

Individual/Parent/Guardian Rights

First Step, Inc. protects the dignity and respect of the individuals served by implementing a system of rights. First Step has committed to protect and promote the rights of the individuals served. This commitment guides the delivery of services and ongoing interactions with the individuals served.

First Step has these rights available in multiple formats. These rights shall be transmitted to the individuals and their parents or guardians in a manner and fashion that is clear and understandable.

First Step consumers have the right to:

- **Be free from physical or psychological abuse or neglect, retaliation, humiliation, and financial exploitation.**
- **Have control over their own financial resources.**
- **Receive, purchase, have and use their own personal property.**
- **Actively and meaningfully make decisions affecting their life.**
- **Have access to pertinent information in sufficient time to facilitate decision making.**
- **Have privacy.**
- **Associate and communicate publicly or privately with any person or group of people of their choice.**
- **Practice the religion of their choice.**
- **Be free from the inappropriate use of a physical or chemical restraint, medication, or isolation as punishment, for the convenience of staff, in conflict with a physician's order or as a substitute for treatment, except when a physical restraint is in furtherance of the health and safety of the individual.**
- **Not be required to work without compensation, except when the individual is residing and being provided services outside of the home of a member of the individual's family, and then only for the purposes of the upkeep of their own living space and of common living area and grounds that the individual shares with others.**
- **Be treated with dignity and respect.**
- **Receive due process.**

- **Have access to their own records, including information about how their funds are accessed and utilized and what services were billed for on the individual's behalf.**
- **Give informed consent or refusal, or expression of choice regarding:**
 - **Service delivery.**
 - **Release of information.**
 - **Concurrent services.**
 - **Composition of the service delivery team.**
 - **Involvement in research projects, if applicable.**
- **Access or referral to legal entities for appropriate representation.**
- **Access to self-help and advocacy support services.**
- **Adherence to guidelines and ethics if involved in research**
- **Investigation and resolution of alleged infringement of rights.**
- **Have all personal records and information, regardless of whether it is visual, verbal, or written, maintained in a confidential manner in accordance with all legal guidelines.**