

# TEEN'S BILL OF RIGHTS

You are probably familiar with the rights that we all have as Americans: things like freedom of religion and freedom of speech. While you are in this hospital you have all those rights, but you also have some extra ones. These rights are meant to make sure you get the best kind of care and treatment while you are here.

This hospital is determined to protect your rights. The only reason any of these rights can be limited is if your doctor thinks you may hurt yourself or someone else, or if your doctor thinks the limitation is necessary for your treatment. Any time your rights are restricted, your doctor will tell you why and for how long. Your doctor has to reconsider this restriction on a regular basis so that you can have all your rights back as soon as possible.

If you think your rights aren't being protected, or you just want to talk to someone about your treatment, there are several places you can call:

If you are at a **private psychiatric hospital**, you can call:

Health Facility Licensing and Compliance Division **1-888-973-0022**  
Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)  
1100 W. 49th St., Austin, TX 78756

If you are at a DSHS state hospital, you can call:

Consumer Services and Rights Protection **1-800-252-8154**  
Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation  
P.O. Box 12668, Austin, TX 78711-2668

Whether you are at a **psychiatric hospital or a DSHS state hospital**, you can call:

Advocacy, Incorporated **1-800-315-3876**  
7800 Shoal Creek Blvd., Suite 171 E, Austin, TX 78757

**Of course, you should always talk to your parents or a friend about the things you like and don't like at the hospital.**

The back of this page tells you about your most important rights\* while you are at this hospital. Take some time to read about them, and don't be afraid to ask questions if you are not sure what something means. The people here want to help you.

*\*There's a longer version of this document that includes more detail about the rights you have in this hospital. Your parents or guardian will get a copy of it, but if you'd like a copy, just ask someone on the hospital staff for a copy of the "Patient's Bill of Rights."*

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**STATEMENT THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED THIS DOCUMENT AND THAT IT HAS BEEN EXPLAINED**

- \_\_\_ I agree that I got a copy of this document (back and front) prior to admission.
- \_\_\_ I agree that sometime during the first 24 hours after I was admitted, someone on the hospital staff explained what it says to me in a language that I understand (if involuntarily committed).
- \_\_\_ I agree that someone on the staff explained what it says to me in a language I understand prior to admission (if voluntarily committed).

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Witness \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship of witness to patient: \_\_\_\_\_

## Basic Rights

1. You have the right to be treated with respect and dignity in a place that is clean and where you are protected from harm.
2. You have the right be treated somewhere where you are restricted as little as possible.
3. You have the right to know about all of the rules and regulations at this hospital so that you don't have to wonder what you can and can't do.
4. You have the right to be treated in a part of this hospital that is separate from adult patients.

### Personal Rights

5. You have the right to talk and write to your friends and family outside the hospital. This means you can write to people, get mail that hasn't been opened, call people, and have visitors. The hospital may have some rules about when you can have visitors or make phone calls. If you're not sure what the rules are, ask someone.
6. You have the right to keep and use any personal possessions you brought with you, like games or books or clothes.
7. You have the right to go outside and exercise or play every day. If your doctor decides that it's not good for you to go outside for a few days, he or she has to tell you why and has to reconsider that decision at least once every three days.
8. If another person in your room is bothering you, you can ask someone who works at the hospital if you can have another room. If they can't give you another room, they have to tell you why and help you work out the situation.

9. If you get sick while you are in this hospital, be sure to tell someone. Doctors will make sure you get treatment for your illness.

10. You have the right to be free from unnecessary searches of your possessions. Although hospital staff are allowed to search your possessions when you are admitted, move from one program to another, or return from pass to make sure you don't have anything dangerous, they can only do other searches of your belongings if a doctor says it's okay because he or she has reason to believe that you have something that is dangerous or bad for you. If the doctor thinks you are hiding something dangerous or bad for you on your body and asks you to remove any clothing, it must be done in private, and a hospital staff person of the same sex as you has to be in the room.

11. The hospital has to have someone come in to teach you so you don't fall behind in your schoolwork. [Editor's note: As required by Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidelines.]

### Care and Treatment

12. You have the right to be treated by people who have special education in the treatment of teenagers who have conditions like yours.

13. You have the right to know ahead of time if your treatment will include any special observation methods, including videotaping, tape recorders, movies, or photographs. Your parents or guardian have to give permission for the doctors to use these things, so be sure to talk to your parents or guardian if you don't like what you hear about these special observation methods.

**14.** You have the right to be told about the treatments, medicines, and therapies that your doctor plans to use on you. Your parents or guardian should talk with you to be sure you think the treatments are all right. They have to give the doctor permission to use the treatments, so you should talk to them if you don't like something.

**15.** Your doctor and some other people will have a plan for your treatment, and you and your parents or your legal guardian have the right to help develop that plan. If there's someone else who you would like to help plan your treatment, you should tell the hospital staff. They'll make sure it's okay with your parent or legal guardian, and if it is, they will invite the person to participate.

**16.** You have the right to be given only the medicines you need, and no more.

**17.** You have the right not to be physically restrained (restriction of movement of your body by person or by a device or by being locked in a room alone) unless your doctor says it's necessary. However, if there is a situation in which staff thinks you may hurt yourself or someone else if you aren't restrained right away, you can be restrained for up to an hour before the doctor's permission is gotten. Whenever you are restrained, staff has to tell you why you are being restrained, how long you'll be restrained, and what you need to do to be removed from restraint sooner.

**18.** You have the right to meet and get to know the people on the staff who are responsible for your care.

**19.** If your doctor thinks you should be transferred to another program inside or outside the hospital, you have the right to know why.

**20.** If you have to be taken from the hospital to another place, the hospital can't let you ride in a police car unless there isn't any other car available.