



# Policy on Client Rights and Grievances

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## Policy Statement:

UCAN believes in protecting the rights of clients by requiring that practices reflect a profound respect for personal dignity, confidentiality, and privacy. Legal and ethical rights of clients shall be protected by ensuring compliance with all aspects of this policy.

## A. Client Rights

UCAN does not deny service nor discriminate in any way based upon a client's race, color, spirituality or religious preference, ethnic identification, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, gender expression, marital status, physical or mental disability, or other differences. Clients have the right to receive services that are respectful of, and responsive to, cultural and linguistic differences.

UCAN designs and adapts its programs and services, as appropriate, to accommodate the visual, auditory, linguistic, and motor abilities of persons served. UCAN accommodates the written and oral communication needs of clients.

All clients have the right to participate in the religious observances and spiritual development of their own choice. For minor children, birth parents or guardians should determine the type of religious observances in which a client may participate. For children who are DCFS youth in care, this is the right of birth parents (unless the court has terminated parental rights).

All reasonable efforts are made to provide clients with the spiritual guidance and religious observance in the designated choice. All clients are free from coercion with regard to religious or spiritual decisions. Written permission from the parent or guardian must be obtained prior to a client participating in religious services outside of their faith.

## B. Informing of Client Rights

Client Rights will be protected by informing clients of their rights and responsibilities, providing fair and equitable treatment, providing clients with sufficient information to make an informed choice about using UCAN's services, and having clients participate in all service decisions.

- 1) Clients will receive UCAN's Statement of Client Rights and Responsibilities, a written summary of their rights and responsibilities during their initial contact with UCAN which includes the
  - a. obligations the organization has to the client
  - b. basic expectations, as well as rules, expectations or other factors that can result in discharge or termination of service
  - c. hours that services are available;
  - d. clear expectation of how to lodge complaints, grievances, or appeals.
  - e. notification of the client responsibility to provide relevant information as a basis for receiving services and participating in service decisions.
- 2) A written summary of client rights and responsibilities will be posted in the reception area of all UCAN sites.
- 3) Some UCAN programs may provide up to five sessions of services without consent from a parent or legal guardian. These services are centered around crisis management and/or gaining consent.

- 4) Any program that charges fees informs the client prior to service delivery about the schedule of any applicable fees, estimated or actual expenses, amount that will be charged, when fees are charged, changed, refunded, waived, or reduced, the manner and timing of payment, and the consequence of nonpayment.

## **B. Client Grievances**

The administration shall provide reasonable means for service applicants, clients, and other stakeholders to make complaints or appeals regarding Agency services and decisions, including denial of service.

- 1) Grievance procedures by individual program shall be established in writing and made available to clients and/or their guardians at the time of client intake and whenever a complaint is lodged. Written procedures shall explain in clear terms the step-by-step process and time frames involved in lodging and resolving complaints or appeals. Clients and other parties listed above have the right to appeal adverse decisions to the highest level possible in the agency and have the right to be heard on issues concerning his/her care, treatment, and plans for the future.
- 2) All client grievances will be resolved in a timely fashion, depending on the nature of the complaint.
- 3) Clients shall receive written notification of the resolution of any complaints, and copies of written notifications shall be retained by the Agency in the client record. Clients will also be provided with an explanation of any further appeal, rights, or recourse.
- 4) The Quality Improvement department will aggregate the client grievances quarterly, including the resolution of complaints, and present them to the agency Risk Management committee for review.
- 5) Information on client grievances will be presented to the Board of Directors quarterly via the minutes from the Risk Management Committee.
- 6) Client confidentiality shall be maintained throughout the grievance lodging, resolution and review processes.