

Ideas on making things easier!



Another way to increase participation in the service system is to provide individuals with information that is easy-to-understand.

People with developmental disabilities and their friends and advocates should have access to the same information as all others.

Access means understanding written materials:

- so that people with developmental disabilities who read, can read it and use it;
- so that people who advocate for those who cannot read, can explain it more easily;
- so that we can all understand something together.

It's really not difficult to do. Writing in an understandable way is writing in a more conversational style. It's how you would talk to someone who you know and respect.

The following pages contain some examples.

You have many rights:

- You have the right to be by yourself when you want to be.
- You have the right to be treated well by staff.
- You have the right to a safe place to work, where you won't get hurt.
- You have the right to know the rules about working here.
- You need to know what to do when you don't like something.
- You have the right to speak up for yourself.
- You have the right to ask for an advocate, or someone to speak up for you.
- You can ask that a report about how you are doing be given to you, your family or your advocate.
- You have the right to have your questions or concerns answered as soon as possible.
- You have the right to have a place to keep your things.
- You have the right to use a telephone for private calls.
- You have a right to get the training you need to live and work more independently.
- You have the right to see a doctor when you need to and without waiting a long time.

Rights and responsibilities made easy

Rights are the things that the law says you should get, like the training that you need to live and work like everyone else.

People do not have the right to say or do bad things to you or keep you from eating or take your money.

None of your rights can be taken away without a chance for you to tell your side of the story.

Staff cannot do things that might physically hurt you.

Grievance procedure made easy

What to do if I don't like something

If something happens to you in the place where you live or work and you think it takes away one of your rights, then you can start a grievance.

What are your rights?

Rights are the things that laws say you should get, like the training that you need to live and work like everyone else.

What is a grievance?

It is what happens if you think that the program is taking away one of your rights. A grievance gives you a chance to tell your side of the story and to try to get things changed.

What do you do?

1. Tell someone who works with you about the problem. They will help you write it down on a piece of paper.
2. This staff person will try to help you with your problem and tell you an answer to it in words and writing within 7 days.
3. If you don't like the answer, then you can take the problem to the director of the program. The director will then try to help you with your problem and tell you an answer to it in words and writing within 7 days.
5. If you don't like that answer, you can take your problem to your service coordinator or social worker.

The law made easy

You may know someone who has been locked up or told not to leave their room or house, or even tied to their bed or wheelchair. You may also know someone who has been hit, pushed, burned, or made to be afraid of what people tell them. You might know someone who was given lots of medication to make them quiet or sleep all the time. You might also know someone with a disability who wasn't helped to eat, go to the bathroom or stay clean. **THESE ACTIONS ARE WRONG!**

The law says you have a right to be safe and treated with dignity.

No one can lawfully:

- Scare you, tie you down or hurt you
- Stop you from taking or going somewhere important
- Refuse to help you when you need it
- Give you a medication you do not need

If you feel you or someone you know are being hurt in any way, tell someone now! Tell a friend, a relative, your service coordinator or anyone who will listen. Keep telling about the wrongful action, until someone listens and stops the action.