

# **LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND OF THE PALM BEACHES**

## **STATEMENT OF RIGHTS**

1. You have the right to be treated in the least restrictive manner and setting that will appropriately meet your needs.
2. You have the right to receive services without regard to your age, race, color, religion, sex, marital status, disability or national origin.
3. You have the right to be treated with dignity and respect; to remain free from mental, physical, and sexual abuse, financial or other exploitation and to be ensured of assistance which advocates against neglect.
4. You have the right to refuse services. Participation in our programs is voluntary. Therefore, your input is encouraged. Your informed consent of program participation will be documented by your signature on this form, and other forms signed throughout your program (Exceptions to consent will be those individuals who have either been adjudicated by the court and/or have a legal guardian). You may ask for assistance in finding other programs that you feel would be more appropriate for you.
5. You have the right to be included in the development of your program plan and have a family member or any other person of your choice involved in developing these plans. You can request a change in your program plan at any time.
6. You have the right to personal choice. You have the right to make your own decisions about the risks that you take. (Exceptions: Individuals who are not their own legal guardian.)

7. You have the right to confidentiality. No information concerning you will be given to anyone outside of Lighthouse without written permission from you (or your legal guardian). Exceptions to the requirement for obtaining authorization:
- If information is requested by a court order/subpoena or search warrant.
  - If you make a comment that can be interpreted as a threat to harm yourself or someone else (Florida State law requires that this information be reported to the appropriate authority regardless of confidentiality).
  - If you are involved in criminal activity and a police investigation.
  - If you are missing or in jeopardy, we may release identifying information to local authorities.
  - Information shared in usual and customary activities for monitoring the quality and utilization review of the services provided.
  - Lighthouse will not release information produced by other organizations or persons such as physicians. You may obtain these reports from the originator of the document(s).
8. You (or your guardian) have the right to review information in your file at any reasonable time. Ask Lighthouse staff and they will make arrangements within three working days (an extra week would be required if you request file information in alternate format). A staff person will be with you when you review your file.
9. You have the right to know about the source of payment for your program and have this explained to you.
10. You have the right to receive reasonable physical and/or environmental accommodations including but not limited to: written materials in the media of your choice including regular print, large print, Braille or audio, and interpretative services.

11. You have the right to participate in planning for your exit from programming. Lighthouse reserves the right to discharge immediately in cases where your behavior poses a threat of danger to yourself and/or others.
12. You have the right to a personal representative (advocate) to help protect your rights. Lighthouse staff will help you find advocacy services if you request them. Statewide Client Assistance Program: 1-800-342-0823. The client advocate for Division of Blind Services is located in the state office and can be contacted at: 1-800-342-1828.
13. You have the right to bring grievances regarding possible violations of basic rights including the following: any questionable, inappropriate treatment/method and any policy, procedure, action, or lack thereof by this agency.

If you feel that any of your basic rights have been violated or that the agency has not followed its values and ethics policies, you have the right to file a grievance. Staff involved will make sure that your complaint is investigated thoroughly.

You may ask any staff member or outside advocacy agencies to help you in this process.

- The first step in the grievance procedure is to write your complaint and give it to the staff person involved. They have three working days to help you resolve the issue. They must put their answer to you in writing.
- If you are not happy with their decision, you should give your written complaint to the Director of Vision Services, who will also have three working days to resolve the issue and give you a written response.

- If you are not happy with this outcome, the last person at Lighthouse that you will give your written complaint to is the President and CEO. He will give you a written answer within three working days. This will be the final decision from Lighthouse.
- If your problem does not get resolved at Lighthouse, you should talk to an advocate outside of the agency. The Advocacy Center or any of your supports can help you with this.

14. You have the right to be free from retaliation for grievances that you make.

I have been given a copy of Lighthouse's Statement of Rights.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Guardian (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date