

# CLIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES POLICY

Individuals receiving service at Family Service Toronto (FST) have both rights and responsibilities. Clients and participants will be educated about their rights and responsibilities in a variety of ways (e.g., posters in service locations, in written form, by staff through the intake and assessment process, posting of this policy on FST's website).

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all personnel (employees, students, volunteers) who serve clients.

## LIMITATIONS

Clients have the right to ask for a change of worker however, the request will only be granted when it is reasonable and an alternative exists. Requests that are discriminatory in nature will not be granted. (See policy on Discriminatory Requests for Service.)

## PROCEDURES

1. Personnel will explain to clients their rights and responsibilities as a regular part of the intake and assessment process and will answer questions posed by clients.
2. Program Managers will ensure the client rights and responsibilities statement (below) is available in written form in English and French and the other major languages served by the program.
3. Personnel will ensure they are familiar with FST's privacy policies and procedures so that they can answer client's questions and assist clients in exercising their rights in regard to their record.
4. Personnel will ensure that each client signs a form to acknowledge they have received and understand the information provided. If a client is unable to read the information provided due to literacy, vision, language or other issues, staff will ensure that they have verbally reviewed the information and will document this and the client's acknowledgement in the client record.
5. In situations where service is provided by web-based technologies, this information will be sent to the client in advance of the first session and staff will review it prior to the start of the first session and document this in the client record.

## CLIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Welcome to Family Service Toronto (FST) where we provide high quality service in an encouraging and supportive environment. Our staff will work with you to explore and understand the issues of concern to you and develop solutions. We consider you to be the expert in your own life experience. Together, you and your FST staff person will develop a plan to guide your work and an estimate of how much time it will take to accomplish your goals.

Service may be provided to you by a staff person employed by FST, a student or a volunteer who is supervised by an FST staff person. FST virtual and office business hours are typically Monday to Friday 9-5 pm. Your FST staff person can advise of services provided outside those hours. Services are also provided virtually.

## YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

You have rights. When you receive services from FST we will:

- Give you high-quality service
- Provide service and supports provide service free of harassment, discrimination or coercion
- Treat you fairly, honestly and respectfully
- Discuss the risks, benefits and alternatives related to engaging in service
- Provide services that are responsive to your cultural beliefs and practices
- Provide services and supports that meet your individual needs in the least restrictive or intrusive manner possible. Inform you of the limits of confidentiality related to service provision outlined in the Service Agreement
- Inform you of our procedure related to frequent missed appointments outlined in the Service Agreement
- Give you information and support to help you make decisions
- Keep your information private and confidential, except in specific circumstances as described in FST's Privacy Statement
- Apply program rules and expectations consistently
- Provide service in offices that are safe, clean and accessible
- Discuss the progress of your service with you, including addressing frequent missed appointments
- When permitted by law, we will involve your family or legal guardians in making decisions about the services provided
- Hear your concerns or complaints about FST services and decisions without interference or reprisal
- Respond to your concerns or complaints in writing and in a timely manner as outlined in the FST Complaint Policy

## HOW TO PROVIDE COMPLIMENTS OR MAKE A COMPLAINT

If you would like to provide us with a compliment or want to make a complaint about your service, please speak with the staff person you are working with. If this is uncomfortable for you, you can speak to the staff person's supervisor. Please call our Service Access Unit at 416-595-9618 to be directed to the supervisor. Complaints regarding Ministry of Children and Community Social Services (MCCSS) guidelines and directives are outside of the scope of the FST Complaint policy.

This is what we ask from you:

- Treat the staff and others at FST with courtesy and respect
- Maintain the privacy of other clients accessing FST services
- Actively participate in all aspects of your service, by providing information and documentation to FST staff as requested
- Inform staff of any accessibility needs or accommodations you require when providing service
- Let FST know 24 hours before if you can't keep an appointment
- Pay the agreed upon fee for programs that charge for service

You should know that FST does not tolerate discriminatory, threatening, harassing, or aggressive behaviours or actions in person, phone, email, or video conference. If these occur, they may be grounds for FST to terminate our relationship with you.

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