



**Mental Health
Mental Retardation
of Tarrant County**

3840 Hulen

North • Fort worth, TX 76107 • 817-569-4300

Street • Hulen Tower

**MENTAL RETARDATION
HANDBOOK OF
CLIENT RIGHTS**

MAY 2001

MHMRTC Complaint Line: 817-569-4367

**TDMHMR (Austin) Consumer Services & Rights Protection:
1-800-252-8154**

**Relay Texas' number (for hearing) 1-800-735-2988 and
1-800-735-2989 (for TDD)**

Advocacy, Inc.: 1-800-880-2884

MHMRTC Crisis Line: 817-335-3022 or 1-800-866-2465

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RIGHTS FOR CLIENTS WITH MENTAL RETARDATION

1. You have the same rights as all adults in the United States.
2. If you need help making decisions then a judge might appoint someone to assist you.
3. You can choose to vote in elections.
4. You can choose to go to church.
5. You can choose to get married and have a family.
6. You can choose to buy your own clothes and other things.
7. You have the right to be treated as an adult.
8. You have the right to be treated with respect.
9. You have the right to live where you can make as many choices as possible.
10. You have the right to go to school. This right will end at the end of the school year, after you turn 22 years old.
11. You have the right to have a doctor tell you that you do or do not have mental retardation.
12. A psychologist can tell you too.
13. You have the right not to agree with them.
14. If you do not agree with the decision that you have mental retardation, then you can choose to have another person test you. You will have to pay that person for the testing.
15. You can choose to get help from different agencies.
16. You can tell any staff what kind of help you want from them.
17. You can choose to have a job and you have the right to get paid.
18. You have the right to understand why you are being given any medication.
19. You can choose to look at your chart but a doctor may decide what parts you can see.
20. No one, but staff, can look at your chart unless you or your guardian gives them permission. Sometimes the law might permit somebody to look at it without your permission.

21. You have the right to be told all about your rights.
22. You can choose to stop getting help at MHMR/TC unless a judge decides that it is not safe for you to stop. (For example, it might not be safe for you to live on your own.)
23. You can choose when you do or do not want help from the staff at MHMR/TC. (For example, you can choose to buy your own clothes.)
24. You have the right to know if you have to pay for things yourself. You have the right to know how much you will have to pay. (For example, you may have to pay for your own phone bill.)
25. You have the right to know the name of the person who is working with you at MHMR/TC.
26. You have the right to know how MHMR/TC can help you.

GUARDIANS

- A judge can ask a person to be your guardian.
 - For example, the judge can ask the guardian to help you with:
 - a) deciding how to spend your money, or
 - b) deciding where you should live, or
 - c) deciding when you should take your medicine.

- A guardian should ask you about some of the things that you want.

- A guardian can meet with you and MHMR/TC staff.

- A guardian can look at your chart.

- A guardian will help protect your rights.

- Every year a guardian will have to tell the judge how you are doing.

YOUR RIGHTS IN AN ICF-M.R. PROGRAM

You have all the rights that are on pages 3 - 6. You also have all of the rights listed here.

1. You have the right to live in a house in a neighborhood.
2. You have the right to live in a house that is clean and safe.
3. If you are not feeling well you have the right to have your doctor tell you why, and how he or she can help you.
4. You have the right not to take any medicine that you do not need.
5. You have the right to know how the medicine you are taking can help you.
6. Staff can not hold your arms or legs unless you try to hurt someone.
7. Staff can not hold your arms or legs unless you try to hurt yourself.
8. MHMR/TC will write a plan that is just for you.
 - (a) Your plan will help you learn to do things all by yourself.
 - (b) You can help choose what you will learn with your plan.
 - (c) Staff has to get permission if the plan says that they can give you time out. Permission will come from the Rights Review Committee (talked about below).
 - (d) Staff has to get permission if the plan says that they can hold your arms or legs. Permission will come from the Rights Review Committee (talked about below).
 - (e) Staff has to get permission from you or your guardian before they can start using the plan.
9. You can choose to invite friends or family to come to MHMR/TC meetings with you.
10. You can choose to visit with other people in the community.
11. You have the right to spend time alone with visitors.
12. You have the right to leave your home and visit others.
13. You have the right to open your own mail.
14. You can choose to have staff help you if you need help with your mail.
15. You can choose the clothes that you want to buy.
16. MHMR/TC will help buy you clothes if you need them to help you.

17. Every day you can choose what clothes you will wear.
18. You can help choose what things you will have in your room.
19. MHMR/TC will make sure that you have a safe place in your home to keep your things. (For example, a safe for your money.)
20. You have the right to share a room with your husband or wife, if you live in the same house.
21. You can choose to take care of your own money.
 - (a) You can ask a friend or staff to help you with your money.
22. You have the right to know how much money you have in your savings.
23. You have the right to have regular mealtimes.
24. You can choose to make phone calls all by yourself.
25. You can choose to have staff help you with the phone.
26. You can choose to be in your room by yourself.
27. Staff must knock before they come into your room.
28. During the day you can choose to be out of your bed and out of your room.
29. You can choose to have staff help you move around inside the house (if you need their help).
30. Staff will be sure that you have things like toothpaste and shampoo.
31. You can choose to spend your own money and buy your own things.
32. MHMR/TC will be sure that you see a doctor or a dentist when you need to.
 - (a) The doctor or dentist must tell you why you need help from them.
 - (b) The doctor or dentist must tell you what will happen if you do not get help from them.
 - (c) You or your guardian must tell the doctor or dentist that it is ok for them to help you.
 - (d) You can choose to have your family or a friend help you decide what to let the doctor or dentist do.
 - (e) If you do not have someone to help you decide, then MHMR/TC will ask other people to help you.
 - (f) You can choose to meet with these people and tell them what you want to let the doctor or dentist do.
33. If you have to move out of the house, then MHMR/TC must give you time to get ready to move.
34. MHMR/TC will give you more time to get ready if you ask for it.

RIGHTS REVIEW COMMITTEE (Special Committee)

Sometimes MHMR/TC might have a plan that changes your rights.

MHMR/TC will have to let other people look at the plan.

The other people can include staff, parents, clients and others.

These people must look at the plan even if you or your guardian says that the plan is ok.

The plan may not be used until these people look at it and say that it is ok.

ADDITIONAL RIGHTS IN THE MRLA PROGRAM

You have all the rights that are on pages 3 and 6. You also have the rights that are listed here.

1. You have the right to be told about all the things that MHMR/TC can do for you.
2. You have a right to be a part of making the rules for the home. You have a right to be told about any rules that you have to follow. (For example, smoke outside, put your trash outside.) You have a right to know if any of the rules change.
3. You have the right to know the name of the person who is working with you. You have the right to know how they can help you.
4. You have the right to choose the people who will work with you.
5. You have the right to live in a house in the neighborhood.
 - (a)MHMR/TC will try to help you live in a house that is close to where you receive services.
 - (b)You can help choose where you want to live. Your choices might be limited by things like your income.
 - (c)You can help choose who will live in the home with you.
 - (d)You can help pick out the things that will be in your room.
 - (e)You have the right to live in a safe and clean home.
6. If you live with your husband or wife in the same house, then you can share the same room with them.
7. If you do not live with your husband or wife, when they visit you can be alone with them.
8. Staff can not ask you to do their work for them. (For example, to give medicine to someone, or to go to the store for them.
9. You can have people come and visit with you. You can be alone when you visit with them.
10. You have the right to go to places in the community by yourself. This might be limited if you need help from others. (For example, you might need someone else to drive you to the place you want to go.)
11. You have the right to religious freedom.
12. You have the right to be alone when you use the telephone.

13. You have the right to open your own mail.
14. Every year you will have your own plan at MHMR/TC.
 - (a) In the plan, MHMR/TC must help you learn to do things.
 - (b) Staff has to listen to what you want to learn in your plan.
 - (c) Your plan will change when you want to do something different.
15. There may be rules that are written just for you. You have to know about those rules.
 - (a) You can tell staff if you do not like those rules.
16. Staff has to tell you how you are doing in the program.
17. You can keep your own money.
 - (a) You can ask a friend or staff to help you with your money.
18. Staff can not hold your arms or legs unless you are going to hurt someone.
19. Staff can not hold your arms or legs unless you are going to hurt yourself.
20. You have the right to call someone when you are upset. You can ask any staff to dial the phone for you if you need help.
 - (a) You can call Client Rights.
 - (b) You can call HCS.
 - (c) You can call Advocacy, Inc.
21. You have the right to stop getting help at MHMR/TC.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Advocacy Inc. 1-800-880-2884

The Arc of Greater Tarrant County (817) 877-1474

United Cerebral Palsy (817) 332-7171

The Autism Society for Greater Tarrant County (817) 877-1474

Our Special Children..... (817) 885-4030