the extent and nature of the services provided by SouthLight.
17. As a clinical staff member, I will apprise consumers of their risks, rights, opportunities, and obligations associated with treatment.
18. As a clinical staff member, I will terminate services to consumers, and professional relationships with them, when such services and relationships are no longer required or no longer serve the consumers' needs or interests.
19. I will exhibit responsible concern for the well being of my peers and the SouthLight community by not ignoring manifestations of illness or unethical conduct in colleagues.
20. As a staff member, I understand and am committed to the fact that SouthLight as an organization will demonstrate ethical, legal, and solvent business practices and will actively seek to prevent, detect, report, and investigate all wrongdoing, whether intentional or unintentional. I understand that a review of SouthLight's contracts, billing and coding procedures, billing records, contractual requirements, and legal requirements will be conducted regularly.

If You Have Any Questions Or Problems Contact...

Your counselor or program director. The Consumer Advocacy Office of SouthLight assures that clients are informed of their rights and that the agency protects these rights. Write to:

SouthLight Consumer Advocacy Office
3125 Poplarwood Court
Suite 203
Raleigh, NC 27604
Phone: (919) 787-6131
Fax: (919) 571-2932

The Consumer Advocacy Office will contact you when your complaint has been received and will involve appropriate staff to investigate and attempt to resolve the matter in a timely manner.

Grievances may ultimately be heard by the Human Rights Committee and the Wake County Human Services Board.



Governor's Advocacy Council For Persons With Disabilities

This statewide agency is designated under federal and state law to protect and advocate for the rights of persons who have disabilities.

Governor's Advocacy Council for Persons with Disabilities
2113 Cameron Street
Raleigh, NC 27605
(919) 733-9250

SouthLight, Inc. Complaint Form

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Your Phone Number: _____

Program or Employee Complained About:

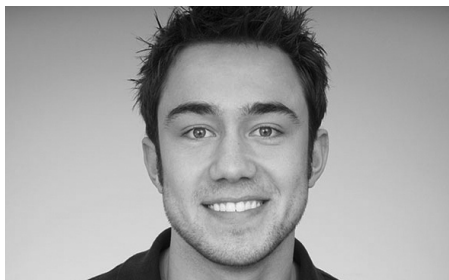
Please state your complaint, including names, dates, times, and locations (attach additional pages if you need more space):

What would you like done about this?

Your Signature:

Today's Date:

Please mail this form to:
SouthLight, Inc.
Consumer Advocacy Office
3125 Poplarwood Court
Suite 203
Raleigh, NC 27604



SOUTHLIGHT
LIFE WITHOUT ADDICTION

Consumer Advocacy Office
3125 Poplarwood Court
Suite 203
Raleigh, NC 27604

Phone: (919) 787-6131
Fax: (919) 571-2932

www.southlight.org

SouthLight, Inc. is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, and is a Triangle United Way Agency of Excellence.

