

# Consumer Guide

In this section you will find information on your rights as a consumer and a glossary of words commonly used throughout the ADAMH community.

## Your rights as a consumer

As a consumer of a community mental health agency certified by the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH), you are entitled to 22 rights. These rights include items such as the right to be treated with consideration and respect. Each agency is required to post these rights in a visible place within the agency and to distribute a copy of the rights to each client at the first meeting or the next appointment. Consumers of community alcohol and drug treatment centers licensed by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS) have similar rights.

All community mental health centers, drug and alcohol treatment centers, mental health boards, ODMH and ODADAS are required to have someone who functions as a Client Rights Officer to assist consumers with complaints and grievances. The Client Rights Officer is responsible for assisting the client in filing the grievance if help is needed, investigating the grievance and representing the client in presenting the grievance.

A grievance is defined as “a written complaint initiated either verbally or in writing by a client or any other person or agency on behalf of a client regarding denial or abuse of any client’s rights.” Agencies have 20 working days from when the grievance is originally filed, to respond in writing.

If you feel your rights have been violated, you may file a grievance with the Client Rights Officer at the agency where you are receiving treatment. A staff member of the agency can put you in contact with that person. If you are not satisfied with the resolution provided by the agency, you may appeal your grievance with the Consumer and Family Advocate at the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board of Franklin County (ADAMH). If you are still not satisfied with the resolution, you may file an appeal with the Client Rights Advocate at the Office of Consumer Services at the Ohio Department of Mental Health.

Consumers receiving services in inpatient psychiatric facilities and/or involved in the forensic system have additional rights as well as restrictions. Please check with the Client Rights Advocate at the psychiatric facility for more information.