



CLIENTS RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND APPEALS STATEMENT

CLIENT RIGHTS

As an Alston Wilkes Society client, you have the right to:

- Be treated fair and equitably.
- Receive services in a non-discriminatory manner.
- Receive a personalized assessment of your needs upon which a plan to meet mutually determined goals will be developed with your input and implemented with your consent.
- Receive services within a reasonable time, ending when they are no longer needed.
- Receive support and assistance as you work to meet your goals.
- Referrals to other competent professionals or resources as needed.
- Refuse or terminate any form of treatment or services if your circumstances require it or if you feel it is in your best interest to do so (for non-mandated clients only).
- Be advised that terminating services against professional recommendation may be detrimental and may lead to discharge from the program.
- Receive notification of the reason for termination of services, if un-voluntarily terminated.
- Be informed of alternatives to recommended treatment and referral to other competent professionals delivering these alternative types of services.
- Request an in-house review of your care, treatment and/or service plan.
- Be informed if there will be a fee charged to you for services prior to receiving services.
- Be free from sexual abuse and sexual harassment
- Be free from retaliation for reporting such incidents of sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

Please note that we do not serve minors without parental or guardian consent.

CLIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

As an AWS client, you have the responsibility to:

- Provide personal and necessary information to effectively participate in services.
- Keep your scheduled appointments.
- Abide by the agreements you sign for each program.
- Maintain contact with AWS staff as indicated.
- Act in ways that bring respect to yourself, your family and friends, and other participants within the program.
- Not use bad language, swear, insult, or fight with other people.
- Refrain from any form of personal abuse towards others, including verbal, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.
- Not engage in any inappropriate contact or relationship with any other agency/program participants.

CONFIDENTIALITY

As an AWS client, your information gathered during service provision will remain strictly confidential, *except:*

- To entities for which you have signed a release of information
- Under court order (signed by a judge.)
- Under mandated reporting law including: 1) neglect or abuse of a child, including sexual abuse; and 2) expressed or suspected danger toward self or others.
- As required by a funding referral agency.
- As reviewed by case auditors, who are required to complete a confidentiality statement prior to access.
- For case supervision / consultation with individuals legally bound by confidentiality law.
- As required by health professionals in an emergency situation
- For judicial and administrative proceedings
- For uses and disclosures for law enforcement purposes
- For program evaluation purposes when information used is non-identifying.

You have the right/responsibility to:

- Release confidential information to whom you choose via your signed authorization.
- Review your record, except for information provided for professional use only or submitted in confidence (i.e. references, or information in a family case record that does not apply to the request, review would be harmful to the client and psychotherapy notes as defined by HIPAA.) In cases where review is deemed to be harmful to the client, a review may be done by another qualified professional, provided they sign a statement not to divulge information harmful to the client.
- Request amendments to your permanent file, place a statement in your file, or receive copies of responses to your amendments.
- Report any incidents or suspicions of sexual abuse or sexual harassment

GRIEVANCE/APPEALS PROCESS

If you are not satisfied with the services you are receiving from AWS or if you disagree with our plans and decisions, you have the right to appeal or make a complaint without fear of interference or retaliation. You must first talk to your AWS staff worker about the problem. If this is not possible or if you and your staff worker cannot work out the problem, you have the right to ask the staff’s supervisor to help solve the problem. Please write down what is wrong so the supervisor will know how to help solve the problem. AWS may request a meeting with you or seek more information. If you are still not satisfied you have the right to ask the Executive Director of AWS to help solve the problem. After additional fact finding, a concluding decision will be provided to you within 15 days. The response will be given to you in writing and a copy will be included in your case record. You also have the right to contact the appropriate public authority or regulatory body (e.g. Department of Social Services, The U.S. Bureau of Prisons, the VA, etc.) if you have a grievance or complaint. You can contact AWS by phone at (803) 799-2490 or by mail at 3519 Medical Drive, Columbia, SC 29203.

HOURS OF OPERATIONS

Office hours are posted in each AWS location. The state office’s (Columbia) hours are Mon. – Fri., 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

AWS will not discriminate against any person based on classes protected by law and those set forth in the staff worker’s respective Code of Ethics.

RESEARCH

AWS may participate in research projects (sociological/psychological research only) only with written consent of both the client and participating staff. AWS prohibits the involvement of clients and staff in medical, pharmaceutical and/or cosmetic experiments/research. AWS does monitor client progress for Performance & Quality Improvement purposes. You may be given an evaluation form before, during, and/or within 12 months of receiving services. You do not have to participate in these evaluations and it will not affect the services you receive.

SPECIAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

AWS will make every effort to accommodate language barriers as well as physical and mental disabilities when communicating with clients (i.e. translators for those who are hearing impaired, provide a bi-lingual translator, etc.).

CODE OF ETHICS

Every AWS employee will abide by the agency’s code of ethics and their respective professional codes of ethics.

By my signature below, I assert that I have read and understand my rights, responsibilities and the grievance appeal procedures.

Client Signature

Date

Guardian Signature (if client is under 18 years of age)

Date

Staff Signature

Date