

# **Hotline Outer Banks Client Rights & Responsibilities Grievance & Appeal Procedures Nondiscrimination Policy**

## **Client Rights**

To be treated by staff at all times with dignity and respect.

To have the information you provide to Hotline Outer Banks kept confidential to the greatest extent allowed by law. If a situation arises where Hotline Outer Banks has to release information you shared, we will make every reasonable effort to notify you of what information needs to be shared, with whom, and for what purpose.

To file a grievance if you feel you have been improperly treated by our organization.

To appeal decisions made by Hotline staff regarding your services.

To contact the Civil Rights Office if you feel that you have been subjected to discrimination.

To have staff review paperwork with you thoroughly prior to signing, and to receive a copy of all paperwork that you are asked to sign.

To receive a copy of your records. Hotline asks for 7 business days to respond to records requests.

To decide which of Hotline Outer Banks' services you would like to receive. All services are voluntary.

To end your participation in services at any time.

To request and receive interpretation services whenever you feel such services to be helpful in your access to services.

To request disability accommodations needed to access services.

To give feedback on the service you received without fear of negative repercussions, and to contribute ideas that could improve the service.

## **Client Responsibilities**

To share in the responsibility of keeping Hotline Outer Banks a safe and secure place for survivors to seek services by keeping the location of Hotline offices, and the identities of anyone you encounter within these offices, confidential.

To treat staff, volunteers, and other Hotline clients with respect.

To refrain from acts or threats of violence. Any act or threat of violence directed toward staff, other clients, visitors or volunteers is grounds for immediate dismissal from services.

To notify your Hotline provider(s) of when and how it is safe to communicate with you, and keep the provider(s) updated to any changes in communication instructions. If you wish to withdraw from services, we suggest contacting your provider(s) to let them know, so that they do not attempt to contact you and potentially compromise your safety.

## **Grievance and Appeal Procedures**

Clients are encouraged to provide feedback while receiving services, both formally and informally. Clients can access feedback surveys both in print and online, and can use the comment boxes located at every Hotline office. These feedback surveys remain anonymous unless you share identifying information in your responses.

Clients may file a grievance when:

They feel that they have been unfairly dismissed from services, or wish to otherwise appeal a decision made by a Hotline staff member regarding services.

They wish to make a formal complaint about how they were treated by Hotline staff.

They feel that Hotline policies are overly restrictive.

They do not feel their confidentiality has been appropriately protected.

We ask that clients attempt to resolve unsatisfactory situations through a scheduled meeting with the staff member(s) involved. If the situation or concern cannot be resolved in this manner, the client may then proceed with contacting the staff member's supervising director (see contact information below). If the situation cannot be resolved in this manner, or if the grievance or complaint is with one of the supervising directors, the client may submit a complaint in writing to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will respond by telephone or in writing within 7 business days of receipt of the complaint. Decisions made by the Executive Director are final.

### **Contacts for Grievances:**

Executive Director, Bronwyn Thronton [bronwyn@HotlineOuterBanks.org](mailto:bronwyn@HotlineOuterBanks.org) (252)338-5338

The Grievance and Appeal policies do not preclude Hotline staff from requiring the immediate vacating of the premises by an individual alleged to have been threatening or violent, or who are alleged to be a danger to themselves or others.

### **Nondiscrimination Policy**

Hotline Outer Banks operates its program, services and activities in compliance with federal nondiscrimination laws. No person shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin (including limited English proficiency), disability, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any of our programs.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write:  
Office of Civil Rights, Office of Justice Programs  
U.S. Department of Justice (OCR)  
810 7th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20531

OR call (202)307-0690 (Voice) or (202)307-2027 (TDD/TTY).

Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may also contact OCR through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339 (TTY), 877-877-8982 (Speech) or 800-845-6136

## **Acknowledgement of Receipt and Understanding of**

### **Client Rights & Responsibilities, Grievance and Appeal Procedures, Non-Discrimination Policy**

Through your signature below, you attest that:

- You have had the opportunity to thoroughly review the Client Rights, Responsibilities, and Grievance Procedures.
- You have been given ample opportunity to ask questions of your Hotline provider regarding these policies, and understand that you can continue to ask questions in the future regarding these policies. –
- You have been offered a copy of these policies to keep for your records.
- You understand that a copy of these procedures can also be provided to you at any point during service delivery, or after service delivery has ended.

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_