

THE UNIQUE
CARING
FOUNDATION

"BUILDING BRIDGES TO THE COMMUNITY"

www.uniquecaringfoundation.com



Client & Guardian Handbook

Welcome to
THE UNIQUE CARING FOUNDATION, INC.

Services Offered:

- ❖ **Therapeutic Foster Care**
- ❖ **Family Foster Care**
- ❖ **Specialized Foster Care**

MCOs Served:

- ❖ **Cardinal Innovations Healthcare Solutions**
- ❖ **Sandhills Center**

**If you receive a Medicaid service, your Medicaid must remain current in order to receive services. Please notify your QP immediately if there will be a change to your Medicaid. **

Business Information:

Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

Phone Number: (704) 569-8654

Fax Number: (704) 563-8677

7128 B Albemarle Road Charlotte, NC 28212

www.uniquecaringfoundation.com

Unique Caring After Hours Crisis Line: 1-800-815-7197

Mecklenburg County Mobile Crisis Line: (704) 566-3410

First Responder/After Hours Protocol:

The Unique Caring Foundation has an after hour's answering service for accessing Unique Caring Foundation Office Staff for emergencies, incident reporting and accident reporting that occur when Unique Caring Foundation offices are closed. Typical business hours are Monday through Friday 9am to 5pm. We are closed holidays and weekends.

For your convenience, the after hour's answering service number is:

1-800-815-7197

The answering service operator will connect you to the Unique Caring Foundation office on-call staff that will assist you with the emergency/incident/accident. In the event a Unique Caring Foundation on-call staff is not immediately available, you will receive a call back from the Unique Caring Foundation staff as soon as possible. If you get disconnected from the answering service operator, Unique Caring Foundation on-call staff, or do not receive a call back within 15 minutes, please call (704) 297-9456 and let the person know that your call was disconnected or you have not received a return call.

For a life-threatening situation:

Call 911 immediately

Once the situation is under control, call (704) 569-8654 to report to Unique Caring Foundation.

All Emergencies, Urgent Matters, Incidents and Accidents (big and small) must be reported to The Unique Caring Foundation or on-call staff.

You must speak with a person.

You will also need to complete an accident/incident report. The written report must be completed and sent to Unique Caring within 24 hours of the incident. If the incident occurs over the weekend, the report is due Monday. The Unique Caring Foundation staff will assist with determining what other information may be needed with the incident/accident report.

Reports can be dropped off at the office, 5500 Executive Center Drive, Suite 118 Charlotte, NC 28212

Notice of Privacy Practices

This notice describes how medical information, also referred to as Protected Health Information (PHI) about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. PHI includes information such as: name, DOB, SS#, diagnosis, dates of service, ect. The information required to provide services through Unique Caring Foundation is considered PHI.

How your health information may be used / disclosed: We may use and disclose your Protected Health Information (PHI) in performing business activities, which we call “operations”. These operations allow us to improve the quality of care we provide. We may also use and/or disclose your information in accordance with federal and state laws for the following purposes:

Operations:

- Reviewing and improving the quality and efficiency of care
- Reviewing and evaluating the skills, qualifications and performance of independent contractors who are providing services to you
- Working with outside organizations that review the services and assess the quality of care we provide such as MCO’s or accreditation organizations
- Working with outside organizations that evaluate, certify or license care providers, staff or facilities
- Conducting business management and general administrative activities related to our organization and the services we provide
- Resolving complaints/grievances within our organization
- Planning for our organizations future operations

Service or Treatment:

- We may use and disclose PHI about you to provide healthcare treatment to you
- We may use and disclose PHI about you to provide, coordinate, or manage your services, healthcare or related activities
- We may use and disclose PHI about you to care providers who provide services to you

Billing and Payment:

- We may use and give your PHI information to claim departments within MCOs or related government agencies to bill and collect payment for the services provided to you
- We may use and give PHI information to departments within the MCOs or related government agencies pertaining to your deductible

Family, Guardian & Natural Supports:

- We may disclose your PHI to family members, relatives, guardians or natural supports when the information is directly relevant to that person's involvement with your care
- We may use or disclose your PHI to notify a family member, guardians or another person responsible for your care regarding your location, general condition or death

Health Oversight:

- We may use or disclose your PHI for public health activities, include the reporting of disease, injury, vital events and the collection of public health information or surveys, investigation and/or intervention
- We may disclose your PHI to a health oversight agency for oversight activities authorized by law, including audits, investigations, inspections, licensure or disciplinary actions, administrative and/or legal proceedings.

Reports suspicion of alleged Abuse, Neglect:

- We may disclose your PHI when it concerns allegations of abuse or neglect or violence toward you in accordance with federal and state law

Department of Health and Human Services:

- We may disclose you PHI when required by the US Department of Health and Human Services as part of an investigation or determination of our compliance with relevant laws

Legal Proceedings and Law Enforcement:

- We may disclose your PHI for certain judicial or administrative proceedings
- We may disclose your PHI for law enforcement purposes or other specialized governmental functions

Coroners, Medical Examiners, Funeral Directors, and Organ Donation:

- We may disclose your PHI to a coroner, medical examiner or a funeral director
- We may disclose your PHI to an organ donation and procurement organization if you are an organ donor

Public Safety:

- We may use or disclose your PHI to prevent or lessen a serious threat to the health or safety to you or another person or to the public

Business Associates:

- We may disclose your PHI to a business associate with whom we contract to provide services on our behalf. To protect your PHI, we require our business associates to appropriately safeguard the PHI of the individuals we serve (Unique Caring Foundation Corporate Attorney's, and/or MCOs ect.)

Access to Information:

- You may schedule a time to view any PHI in your record with your QP
- You may ask for a copy of your records. This right is subject to certain specific exceptions.

We will not use or disclose your PHI for any other purpose without your written consent.

Client Rights Brochure:

Your rights as a receipt of services through, The Unique Caring Foundation Inc. If you would like a copy of the rights and responsibilities with pictures, we have them available, please let us know.

It is the policy of the State to assure basic human rights to each client of a facility. These rights include the right to dignity, privacy, human care, and freedom from mental and physical abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Each facility shall assure to each client the right to live as normally as possible while receiving care and treatment. It is further the policy of this State that each client who is admitted to and is receiving services from a facility had the right to treatment, including access to medical care and habilitation, regardless of age or degree of mental illness, development disabilities, or substance abuse. Each client has the right to an individualized written treatment or habilitation plan setting forth a program to maximize the development or restoration of his capabilities. You can expect to receive services and supports to help increase independence and to be treated with dignity, acceptance and respect.

We will help you to understand your needs and/or conditions and work on a plan that you can agree on that is founded on the best practices.

- **You have fundamental American right.**

- Free Speech
- Religious Freedom
- Personal Liberty

- **You have certain civil rights, unless a court has declared you incompetent.**

- To register and vote
- To buy, sell, or own property
- To sign a contract
- To sue others who have wronged you
- To marry or get a divorce
- To procreate and raise children

- **You have the right to a Treatment Plan**

- You have the right to choose goals that will assist you to lead the type of life that you want for yourself
- You have the right to develop your own treatment plan with the help of persons that you choose to be part of your “team”. You have the right to review your plan along with your “team” to see how you are doing. You have the right to make choices about the services and supports you receive and who provides them.
- You have the right to receive services that give you the most freedom possible as well as to be an independent person and have the life that you want
- You have the right to make changes in your treatment plan, medical care, your provider agency or care coordinator, and your direct service staff
- You have the right to ask questions, disagree with or make suggestions about the services that you receive from The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc.
- You have the right to make a complaint, grievance or an appeal regarding your services

- **You have the right to be informed about your health concerns or conditions and about medications that may help you**

- As a recipient of services, you have the right and responsibility to understand your diagnosis including medical, mental health, development disability and substance abuse. Some conditions improved with medication.
- You have the right to obtain a notice of privacy practices explaining the disclosure of health information
- There may be goals in your treatment plan for taking medications
- You have the right to understand how the medication may help
- You have the right to take the lowest dose possible that is effective for you. You have the right to refuse to take the medicine that is prescribed by your physician or the right to request a change in your medicine.

- Your physician, physicians assistant, nurse practitioner, or pharmacist is responsible for explaining the risk or harm to you if you refuse to take your prescribed medication. Medication may never be used to punish you or because it is more convenient for the people who work with you.
- **You have the right to confidentiality**
 - Local and Federal laws protect your right to confidentiality about your treatments or services. Your records and other information about you will not be shared with other agencies without your signed permission. You can withdraw permission at any time. You can ask that only certain parts of your record be shared. Unique Caring Foundation will not re-disclose information without your consent as stated on 10A NCAC 26B .0304 (a & b) or disclose information as stated in G.S. 122C-52 through G.S. 122C-56. The individual or legally responsible person shall give consent voluntarily in accordance with 10A NCAC 26B. 0205.

Sometimes the law may require us to share information about you and the services that you receive.

- In special situations, if a family member is involved in your treatment or service, they may be allowed
- You have the right to only release minimum information necessary for coordination of care and services
- A consumer representative or other advocate may review your record when they are asked to work on your behalf
- The court may order us to release your records
- The Area Authority may request to see your record
- A state facility may furnish client identifying information to the Department for the purpose of maintaining an index of clients served in State facilities with maybe used by State facilities only if that information is necessary for appropriate and effective evaluation
- A facility may disclose confidential information to persons responsible for conducting general research or clinical, financial, or administrative audits if there is a justifiable documented need for this information. A person receiving the information may not directly or indirectly identify any service recipient in the report, audit or any other information

- If your treatment or service changes to another agency, the other agency may need to receive your records
- If you go to jail or prison, we may share your files with prison officials if they believe you need mental health, substance abuse or developmental disability services
- In an emergency, another doctor, nurse or counselor who is treating you may see your records
- If you seem to be a danger to yourself or to others, or if we believe that you are likely to commit a crime, we are required by law to tell the police or a judge
- Special confidentiality rules may apply to you if you have a legal guardian, are under age 18, and are receiving treatment for drugs and/or alcohol
- When a child is receiving services and his/her parents are divorced, both birth parents may have access to their child's record unless their parental rights have been taken away
- The Unique Caring Foundation Inc., is required by law to report suspected abuse or neglect of children, teens disabled adults
- If you feel that your right to confidentiality has been violated, you have the right to complain to our Quality Assurance Director at (704) 569-8654. You have the right to ask someone you trust to help you make a complaint.

- **You have the right to refuse services:**

- Before you agree to your treatment plan and sign it, you will be told of the benefits or risks of the services that you receive. You have the right to consent to your plan and you also have the right at any time to refuse the services. The risks or harm of refusing services will be explained to you. The only time you can be treated without the consent is in an emergency situation. Some examples would be if you are thought to be a danger to yourself or others or when treatment has been court-ordered or if you are a minor and your parents have given the permission.

- **You have the right to see your own record:**

- If you wish to see your record, you have the right to do so except in some situations described in law and according to agency procedures. You have the right to have these situations explained to you
- You have the right to make alterations to your records and process

- A copy of your treatment plan should be given to you upon completion/approval. If you have not received a copy or would like an additional copy, you may verbally request this from your QP.
- **You have the right to privacy:**
 - You have the right to be free from any search of your person or property without just cause. The Unique Caring Foundation has policies regarding appropriate search and seizure protocol.
- **You have the right to know the cost of services:**
 - The menu of services and budgeting of hours/services is discussed at treatment plan meetings
- **You have the right to be treated with respect:**
 - Some programs are approved to use special techniques or interventions in an emergency if you become dangerous to yourself or others or to property. These special techniques will only be used if all positive or redirection will not work. Before you begin receiving services, you will be informed of the types of interventions that are approved for use by The Unique Caring Foundation care providers or staff. You have the right to refuse a planned intervention if it is suggested as part of your treatment plan. You, your team, parents and/or guardians and the Human Rights Committee must approve these planned interventions. If you have any restrictions approved, a plan will be developed for restoring these rights.
 - To protect you, there are very strict rules for staff about using interventions. Only trained staff out (time spent completely alone). Punishment I never allowed. Staff must protect you from harm while you are in any program and must report any form of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
 - A number of safeguards must be in place if these interventions are used and you or your parent/guardian have a right to request that someone you name will be told if an intervention is used. If you are a minor and admitted yourself, your parent or guardian has the right to talk with your program staff and to know when you are discharged.
 - Some emergencies may require police help or that a legal process be started to admit someone to a hospital against their will.

- The Unique Caring Foundation care providers and staff may never use these techniques to get back at you, because it is easier for them or in a way hurts you or is very uncomfortable.

- **You have the right to freedom from abuse, neglect, mistreatment and exploitation.**

- **You have the right to get information about your rights and responsibilities and to know the rules of Unique Caring Foundation Inc.**
 - When you start services through Unique Caring Foundation you have the right to learn about the rules you are expected to follow and what the consequences will be for not following the rules. You should expect to receive a guide for Unique Caring Foundation before you begin services.

 - If you do not feel adequately informed about the rules of your service through Unique Caring Foundation, you may contact our Corporate Compliance Officer at (704) 569-8654.

 - If you do not follow your program rules, you may be asked to leave Unique Caring Foundation as a service recipient.

 - You and your team may meet and decide that you need a different kind of service if your condition meets medical necessity for that service.

 - If you disagree, you have the right to appeal in writing.

- **Your rights in a 24-hour Facility**
 - When you receive care in a 24-hour facility you have more rights beyond those already listed above. Treatment rights and additional rights in a 24 hour facility are listed in G.S. 122 C-61 AND 122 C-62. When you start living in a 24-hour facility, direct service staff may search you and your things to prevent dangerous objects or illegal drugs from being brought into the home. The facility itself may be searched if staff believes that these items are present and staff or care providers may search service recipients who are children or teens. Additional regulations may apply to you as stated in G.S. 122 C-205. Permitting disclosure of confidential information may apply to the records if an individual when federal statues or regulations applicable to that individual prohibit the disclosure of that information.

- **Additional rights of minors living in 24-hour Facilities:**

The first four rights may not be restricted or limited:

- To contact and consult with your parent or guardian or the agency or person that has legal custody of you.
- To contact or consult with, at your expense or that of the person legally responsible for you, lawyers, private doctors and private mental health, developmental disabilities and substance abuse professionals that you or your legally responsible person chooses.
- To contact and talk with the Consumer Representative or other advocate
- To send and receive mail and have writing materials, stamps, and help from direct service staff when necessary.

The rights below may be restricted in some circumstances by your doctor or therapist responsible for your services. There are special procedures to establish a restriction.

- To receive proper adult supervision and guidance.
- To have opportunities to mature physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially, and vocationally.
- To have structure and supervision that respects your rights.
- To have treatment separate from adult service recipients unless your treatment needs direct that you should be with adults.
- To make and receive telephone call. Long distance calls will be at your own expense or made collect.
- To have visitors with staff, direct service staff, or family supervision when it does not cause problems with treatment or school and during agreed upon hours.
- To receive special education and job related training according to state and federal law.
- To be outside daily and participate in play, recreation and physical exercise according to your needs.
- To keep and use your own clothing and belongings with supervision.
- To participate in worship that you choose.

- To have access to a place to store your own belongings.
- To have access and spend a reasonable amount of your own money.
- To keep a driver's license unless prohibited by law.
- To have the right to dignity, privacy and human care in the provision of personal health, hygiene and basic grooming care.

You have two special rights in you receive services in a day/night or 24-hour program.

- To socialize with other persons in the program
 - To make suggestions about the program and its rules.
- **You have the right to make advance instructions**
 - In North Carolina, Advance Instruction for Mental Health Treatment is a legal document that tells doctors and health care providers what mental health service or treatment that would want and what services or treatment you would not want if you later become unable to decide yourself.
 - You can name a person to make health care decisions for you if you are not able to make them yourself. This must be done legally as part of a Health Care Power of Attorney. Your care coordinator, therapist, nurse, doctor or consumer representative can tell you more. A consumer advocate may help you file papers for advanced instructions. For more information go to websites: <http://goo.gl/mP6Ebn> or <http://www.secretary.state.nc.us/ahcdr/FAQ.aspx>
- **Additional rights of adults residing in 24-hour facilities:**

The first four rights listed may not be restricted, limited or taken away. The other rights listed may be limited under certain circumstances. There are special procedures to establish a restriction.

- To receive necessary services for and prevention of medical problems based on your condition and length of stay. (You may be billed for this care if it is more than the authorized amount of services.)
- To send and receive sealed mail and have writing materials, stamps, and help from direct service staff provided to you when necessary.

- To contact and consult with, at your own expense, lawyers, private doctors, and private mental health, developmental disabilities and substance abuse professionals that you choose.
 - To keep and spend your own money.
 - To keep a driver's license unless prohibited by law
 - To have access to a place to store your own belongings
 - To have the right to dignity, privacy, and humane care in the provision of personal health, hygiene and grooming care.
 - To have your own written discharge plan that contains recommendations about other services that you may need. You and/or guardian have the right to have your discharge plan become a part of your treatment plan.
 - To have quiet place to sleep without being disturbed during regular, reasonable, sleeping hours and to have a place to spend some time alone.
 - To have the rights to decorate your own room.
 - If you are dissatisfied with a service or feel that you have not been treated fairly, you have the right to make a complaint at any time. You may ask anyone you choose to help you make complaint.
 - Try to talk about your problem first with your direct service staff, QP to staff at Unique Caring Foundation and give them a chance to solve the problem. If you are not satisfied, contact Unique Caring foundation Compliance Coordinator Officer to file a complaint or make suggestions.
 - At any time that you are not satisfied with the answers that you are receiving for your complaint, you can call the consumer rights representative or supervisor at the area authority that authorizes your services.
 - Unique Caring Foundation is committed to responding as quickly as possible.
- **You have the right to appeal decisions made about your services.**
 - If you do not agree with a recommendation about what services you will or will not receive or about changes in your services, Unique Caring Foundation, will explain the process of a Utilization Management Review.

- If you are already receiving services, those services will continue until a review is completed and any appeal is settled.
 - If your service is approved then the service you requested will begin, continue or not change until it is time for another review of your services.
 - If your request is denied, you will receive a letter from the area authority explaining how to appeal this decision locally or at the state level.
 - In certain MCOs, if your appeal is denied, you will have to pay for the services that were provided during the appeal process.
- **Your responsibilities as a service recipient through The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc.**
 - Give us all the facts about the barriers you want help with and bring a list of all of the services that you are receiving through other organizations.
 - Follow your treatment plan once you have agreed to it.
 - Keep all appointments or call 24 hours before an appointment if you cannot attend.
 - Let us know about the changes in your name, insurance (including Medicaid), address, telephone number or your finances.
 - In some cases you may have to pay Unique Caring Foundation a deductible. If so, pay your bill or let us know about problems you have with making any payments to Unique Caring Foundation.
 - Treat staff and other service recipients with respect and consideration.
 - Follow the rules of the program services that you receive.
 - Let us know when you have a suggestion, comment or complaint so we can help you find an answer to the problem.
 - Be very involved in developing and reviewing your treatment plan.
 - Ask for information about any barriers or areas of concern.
 - Talk to your care coordinator or qualified professional and others on your planning team often about your needs, preferences and goals and how you think you are doing at meeting your goals.

- **Information about person-centered planning:**

- Person-centered planning and thinking occurs when a service provider respects an individual's wishes and goals and puts the service recipient in charge of defining the direction of their lives by:
 - Allowing them to make their own choices and decisions.
 - Honoring their choices and wishes as much as possible.
 - Encouraging their family members and friends to participate in planning and decision-making.
 - Helping them build on their strengths.
 - Helping them create real relationships.
 - Helping them become a part of their neighborhood and communities.
 - Helping them achieve their dreams.
 - Helping them feel proud of whom they are.
 -

For more information about rights:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights: <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>

North Carolina State Constitution: www.ncleg.net/Legislation/constitution/nconstitution.html

The Unique Caring Foundation encourages all people and families receiving services to become involved in self advocacy groups.

The following is a list of some of the groups:

Cardinal Innovations Healthcare Solutions - Piedmont
Consumer Affairs
1-800-357-9084

Cardinal Innovations Healthcare Solutions – Piedmont
Consumer and Family Advisory Committee (CFAC)
E-mail: cfac@cardinalinnovations.org Tel: (704) 939-7769
To learn more about how you can become involved in CFAC you may contact the CFAC liaison.

For Mecklenburg County CFAC
E-mail: meckelnburgcfac@cardinalinnocations.org Tel: (704) 939-7769

Partners Behavioral Health Management
CFAC
Website: <http://www.partnershipbhm.org/Individuals%20and%20Families/consumer-damily-advisory-committee>
Tel: (704) 884-2646
Questions and Volunteer opportunity information can be accessed at the above contact information

Sandhills Center
CFAC
Website: <http://www.sandhillscenter.org/for-consumers/consumer-and-family-advisory-committee-cfac/>

Contact information for state and local advocates:

Disability Rights North Carolina 1-877-235-4210 www.disabilityrightsnc.org
Mental Health Association of North Carolina www.mhacentralcaolinas.org
National Alliance on Mental Illness NC 1-800-451-9682 www.naminc.org
American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities www.aamr.org
Arc of Mecklenburg County, Inc. (704) 332-4535 www.arcmeck.org
Exceptional Children Assistance Center 1-800-962-6817 www.ecac-parentcenter.org

THE UNIQUE CARING FOUNDATION, INC.

POLICY NAME: CLIENT RIGHTS COMMITTEE	EFFECTIVE DATE: 04/01/04
ANNUAL REVIEWS: 01/01/05, 01/01/06, 01/01/07, 01/01/08, 01/01/09, 01/01/10, 01/01/11, 01/01/12, 01/01/13, 01/01/14, 01/01/15, 01/01/16 UPDATES/REVISIONS 6/16/08, 1/17/09	APPROVED BY : BOARD OF DIRECTORS

It is the policy of The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. that the Client Right's Committee will meet quarterly, at a minimum to ensure the protection of client's rights. Training and Orientation of committee members will be completed by Client Rights Committee Chairperson.

The Client Rights Committee will be composed of at least five members. At least one third of the committee members will be staff of the agency and at least one client advocate, shall be composed of a majority of non board members, with a reasonable effort made to have all applicable disabilities represented, with client and family member representation. Staff who serves on the committee shall not be voting members.

The committee chairperson will provide information to members on confidentiality, as well as recruiting members for the committee. Committee members may have access to confidential information only upon the written consent of the client and or the legal guardian. The Director of Operations shall release confidential information upon written consent to the Client Rights Committee members only when such members are engaged in fulfilling their functions and when involved in or being consulted in connection with the training or treatment of the client.

The chairperson or designee will schedule meetings and notify members.

The chairperson will appoint a member to record the minutes of each meeting. The secretary will type the minutes and distribute to committee members. The Client Rights Committee shall maintain minutes of its meetings and shall file at least an annual report of its activities with the board. Client shall not be identified by name in minutes or in written or oral reports.

The committee will meet at least four times per year, once during each quarter (Jan.-March, April-June, July-Sept., and Oct-Dec.) with additional meetings as necessary.

Meetings will flow from an approved agenda, approved by the chairperson. Voting will be by majority.

Procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of existing and proposed methods and procedure for protecting client rights will be the responsibility of the Client Rights Committee.

Criteria for membership are:

- A freedom from conflict of interest.

- A genuine desire to serve on the committee.
- Time to devote to meeting attendance, through membership can be time limited.
- Commitment to maintain confidentiality of clients and the agency.

The Client Rights Committee shall review grievances regarding incidents which occur within a contact agency after the governing body of the agency has reviewed the incident and has had opportunity to take action. Incidents of actual or alleged client rights violations, the facts of the incident, and the action, if any, made by the contract agency shall be reported to authorizing entity within 30 days of the initial report of the incident, and to the board within 90 days of the initial report of the incident.

The Committee will review each case presented. Individuals will be identified by numbers only.

The Committee will approve, disapprove and or make recommendations for a resolution of each case.

A Compliance Review will be conducted no less than every three years regarding the implementation of client right and shall assure that:

- There is compliance with applicable provisions of the federal laws governing advocacy services of the mentally ill as specified in the Protection and Advocacy for Mentally Ill Individuals Act of 1986.
- There is compliance with application provisions of the federal laws governing advocacy services to the developmentally disabled.

The Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (QA/QI) Committee shall maintain the three most recent written reports of the findings of such reviews.

The Client Rights Committee shall oversee implementation of the following client rights protections within the agency:

1. Compliance with G.S. 222C, Article 3.
2. Compliance with the provisions of 10 NCAC 27C, 27D, 27E and 27F governing the protection of client rights, and 10NCAC 26B governing confidentiality.
3. Establishment of review procedure for any of the following which may be brought by a client, client advocate, parent, legal guardian, staff or others:
 - Client grievances.
 - Alleged violations of the rights of individuals or groups, including cases of alleged abuse, neglect or exploitation.
 - Concerns regarding the use of restrictive procedures.
 - Failure to provide needed services that are available.

Staff of The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. will at all times respect the rights of client as individuals. If at any time a client wishes to express dissatisfaction with services or feels that their rights or the rights of another have been violated, he/she shall have access to a process through which the grievance will be fairly considered, investigated and appropriately acted upon. The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. shall give high priority to being responsive to appropriate requests for help.

PROCEDURE:

- A. Clients have the right to make a grievance about any aspect of The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. service or operation.
- B. Client will be informed of the grievance procedure at first face to face contact and anytime upon person's served request. Where a client may be incapable of making or pursuing a grievance because of mental disability, mental retardation, or as an effect of treatment, staff shall act on the person's served behalf in accordance with this policy. At the time a complaint is initiated, the client will receive a new copy of the detailed grievance procedure.
- C. The manner of dealing with the grievance serves as a vital source of information for assessing and improving the quality of service therefore, The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. has established a mandatory reporting requirement. Any employee or other staff, who is the recipient of, is witness to, or who otherwise becomes aware of a complaint is required to facilitate the reporting of it in writing according to procedures defined under this policy. Where client or others may have difficulty registering a complaint, employees of The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. are required to help them.
- D. There shall be no penalty, direct or indirect, for any action reasonably taken by any employee or other staff acting in compliance with this policy.
- E. Review and response to client grievances shall be investigated through established administrative channels as follows:
 - a. Client shall present complaint to any staff member providing care, and/or to the Director of Operations. The person receiving the complaint must respond to the complaint and to the client within five (5) working days, or sooner if clinically indicated. Response may include one or all of the following: letter, meeting, or specific action as documented on the client complaint form.
- F. Upon its completion, the Grievance and Complaint Report must be received by the Director of Operations who shall take one of the following actions within 5 days of receiving the complaint:
 - 1. Determine that there is no reasonable cause for complaint. If the Director of Operations determines the complaint was unfounded and documents this in writing, by checking the appropriate line on the bottom of the complaint form. The complainant must sign the complaint form again indicating that they have been informed of this determination.
 - 2. If the Director of Operations is able to offer a resolution that is acceptable to the complainant, this resolution will be documented on the complaint form. The complainant must check the appropriate line on the complaint form and sign the bottom of the complaint form indicating that they agree that the proposed resolution is acceptable.
 - 3. Attempt to resolve the complaint, but finds that his/her proposed resolution is not satisfactory to the complainant. If the Director of Operations is unable to resolve the complaint, this will be indicated on the complaint form and forwarded to the Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (QA/QI) Committee.
 - 4. Determine that an investigation is required or that the matter cannot be resolved no later than five (5) days. If a lengthy investigation is anticipated, the Director of

Operations should document on the complaint form the expected length and scope of the investigation.

- G. A summary of all complaint reports and their resolutions shall be submitted to the Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (QA/QI) Committee at the first meeting of this body after report is received by the Executive Director.
- H. Right of Appeal: The complainant or other party involved in the complaint may appeal the decision which will be processed through the Executive Director and Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (QA/QI) Committee. All parties will receive notification of results of appeals.
- I. This procedure does not preclude or prohibit the client from contacting advocates who are outside of the agency. At any point during the person's served care, he will be afforded the opportunity to contact officials from the Department of Social Services, the Disability Rights Office, an attorney and/or Guardian Ad Litem.
- J. A file of complaints shall be maintained by The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. and shall remain on file until the end of the second calendar year after the one in which complaint was filed.

THE UNIQUE CARING FOUNDATION, INC.

Client Grievance and Complaints

Description of Complaint: (Include date, time, place, who the complainant is, the nature of complaint in complainants words, if possible, the conditions precipitating the complaint, and other relevant circumstances):

Remedy Sought:

Signature of Complainant or Person Completing Form

Date

Staff Assessment of and Response to Complaint:

Attempted or Achieved Resolution/Remedy or Disposition:

Signature of Staff accepting or responding to complaint

Date

COMPLETE ONLY AFTER REVIEW BY DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS:

Complainant has:

_____ agreed that proposed resolution is acceptable.

_____ indicated that the proposed resolution is not acceptable.

_____ been notified that the complaint was determined to be unfounded.

Signature of Complainant indicating agreement with above

Date

THE UNIQUE CARING FOUNDATION, INC.

**CLIENT GRIEVANCE
SUMMARY SHEET**

SUBMITTED TO QUALITY ASSURANCE/QUALITY IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

YEAR _____

Month occurred	Number of complaints	Breakdown of personnel assignment	Date returned to employee	Recommendations made Yes/No	Complaints resolved Yes/No

Mission Statement

The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. mission is to provide foster children with safe and caring homes and provide quality programs and services that will educate, assist and prepare them to live and compete in the 21st century global community.

What does this mean?

It's simple. Our services were created with you and your family in mind; therefore, we are here to give you the special support and services that you need to be successful as a person in and out of the community.

Service Philosophy

Our service philosophy is our belief about the quality of care you get from everyone with our agency. We believe that you should feel comfortable with telling us what you want and need from us. The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. believes that no matter what you're going through, there is hope for you. Great things are going to happen for you, but it begins with being strong, having a positive attitude and believing in yourself. We have special services and people with our agency that can help you to be your very best, and if there is something you need, don't be afraid to ask.

Services That We Provide

Therapeutic Foster Care Program

Many children and teens are better off in a home with a foster family instead of a group home, where there are a lot of kids and a few adults that watches everyone. Foster families are carefully chosen and when we place you in a home with a family, you are matched according to your similarities and the foster parents' ability to meet your special needs.

Therapeutic foster parents have been trained and are licensed by the Department of Social Services to care for you. So you can trust that you are in good hands.

Family Foster Care Program

When the county Department of Social Services (DSS) believes a child is not safe, and a judge agrees, DSS takes the child to a foster home, a place where they can be safe from abuse or neglect. Your parents or relatives may not be in a position to take care of you because of sickness, drug and alcohol use, or because they do not have a place to live. Family Foster Care is a program that allows you to live in a safe home for a short time until your family is able to care for you. The time you spend at a foster home could last for only a few days, but sometimes it can be longer.

Respite

Respite care is a service that provides periodic relief for the family or primary caregiver. This service may be provided in the individual's home or in an out-of-home setting. However, respite cannot be provided when the individual is at home for the purpose of a family visit.

What Are Your Responsibilities at The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc.

 <p style="text-align: center;">Asking questions</p>	<p>YOU are Responsible For:</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Keeping appointments for services at UCF</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">Staying at home if you are sick. Call UCF to reschedule appointments.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Keeping yourself clean, don't share drinks, combs, hats, or personal items</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Avoiding hitting or speaking in a disrespectful manner, including curse words and sexual talk</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">Do not use drugs and alcohol while receiving services</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Saying NO to smoking at UCF facilities</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Following safety rules</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">Treating staff with respect</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Do not bring weapons to UCF facilities</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Wearing seat belt at all times when you are in a vehicle</p>

What Are Your Responsibilities?



What are Your Responsibilities?

What is a Responsibility?

Something you agree to do to the best of your ability

You have responsibilities as a client of The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc.:

- Give us all the facts about the problems you want help with
- Tell us about any problems you believe you should be getting treatment for
- Follow your person centered plan once you have agreed to it
- Attend all court dates
- Keep all appointments or call 24 hours before an appointment if you cannot come in
- Treat staff and other Foster Childs with respect and consideration
- Follow the rules of the Foster Home you have been placed with
- Let us know when you have a suggestion, comment or complaint so we can help you find an answer to the problem
- Respect the privacy of others
- Be very involved in developing and reviewing your person centered plan
- Talk to your case manager, counselor or doctor and others on your planning team often about your needs, preferences, goals and how you think you are doing at meeting your goals
-

Your Rights at The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc.

 <p>Refuse services</p>	<p>YOU have the Right To:</p>	 <p>Include your family in your service planning</p>
 <p>Stay away from drugs and alcohol when receiving services</p>	 <p>Receive proper emergency medical treatment</p>	 <p>Talk to anyone about anything that happens to you in UCF services</p>
 <p>Receive services in a safe environment</p>	 <p>Make comments or make a complaint</p>	 <p>Take part in a plan to help you reach your goals</p>
 <p>Have your personal information kept private</p>	 <p>Review your file anytime during office hours 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. M-F</p>	 <p>Be treated with respect</p>

What Are Your Rights As A Client Of The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc.?

Definitions

What is a right?

Something you can do by law

What is a rule?

Something set up by a program, or area program, or the state so things will run smoothly

What are rights restrictions?

- "Rights restrictions" limit or take away a person's right to do something. Your rights can not be taken away without defenses in place to protect you. Your rights may be limited if you might harm yourself or other people and could involve an involuntary commitment
- A very specific change to your **person-centered plan** must be approved by your team before your rights are limited in any way. A human rights committee may need to approve some restrictions. You or your guardian will play a part in making these decisions
- Your rights cannot be taken away because of the way others act, the way you behave or because it would be more convenient for someone else if your rights were ignored.
- However, you may lose certain privileges such as recreation time, the opportunity to participate in fun activities, or watching television if your behavior, attitude or participation in unruly events causes you to lose your privileges.
- You can regain privileges by behaving in a positive and respectful manner. It is the responsibility of your foster parent to explain how long your privileges will be taken away and what reasonable actions you can take to regain them.
- You have a right to be transported to all educational, social and medical support services that you are enrolled in by either your foster parent or a member of our staff.

You Have The Right To A Person-Centered Plan



- **Your role as a foster child** is only part of who you are. You have the right to choose goals that will lead to the kind of life you want to live. The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc.'s job is to help find a foster home to provide the treatment and/or care or support that will help you meet the goals that you helped create in your Person Centered Plan.
- **If you have mental health problems, a disability or diagnosis**, these limitations do not account for all of who you are. The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc.'s job is to help find a foster parent and other care providers to provide the treatment and/or care or support that will help you meet the goals that you helped identify in your Person Centered Plan.
- **You have the right** to help create your own **person-centered plan**, to choose who will help you build it, and to review it from time to time to see how you are doing. You have the right to make choices about the services and supports you receive and who provides it to you.
- **You have the right** to ask to make a change in your plan, in your medications, in the agency who works with you, your doctor, nurse, counselor or case manager
- **You have the right** to ask questions and to make suggestions about The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc.'s rights and responsibilities policies that are described in this handbook. You have the same rights with the agency or program or person who provides your Case Management services.
- **You have the right** to receive the information you want about The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. services, its foster parents, your rights and responsibilities, and how to make a complaint or a request.

Person-centered planning and thinking occurs when a service provider like our agency and foster parents respect your wishes and goals and allows you to be in charge of defining the direction of life by:

- ✓ Allowing you to make your own choices and decisions
- ✓ Honoring your choices and wishes as much as possible
- ✓ Encouraging your family members to participate in planning and decision-making
- ✓ Helping you build on your strengths
- ✓ Helping you create real relationships
- ✓ Helping you become a part of your neighborhoods and communities
- ✓ Helping you achieve your dreams
- ✓ Helping you feel proud of who you are

Use this checklist to make sure you are receiving person-centered planning

- ✓ Your planning meeting occurs at a time and place that is convenient for you
- ✓ You invite the people you want to your meeting
- ✓ You get the information you need and ask for from the people at your meeting
- ✓ The people at your meeting listen to you and respect your opinions
- ✓ The people at your meeting have ideas about how you can be more independent
- ✓ You agree with solutions that others offer.
- ✓ You are satisfied with the final plan and agree to sign it

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE INFORMED ABOUT MEDICATIONS

If medication is part of your agreed upon individualized service plan, only a physician will prescribe necessary medication based on accepted medical standards. You have the right to ask your doctor to explain what your mental illness or emotional problem is and why he or she may put you on medication to help treat your illness. You have the right to know the risks and benefits and alternatives to medication. You may refuse to take medications, but you will be informed of the risks of doing this.

As a foster child, you have **the right** and the **responsibility** to understand your concerns or issues, illness, or developmental disability. Some conditions improve with medicine

- Taking medicine may be part of your **person-centered plan**
- You have **the right** to understand how the medicine may help you
- You have **the right** to take the lowest possible dose that will work for you.
- You have the right to refuse to take the medicine that is suggested or to request to change your medicine
- Medicine may never be used to punish you or because it is more convenient for the foster parent who works with you
- Your doctor or nurse is responsible for explaining the risk or harm to you if you refuse to take the medicine suggested

Questions to ask the doctor about medication:

- What is the difference between the generic and brand name medicine?
- What is the suggested dose level?
- How does this medicine work?
- What do you expect it to do?
- How long will it take to achieve results?
- What are the risks of with taking this medication?
- How well has this medicine worked for other people with the same issues?
- What short-term side effects does this medication have?
- What long-term side effects does this medication have?

- Is there any way to lessen the chances of experiencing side effects?
- Is there anything that I need to change about my diet or lifestyle suggestions or restrictions when using this medication?
- Why do you recommend this particular medication?
- Have you had other patients that have used it?
- If so, how have they done?
- How is this medication monitored?
- What tests will I need prior to taking this medication?
- How often will I need these tests while taking the medication?
- What signs show that the dosage should be changed or the medication stopped?
- Where can I get more information about this medication?
- Ask the physician and/or pharmacist if they have any printed information on this medication you can have to study.

You Have The Right To Confidentiality



Your right to confidentiality about your treatments or services that you receive is protected by law. Your records and other information about you will not be shared with other agencies or people without your signed permission. You can withdraw permission at any time. You can ask that only certain parts of your record be shared. Sometimes the law may require The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. to share information about you and the services you receive.

- ✓ In special situations, if a family member is involved in your treatment or service, they may be allowed to know some information about your services
- ✓ The court may order us to release your records
- ✓ Mecklenburg LME may need to see your records at any time
- ✓ If your treatment or service changes to another public agency, they may need to receive your records
- ✓ If you go to jail or prison, we may share your files with prison officials if they believe you need mental health or substance abuse services or support for a developmental disability
- ✓ In an emergency, another doctor or nurse or counselor who is treating you may see your records
- ✓ If a doctor or psychologist referred you to Mecklenburg AMHA (Mecklenburg Area Mental Health Authority), he or she may see your files
- ✓ If you seem to be a danger to yourself or to others, or if we believe that you are likely to commit a crime, we are required by law to tell the police or a judge (for example, in a commitment situation.)
- ✓ Special confidentiality rules may apply if you have a legal guardian, are under age 18, or are receiving treatment for drugs and/or alcohol

- ✓ When a child is receiving services and his/her parents are divorced, both birth parents may have access to your child's record unless your parental rights have been taken away
- ✓ If you feel that your right to confidentiality has been violated, you have the right to complain to the **The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. Foster Child Representative at (704) 569-8654**. You have the right to ask someone you trust to help you make a complaint, see pages 35-37

You Have The Right To Refuse Treatment



Before you agree to your person-centered plan and sign it, you will be told of the benefits or risks involved in the services you will receive. You have the right to consent to your plan and you also have the right at any time to refuse the services. The risks or harm of refusing treatment or services will be explained to you. The only time you can be treated without your consent is in an emergency situation. Some examples would be if you are thought to be a danger to yourself or others or when treatment has been court-ordered or if you are a minor and your parents have given permission.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEE YOUR OWN RECORD

If you wish to see your record, you have the right to do so except in some situations described in law and according to agency procedures. You have the right to have those situations explained to you.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY

You have the right to be free from any search of your person or property without good reason. Some programs of Mecklenburg Area Mental Health Authority have special procedures about Search and Seizure which will be explained to you before you receive services from these programs. (See pages 14 and 15 for minors living in foster homes.)

You Have The Right To Know The Cost Of Services



Who Pays For The Child's Care?

Foster parents receive financial compensation from the placement agency or a child's room, board, and other living expenses. Sometimes there are supplemental payments for the care of children with special needs.

Although the amount of the financial compensation payments may vary from agency to agency and sometimes based on the individual needs of the foster child, the current state recommended rates are as follows:

- \$475 for children ages 0 - 5
- \$581 for children ages 6 - 12
- \$634 for children ages 13 and over

You Have The Right To Be Treated With Respect



- We are approved to use special techniques or **interventions** in an emergency if you become a danger to yourself or others or to property. Before you are admitted to a program, you will be informed of the types of interventions that are approved for use by that program. You have the right to refuse a planned intervention if it is suggested as part of your person-centered plan. Parents and guardians may approve these planned interventions.
- To protect you, there are very strict rules for staff about using interventions. Only trained staff may use restraints (holding), seclusion (keeping you away from other people) or isolated time outs (time spent completely alone). Punishment is never allowed. Staff must protect you from harm while you are in any program and must report any form of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- A number of safeguards must be in place if these interventions are used and you or your parent/guardian have a right to request that someone you name will be told if an intervention is used. If you are a minor and admitted yourself, your parent or guardian has the right to talk with your program staff and know when you are discharged.
- Some emergencies may require police help or that a legal process be started to admit someone to a hospital against your will.
- Staff may never use these techniques to get back at you, because it is easier for you or in a way that hurts you or is very uncomfortable.

You Have The Right To Get Information About Your Rights And Responsibilities And To Know The Rules Of Your Program

THE RULES



HOW TO LIVE YOUR LIFE

- When you come into our care as a foster child, you have the right to learn about the rules you are expected to follow and what the consequences will be for not following the rules. This handbook is your copy of the rules.
- If you do not receive a copy of your rules or if you believe your program is not following its own rules, you can file a grievance or complaint.
- If you do not follow your program rules and the rules set out by your foster parent, **(what are the consequences?)**.
- You and your team may meet and decide you need a different kind of service if your condition meets "medical necessity" for that service.

Your Rights In a Foster Home



As a foster child you will receive care in a 24-hour licensed foster home. You have more rights beyond those already listed. You must be told about these rights within 72 hours after going into the home.

When you start living in a foster home, your foster parent may search you and your things to prevent dangerous objects or illegal drugs from being bought into the home. Your room itself may be searched if your foster parent has reason to believe these items are present.

The first four rights may not be restricted or limited

- To contact and consult with your parent or guardian or the agency or person that has legal custody of you.
- To contact and consult with, at your expense or that of the person legally responsible for you, lawyers, private doctors and private mental health, developmental disabilities and substance abuse professionals that you or your legally responsible person chooses.
- To contact and talk with the Foster Child Representative or other advocate.
- To send and receive mail and have writing materials, stamps, and help from staff when necessary.

The rights below may be restricted in some circumstances by your doctor or therapist responsible for your services. There is a special procedure for this restriction.

- To receive proper adult supervision and guidance
- To have opportunities to mature physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and vocationally
- To have structure and supervision that respects your rights
- To have visitors when it does not cause problems with treatment or school
- To be outside daily and participate in play, recreation, and physical exercise according to your needs
- To keep and use your own clothing and belongings with supervision except as forbidden by law
- To participate in worship that you choose
- To have access to and spend a reasonable amount of your own money
- To keep a driver's license permit or license unless prohibited by law
- To socialize with other people in the program
- To make suggestions about the program and its rules
- To have the right to dignity, privacy, and human care in the provision of personal health, hygiene and basic grooming care
- To receive necessary treatment for and prevention of medical problems based on your condition and length of stay (You may be billed for this care if it is more than the facility's regular service.)
- To send and receive sealed mail and have writing materials, stamps, and help from staff provided to you when necessary.
- To contact and consult with, at your own expense, lawyers, private doctors, and private mental health, developmental disabilities and substance abuse professionals that you choose.
- To contact and talk with a Foster Child representative or other advocates
- To make and receive private phone calls. You must pay for long distance calls yourself or make collect calls.
- To receive visitors when visiting does not interfere with treatment.
- To talk to and to meet (under supervision) with people you choose, if they are willing.

- To keep and spend your own money.
- To make visits outside the facility unless there are issues related to commitment (being sent to a facility against your will) or you have been charged with a violent crime and are being held briefly while a judge determines if you are able to make sound decisions about your treatment, etc.
- To be outside every day and be able to exercise several times a week in a place with reasonable equipment. To keep and use your own clothing and belongings except as prohibited by law. (The facility will help you make a list of clothing and belongings to prevent loss.)
- To participate in worship that you choose.
- To keep a driver's license unless prohibited by law.
- To have access to a place to store your own belongings.
- To have the right to dignity, privacy, and humane care in the provision of personal health, hygiene and grooming care.
- To have your own written discharge plan that contains recommendations about other services you may need. You or your guardian has the right to have a written copy of your discharge plan.
- The foster home will make efforts to have a quiet place; to sleep without being disturbed during scheduled sleeping, and spend quiet time if needed.
- To have the right to decorate your own room.

Laws and Regulations that may affect your personal choices:

- **Education**
- **Social Supports**
- **Health**
- **Accessibility**

You Have The Right To Monitor your Income



Foster child Fund Management

For the foster care youth who need the company to manage their income (Social Security, SSI, etc.), UCF can become your payee. It is not a UCF policy to charge an administrative fee on administering your funds.

1. Your check will be deposited into the company account, but will show as a separate General Ledger Item.
2. All of your costs will be tracked and included in all quarterly reports. Quarterly reports are created in March, June, September and December of every year. A separate quarterly report of your income and expenses are available at anytime for your guardian, Social Security or any auditing body.
3. UCF will be responsible for the expenses of all foster children, and will pay any bills monthly with the funding that has been received.
4. In addition, a monthly stipend will be given to the Foster child for any miscellaneous expenses.
5. Finally, a clothing stipend will be given to the Foster child each season for related costs.
6. On a quarterly basis the Foster child's expense account will be rechecked by the Finance Director to ensure that your expenses have been billed properly. This is to be sure that your money is being spent responsibly and for good reasons.
7. At the end of the year, if the Foster child's account is positive, depending on the amount, it will be either:
 - i. transferred into an interest-bearing account, or a bank account that builds up a small amount of money every month like a savings account;
 - ii. Or a check will be cut for you to deposit into your personal account.

In the event that a Foster child requests access to records of their funds, that information will be given within 48 hours.

You Have The Right To Make A Complaint



If you are dissatisfied with your foster parent or feel you have not been treated fairly, you have the right to make a complaint at any time. You may ask anyone you choose to help you make a complaint.

Try to talk about your problem first with the foster parent and give him or her a chance to help solve the problem. If you are not satisfied, contact your program's Complaints/Foster Child Rights Representative or supervisor to complain or make suggestions.

Our staff is committed to responding as quickly as possible to your questions, concerns, or complaints. Every effort will be made to get the answer you need as quickly as possible.

Glossary Of FOSTER CARE Terms

Abuse – mistreatment, cruelty, exploitation of a person

Advocate - Someone who is not directly involved with your treatment or care, but who can speak to you about your rights because of his/her understanding about how you should be treated. Advocacy services are offered for FREE.

Choice of Providers - Individuals who are in FOSTER CARE are normally placed with an approved agency chosen by your case worker at D.S.S.

Department of Social Services – simply known as “Social Services”, is the name of a [governmental agency](#) in many [states](#) of the [United States](#) that responds to reports of [child abuse](#) or neglect.

Foster Care Agency - Includes State or territory child welfare agencies or private agencies contracted by the State or territory that place children for adoption from the foster care (or child welfare) system.

Foster Home - household in which an orphaned or delinquent child is placed (usually by a social-service agency)

Foster Care Services - Beneficial activities and care responsibilities associated with your placement with The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc..

General Ledger Item - The [balance sheet](#) and the [income statement](#) are both derived from the general ledger. Each account in the general ledger consists of one or more pages. The general ledger is where posting to the accounts occurs. Posting is the process of recording amounts as credits, (right side), and amounts as debits, (left side), in the pages of the general ledger.

Grievance - a circumstance that you consider to be unfair and ground for complaint. It is a formal complaint or statement expressing how you believe you have been treated unfairly and describing how you would like for the problem to be resolved.

Group Home - A type of foster care where care is given in a small group setting.

Guardian Ad Litem - A guardian appointed by the court to represent the interests of a minor.

Intervention - Ways to handle behavior problems including corporal punishment (commonly referred to as spankings, whippings, or beatings). The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. **does not** support use of any physical, mean or unusual punishment that could cause bodily injury or emotional distress to foster care youth.

Neglect - Lack of attention and due care to minors by an adult who is legally responsible for their care. The guardian fails to provide the right amount of care to meet the child’s needs which leads to unsafe circumstances or conditions for the child.

Minor – a person who is under the age of 18

Person Centered Plan (PCP) - is based on information gathered about a person, starting with personally expressed goals. The PCP attempts to empower the person towards independent goals that build on strengths and aspirations, not weaknesses or shortcomings. The individual directs the planning process that identifies strengths, Foster Care activities, desires and support needs. A person-centered plan generates action or positive steps that the person can take towards realizing a better and more complete life. Plans are also in place to make sure that support is given in a consistent, respectful way and offer valuable insight into how to assess the quality of services being provided.

Treatment Team Meeting – Consists of you and all of the professionals, as well as family members who are available to help you be successful. Your social worker, foster care coordinator, therapist and many others may be players on your treatment team.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can be a Foster Parent?

Foster parents must:

- Be at least 21 years old
- Have a stable home and income
- Be willing to be finger printed and have a criminal records check
- Maintain a drug free environment
- Complete all required training and be licensed by the state of North Carolina

Do Foster Parents have to be licensed?

Yes, North Carolina state law requires that all foster parents be licensed to care for children in their care. These licenses are issued by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. County Departments of Social Services and several private child caring agencies are authorized to work with potential foster parents to assist them with the licensing process and to provide supervision and support for the foster parents.

Potential foster parents receive 30 hours of training. The training covers topics such as child abuse and neglect, working with birth parents, and helping foster children deal with the issues they face. It also helps the potential foster parents think about how parenting another child may affect their family.

What types of interventions does our agency use?

1. Ignore any type of behavior that is unconstructive or disruptive (may actually increase the behavior for a period of time before it begins to decrease).
2. Acknowledge or praise behaviors that are constructive Increase reinforcement for appropriate behavior
3. Show no support for inappropriate behavior
4. Teach an alternate behavior that gets the same outcome or result
5. Teach relaxation techniques
6. Teach anger management techniques
7. Teach habit-breaking strategies (i.e. self-talk, behavior substitution, positive practice)
8. Teach the use of self-regulation strategies (i.e. making a commitment, setting goals, self-monitoring, self-reinforcement)
9. Reframing
10. Life space interviewing (i.e. talking over how a school day went)
11. Social skills training (i.e. at the YMCA, shopping at the mall, playing with siblings).
12. Teach client to model appropriate social skills
13. Behavioral Point System (i.e. reviewing behavior charts, assessing client's progress (or lack of) with the client, processing consequences of client's choices)

Local Advocates

Arc of Mecklenburg County, Inc.

Advocacy, information and support for people and your families living with mental retardation and developmental disabilities

704-332-4535 <http://www.arcmeck.org>

Council for Children, Inc.

Advocacy for individual and groups of children

704-372-7961 <http://www.councilforchildreninc.org>

Exceptional Children's Assistance Center

Parent training and information

704-892-1321 <http://www.ecac-parentcenter.org>

Mental Health Association of the Central Carolinas

Advocacy, education and referral

704-365-3454 <http://www.mhacentralcarolinas.org>

NAMI Charlotte, (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill)

Advocacy, education and support for people and your families living with severe and persistent mental illness

704-333-8218 <http://www.nami-charlotte.org>

Programs for Accessible Living (P.A.L.)

Advocacy, independent living skills, information and referral, and peer mentoring for people with disabilities

704-537-0550 (V/TTY) <http://www.paladvocates.org>

Substance Abuse Prevention Services

Training, referral and education about drugs and alcohol

704-375-DRUG (3784) - Information line <http://www.preventionservices.org>

State & Federal Advocates

Governor's Advocacy Council for People with Disabilities is a state agency established to protect and advocate for the rights of people with disabilities.

1-800-821-6922 <http://www.gacpd.com>

Mental Health Association of North Carolina is an organization to promote mental health, prevent mental disorders and eliminate discrimination against people with mental disorders.

1-919-981-0740 <http://www.mha-nc.org>

NC Mental Health Foster Childs Organization, Inc. is a non-profit organization made up of mental health Foster Childs who provide support and advocacy for other mental health Foster Childs.

1-800-326-3842 <http://www.namic.org/Foster Child3/19/2009> (\$0)

The ARC of North Carolina is a non-profit organization advocating for rights of people with developmental disabilities.

1-800-662-8706 <http://www.arcnc.org>

National Alliance for Mentally Ill - North Carolina (NAMI) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization made up of mental health Foster Childs and your families.

1-800-451-9682 <http://www.naminc.org>

U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services: Administration for Children & Families

Remember: An *advocate* is someone who is not directly involved with your treatment or service but who has the knowledge and ability to speak with you about your rights. The advocates listed provide your advocacy services free and most phone calls are free. In most cases the hours are from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. **Please let us know if you need assistance with reaching any of these agencies.**

Educational Opportunities & Services

CMS Schools

Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools

www.cms.k12.nc.us

Family Application Center

700 Marsh Road

Charlotte, NC 28209

980.343.5030 / 980.343.5469 fax

UCF after School Tutoring Initiative

Junior Achievement

Results show that students who participate in JA programs understand more about personal finances and budgeting. JA works around the world helping students realize the importance of entrepreneurship, work readiness and financial literacy – and also helps improve behavior and critical thinking.

201 S Tryon St # 100 Charlotte, NC 28202-3223 (704) 536-9668 www.jacarolinas.org

YMCA

Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation

Mecklenburg County Public Libraries

Scholarship Opportunities

Links to other financial aid resources

- www.collegeboard.org
- www.fastweb.com
- www.finaid.org
- www.fafsa.ed.gov
- <http://nfpainc.org/admin/www.nasfaa.org>
- www.savingforcollege.com
- www.UNCF.org
- www.orphan.org
- www.jimcaseyouth.org
- www.getcollegefunds.org
- <http://nfpainc.org/admin/www.discoverfinancial.com/data/philanthropy/tribute.shtml>
- www.collegenet.com
- www.waedfoundation.org/gs/
- www.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html
- www.collegescholarships.com/
- www.nrcys.ou.edu/nrcyd/state_home.htm
- <http://www.affcf.org/mc/page.do?sitePagelD=62702>
- http://www.questbridge.org/cps/awards/summer_school.html
- www.onwardandupwards.org
- www.sociallearning.com
- <http://firstchancescholarship.com/>

Community Resources

How to access

Coordinate resources

Lack of needed resources

Critical Phone Numbers

Child Abuse

[Childhelp's National Child Abuse Hotline](#)

800-4-A-CHILD (800-422-4453)

Child Care

[Child Care Aware](#)

1-800-424-2246

Domestic Violence

[National Domestic Violence Hotline](#)

1-800-799-SAFE (800-799-7233)

TDD 1-800-787-3224

Missing and Exploited Children

[National Center for Missing and Exploited Children](#)

1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678)

Runaway Youth

[National Runaway Switchboard](#)

1-800-621-4000

National Human Trafficking Resource Center

[National Human Trafficking Resource Center](#)

1-888-3737-888

Client Complaint Procedures

Policy:

Foster parents of The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. will always respect your rights. If you need to talk to someone about your dissatisfaction with your placement or services, or feel that your rights or the rights of someone you know who is also in our care may have been violated, it is important for you to know the process for filing your complaint. This process allows the agency to investigate and deal with all problems in a way that is fair to everyone involved. Your complaint will be a high priority to everyone and we will act quickly to respond to your request for help.

- A. Foster care youth have the right to make a complaint about any part of the services or procedures at The The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc., Inc.
- B. Foster care youth will be informed of the complaint procedure the first time you meet someone from our team face to face and at anytime that you ask. If you are unable to file a complaint or pursuing a grievance because you have as mental disability, mental retardation, or as an effect of treatment, someone at our office will file one on your behalf. When the complaint process has begun, you will receive a detailed copy of the complaint procedure and your own copy of the report filed by you or on your behalf.
- C. The way of dealing with the complaint serves as a very important source of information for measuring and improving the quality of service therefore, The The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc., Inc. has established a mandatory reporting requirement. Any employee or other staff, who is receives, witnesses, or who otherwise becomes aware of a complaint is **required** to help report it in writing according to procedures defined under this policy. Also, where Foster care youth or others may have difficulty registering a complaint, employees of The The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc., Inc. are required to help you.
- D. There will be no penalty, direct or indirect, for any action reasonably taken by any employee or other staff who follow this policy.
- E. Review and response to your grievances will be investigated by managers at our office as follows:
 - a. You will give your complaint to any staff member providing care, and/or to the Executive Director. The person that receives the complaint must respond to the complaint and to the Foster Child within five (5) working days, or sooner if clinically suggested. Response may include one or all of the following: letter, meeting, or specific action as documented on the client complaint form.
- F. When the process is complete, the Grievance and Complaint Report must be received by the Executive Director who will take one of the following actions within 5 days of receiving the complaint:

1. Decide that there is no reasonable cause for complaint. If the Executive Director concludes that the complaint was unproven and documents this in writing, by checking the appropriate line on the bottom of the complaint form. You must sign the complaint form again indicating that they have been informed of this determination.
 2. If the Executive Director is able to offer a resolution that is acceptable to you, this resolution will be documented on the complaint form. The foster child must check the appropriate line on the complaint form and sign the bottom of the complaint form indicating that they agree that the anticipated resolution is acceptable.
 3. If the Executive Director attempts to resolve the complaint, but finds that his/her proposed resolution is does not meet your satisfaction, this will be documented on the complaint form and sent to the Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Committee.
 4. If the Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Committee comes to the decision that an investigation is required or that the matter cannot be resolved in at least five (5) day, this must be documented on the complaint form. In addition to a statement about how long the investigation will take and how the investigation will be carried out.
- G. A summary of all complaint reports and your resolutions will be submitted to the Quality Improvement Committee at their first meeting after the report is received by the Executive Director.
- H. Right of Appeal: You or the other person involved in the complaint may appeal or request that the final decision be reconsidered. The appeal will be processed through the Executive Director and Quality Improvement Committee. Everyone will receive notice of the outcome of the appeal.
- I. This procedure does not prevent or ban the foster care youth from contacting advocates who are outside of the agency. At any point during your care, you will be given the opportunity to contact officials from the Department of Social Services, the Governor's Advocacy Council for People with Disabilities Council, an attorney and/or Guardian Ad Litem.
- J. A record of complaints will be maintained by the owner and will remain on file for two (2) years.

Search & Seizure Policy and Procedures

- (a) The The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. agrees to adopt the following policies and procedures about performing search & seizure of its Foster care youth and/or Guardians property. This policy explains the conditions that allow your foster parent or our staff to search you and/or guardian's property. The limitations basically include good reason to believe that you may have possession of stolen property, or either over the counter or controlled substances, weapons, which may be health threatening or dangerous, such as: alcohol or drugs (either over the counter or controlled substances).
- (b) The search policies and procedures will include:
- 1) Circumstances where a search maybe performed: All Foster care youth and/or Guardian are subject to search when you begin receiving services from The The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc., Inc for threatening or dangerous items such as: weapons, alcohol, drugs, fire starting devices, etc. Foster care youth and/or Guardians will not be subject to unnecessary invasion or privacy and will have access to private living and/or storage areas for your personal belongings such as your room. All other areas will be considered public and as such may be searched with no special cause. Some examples of your private space include spaces that are assigned for your personal use, such as: lockers, closets, bureaus or chests. The Foster Care Coordinator will provide you with a copy of our procedure regarding search and seizure when you first come into the The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. program.
 - 2) Every search will be documented on an Incident Report Form. These forms will be kept in the client's record. The documentation will include:
 - i. What was searched
 - ii. Reason for the search
 - iii. Procedures followed during the search
 - iv. Description of any property seized/taken
 - v. Weapons, illegal drugs, stolen items, etc. will be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement agency. The The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. will obtain a signed document from the law enforcement agency describing the items and the date they were received.

THE THE UNIQUE CARING FOUNDATION, INC., INC.
Client Grievance and Complaints

Description of Complaint: (Include date, time, place, who the complainant is, the nature of complaint in complainants words, if possible, the conditions precipitating the complaint, and other relevant circumstances):

Remedy Sought:

Signature of Complainant or Person Completing Form

Date

Staff Assessment of and Response to Complaint:

Attempted or Achieved Resolution/Remedy or Disposition:

Signature of Staff accepting or responding to complaint

Date

COMPLETE ONLY AFTER REVIEW BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Complainant has:

_____ agreed that proposed resolution is acceptable.

_____ indicated that the proposed resolution is not acceptable.

_____ been notified that the complaint was determined to be unfounded.

Signature of Complainant indicating agreement with above

Date

Emergency Telephone Numbers

The Unique Caring Foundation, Inc. (704) 569-8654
(704) 535-0093

Crisis After Hour..... 1-800-815-7197

USE THESE NUMBERS IF YOU NEED HELP OR ASSISTANCE AT ANY TIME:

Police, Fire, & Ambulance 911

Poison Control (704) 379-5827

Mobile Crisis Unit 1-800-939-5911

REPORTING OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT:

Mecklenburg County DSS..... (704) 336-2273
Child Services

Mecklenburg County DSS..... (704) 336-2146
Adult Services

DHSR Hotline1-800-624-3004

FOSTER CARE DEPARTMENT:

Clinical Supervisor (704) 605-6924

Placement Recruiter (704) 241-9684

USE THESE NUMBERS DURING REGULAR OFFICE HOURS: 9am – 5pm
(704) 569-8654 or (704) 535-0093
