



Client Rights & Responsibilities

It is the policy of the Partnership for Children of Essex (PCE) to ensure that your rights as our client are safeguarded and that disputes concerning your rights and the rights of others are resolved promptly and fairly.

This document is a list of your rights and responsibilities as a client of PCE. It includes an explanation of PCE's conflict resolution and complaint/grievance procedures.

Rights:

It is the policy of PCE that youth and their families/caregivers have the right to:

- Be treated with respect, dignity, and recognition regarding privacy and cultural sensitivity, including gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, disability, and health status.
- Receive information about all partners in the Division of the Children's System of Care (CSOC).
- Request and receive information about the policies and procedures, clinical guidelines, and titles and names of all supervisory staff at PCE.
- Request and receive information regarding their family's care, their care, and their clinical records. Care Managers can provide information about how to get copies of records.
- Request and receive general information about PCE.
- Expect that, to the extent allowed by law, all identifying information regarding current or previous services, contacts, and treatment be kept confidential. The family has the right to refuse to disclose information to the agency or provider.
- To the extent allowed by law, expect that no identifying information will be released by PCE without having the valid written authorization of that youth and/or their legal guardian on file.
- Be informed of services, benefits, and how to access care.
- Choose and/or change provider(s). (The selection of providers may be limited by availability, by boundaries of participant's insurance program, including Medicaid, and by ability to pay.)
- Receive care in a timely manner. Timely manner refers to best practices and timelines established by the Children's System of Care. These timelines are part of the information available to all youth and their families/caregivers.
- Be full partners in every decision regarding the youth.
- Participate in an honest discussion with PCE Care Management staff about appropriate options necessary to achieve their family vision, regardless of cost or benefit coverage.
- Decline services.
- Openly communicate conflicts, complaints, or grievances about PCE service, care, administrative action, or quality of care issues without fear of retaliation or of losing their benefits.
- Have an authorized representative of their choice. An authorized representative is an individual chosen by the youth/family to act on their behalf in a conflict, complaint or grievance process. Any cost associated with this option is the responsibility of the youth/family.
- Make recommendations regarding youth and family rights and responsibilities policies.



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- Initiate a complaint orally or in writing.
- Timely resolution of conflicts, complaints, grievances, or reconsiderations.

Responsibilities:

It is the policy of PCE that youth and their families/caregivers have the responsibility to:

- Provide, to the extent possible and deemed appropriate by you and your family, information that PCE and other service providers need to arrange and provide care for the youth and family/caregiver.
- Collaborate with all system partners to develop a mutually agreed upon plan.
- Follow the plans and instructions for care that you and your family have developed with their teams.

Conflict Resolution and Complaint Guidelines:

As stated in the Rights section of this document:

- You have the right to the assistance of an independent person/authorized person and witnesses in presenting a complaint. Any costs associated with this assistance are your responsibility.

Conflict Resolution:

Occasionally, a disagreement may arise between you and your PCE Care Manager about how to address a need you have identified. Should this happen, you are encouraged to present your concern(s) regarding the disagreement as soon as possible so that a resolution can be found.

First Level Conflict Resolution:

1. The first level of conflict resolution should be directed to the Care Manager and/or the Care Manager Supervisor. The report of this conflict can be verbal or written. We strongly encourage you, or the person assisting you, to attempt to resolve any conflicts with the Care Manager and/or Care Manager Supervisor directly.
2. The Care Manager or Care Manager Supervisor will provide a response to your reported concern(s) within 5 business days.
3. You have the right to accept the first level conflict resolution decision.

Second Level Conflict Resolution:

1. If you are dissatisfied with the resolution, within the next 10 days you, or the person assisting you, may appeal the first level decision to the Operations Manager, either verbally or in writing.
2. The Operations Manager will provide a response to the appeal within 5 business days.

Third Level Conflict Resolution:

1. If you remain dissatisfied with the second level decision, you may further appeal to the Executive Director and/or the Director of Operations verbally or in writing.



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2. A decision will be made as quickly as possible but is dependent on the level of investigation needed.
3. If you continue to be dissatisfied with the third level response received, you may also file a complaint with the Centralized System Administrator (PerformCare) at 877-652-7624.

Complaints/Grievances:

A formal complaint/grievance should be filed with PCE if you feel that there has been a violation of your privacy rights, disagree with a decision PCE has made regarding the handling of your Protected Health Information (PHI), have concern(s) or about potential fraud committed by a PCE staff member. The steps for addressing a complaint/grievance are different for privacy issues than it is for potential fraud.

For Privacy and PHI Issues

First Level Complaint/Grievance:

1. The first level of complaint/grievance should be directed to the Compliance Manager. The Compliance Manager will provide you, or the person assisting you, with a form to complete in order to submit your complaint/grievance in writing. If you need additional assistance, the Compliance Manager will help you complete the form.
2. The Compliance Manager will investigate the complaint and notify you, and the person assisting you, in writing of the result of his/her investigation. If it is determined that your HIPAA privacy rights were violated, the Compliance Manager will provide you with a summary of the action that will be taken to address the complaint/grievance.

Second Level Complaint/Grievance:

1. If you filed a complaint/grievance regarding privacy issues or handling of your PHI, and you are dissatisfied with the response from the Compliance Manager, you have the right to file a written complaint to the Secretary of the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services via email at OCRComplaint@hhs.gov or through the mail at 200 Independence Ave., S.W.; Rm. 509F; HHH Bldg. Washington, D.C., 20201.

For Potential Fraud Concerns:

First Level Complaint/Grievance:

1. If you have concerns that a PCE staff member may have committed fraud such as falsifying visits to you or knowingly billing for services not provided, please contact Safe Hotline to report your concerns. You may anonymously call or text Safe Hotline at 1.855.662.SAFE or complete a complaint form at SafeHotline.com/SubmitReport. You must use PCE's Company ID (5681180846) when making your complaint.
2. Safe Hotline will share the anonymous report with the PCE Compliance Manager who will investigate the charge and respond accordingly to any allegations proven to be true.

**PLEASE REMEMBER, PCE WILL NEVER TAKE RETALIATORY ACTION
AGAINST YOU IF YOU FILE A GOOD-FAITH COMPLAINT!**