



## **PEOPLE WITH HIV/AIDS BILL OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The purpose of this Patient and Client Bill of Rights is to help enable clients act on their own behalf and in partnership with their providers to obtain the best possible HIV/AIDS care and treatment. This Bill of Rights and Responsibilities comes from the hearts of people living with HIV/AIDS in the diverse communities of Los Angeles County. As someone newly entering or currently accessing care, treatment or support services for HIV/AIDS, you have the right to:

### **A. Respectful Treatment**

1. Receive considerate, respectful, professional, confidential and timely care in a safe client-centered environment without bias.
2. Receive equal and unbiased care in accordance with federal and State laws.
3. Receive information about the qualifications of your providers, particularly about their experience managing and treating HIV/AIDS or related services.
4. Be informed of the names and work phone numbers of the physicians, nurses and other staff members responsible for your care.
5. Receive safe accommodations for protection of personal property while receiving care services.
6. Receive services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, including having a full explanation of all services and treatment options provided clearly in your own language and dialect.
7. Look at your medical records and receive copies of them upon your request (reasonable agency policies including reasonable fee for photocopying may apply).
8. When special needs arise, extended visiting hours by family, partner, or friends during inpatient treatment, recognizing that there may be limits imposed for valid reasons by the hospital, hospice or other inpatient institution.

### **B. Competent, High-Quality Care**

1. Have your care provided by competent, qualified professionals who follow HIV treatment standards as set forth by the Federal Public Health Service Guidelines, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the California Department of Health Services, and the County of Los Angeles.
2. Have access to these professionals at convenient times and locations.
3. Receive appropriate referrals to other medical, mental health or other care services.

### **C. Make Treatment Decisions**

1. Receive complete and up-to-date information in words you understand about your diagnosis, treatment options, medications (including common side effects and complications) and prognosis that can reasonably be expected.
2. Participate actively with your provider(s) in discussions about choices and options available for your treatment.
3. Make the final decision about which choice and option is best for you after you have been given all relevant information about these choices and the clear recommendation of your provider.
4. Refuse any and all treatments recommended and be told of the effect not taking the treatment may have on your health, be told of any other potential consequences of your refusal and be assured that you have the right to change your mind later.
5. Be informed about and afforded the opportunity to participate in any appropriate clinical research studies for which you are eligible.
6. Refuse to participate in research without prejudice or penalty of any sort.
7. Refuse any offered services or end participation in any program without bias or impact on your care.
8. Be informed of the procedures at the agency or institution for resolving misunderstandings, making complaints or filing grievances.
9. Receive a response to a complaint or grievance within 30 days of filing it.
10. Be informed of independent ombudsman or advocacy services outside the agency to help you resolve problems or grievances (see number at bottom of this form), including how to access a federal complaint center within the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

### **D. Confidentiality and Privacy**

1. Receive a copy of your agency's Notice of Privacy Policies and Procedures. (Your agency will ask you to acknowledge receipt of this document.)
2. Keep your HIV status confidential or anonymous with respect to HIV counseling and testing services. Have information explained to you about confidentiality policies and under what conditions, if any, information about HIV care services may be released.
3. Request restricted access to specific sections of your medical records.
4. Authorize or withdraw requests for your medical record from anyone else besides your health care providers and for billing purposes.

5. Question information in your medical chart and make a written request to change specific documented information. (Your physician has the right to accept or refuse your request with an explanation.)

#### **E. Billing Information and Assistance**

1. Receive complete information and explanation in advance of all charges that may be incurred for receiving care, treatment and services as well as payment policies of your provider.
2. Receive information on any programs to help you pay and assistance in accessing such assistance and any other benefits for which you may be eligible.

#### **F. Patient/Client Responsibilities**

In order to help your provider give you and other clients the care to which you are entitled, you also have the responsibility to:

1. Participate in the development and implementation of your individual treatment or service plan to the extent that you are able.
2. Provide your providers, to the best of your knowledge, accurate and complete information about your current and past health and illness, medications and other treatment and services you are receiving, since all of these may affect your care. Communicate promptly in the future any changes or new developments.
3. Communicate to your provider whenever you do not understand information you are given.
4. Follow the treatment plan you have agreed to and/or accepting the consequences of failing the recommended course of treatment or of using other treatments.
5. Keep your appointments and commitments at this agency or inform the agency promptly if you cannot do so.
6. Keep your provider or main contact informed about how to reach you confidentially by phone, mail or other means.
7. Follow the agency's rules and regulations concerning patient/client care and conduct.
8. Be considerate of your providers and fellow clients/patients and treat them with the respect you yourself expect.
9. Refrain from the use of profanity or abusive or hostile language; threats, violence or intimidations; carrying weapons of any sort; theft or vandalism; intoxication or use of illegal drugs; sexual harassment and misconduct.
10. Maintain the confidentiality of everyone else receiving care or services at the agency by never mentioning to anyone who you see here or casually speaking to other clients not already known to you if you see them elsewhere.

## **For More Help or Information**

Your first step in getting more information or involving any complaints or grievances should be to speak with your provider or a designated client services representative or patient or treatment advocate at the agency. If this does not resolve any problem in a reasonable time span, or if serious concerns or issues that arise that you feel you need to speak about with someone outside the agency, you may call the number below for confidential, independent information and assistance.

For patient and complaints/grievances call (800) 260-8787

8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Monday – Friday