

Client Rights and Grievance Procedures

Northern Rivers Family of Services is committed to fair and equitable treatment to the children, adults, and families we serve. We respect the personal dignity of each client while providing 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/culture, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical ability.

Our Client Rights and Grievances procedures establish a process to resolve your concerns rapidly and fairly.

We are committed to ensuring your client rights are met, and we will address any concerns you may have about the services you receive at Northern Rivers Family of Services.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Susanne Alterio
Senior Director of Compliance
Susanne.Alterio@northernrivers.org
518.426.2600

NORTHERNRIVERS

Founded where the Mohawk and Hudson meet, like the rivers that shaped our region, Northern Rivers Family of Services helps change lives by shaping the future of those we serve throughout the Capital Region and beyond. Northern Rivers is a family of human services agencies that work together and are committed to helping children, adults, and families.

Formed in 2012, Northern Rivers is the parent organization to Northeast Parent & Child Society (founded in 1888 in Schenectady), Parsons Child & Family Center (founded in 1829 in Albany), and Unlimited Potential (founded in Saratoga Springs in 1979). Together we serve more than 18,000 children, adults, and families in more than 40 counties in New York state who struggle with abuse, neglect, trauma, mental health challenges, educational difficulties, career training and employment, and service navigation through an innovative continuum of home-, clinic-, school-, and community-based services, vocational rehabilitation, supported employment, and senior-supporting programs that provide person-centered, trauma-informed innovative solutions to ensure clients live their best lives.

With a 1,400-strong workforce and informed by our nearly 200-year heritage, our quality of care, depth of programs, combined size, and passion for the mission make us a leading human services provider.

Main Office
60 Academy Road
Albany, NY 12208
518.426.2600

www.northernrivers.org

NORTHERN RIVERS

Life changing care since 1829

*Your Rights,
Your Voice*

How to Voice Concerns

For Northern Rivers Family of Services
and member agencies

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
- Access your record
- Be treated with respect, dignity, and compassion
- Actively participate in developing, implementing, and changing your treatment plan or that of your child
- Be provided treatment in the least restrictive environment that gives you freedom and community involvement.
- Express concerns or grievances through our Client Rights and Grievance Procedures
- Be provided interpretation services and accommodations necessary to participate in your care
- Be free from retaliation or intimidation from 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, providing correct medical history, legal, contact information, and updates when information changes
- Ask questions if directions or procedures are not clearly understood

How to file a grievance:

At times, you may become dissatisfied with the services you receive. 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 member or the 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 complaint within 7 business days.

Step 2. If you are not satisfied with the staff member's response to your complaint, 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 State Education Department
518.474.3852

NYS Office of Mental Health
800.597.8481

NYS Office of Children and Family Services
518.473.7793

U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services
800.368.1019

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

Disability Rights of New York
518.432.7861
www.drny.org

NAMI Helpline
800.950.NAMI (6264)
www.nami.org

NYS Mental Hygiene Legal Services
518.451.8710
