



# Client Rights

## Lesson Plan

To use this lesson for self-study, the learner should read the material, do the activity, and take the test. For group study, give each participant a copy of the Learner's Guide and follow this lesson plan. Copy certificates for everyone who completes the lesson and passes the test. **Approximate time: One hour.**

### Objectives

At the conclusion of this lesson, participants will be able to:

1. Explain what client rights are.
2. Name and describe some of the most important client rights.
3. State the rules about restraints and how they should be used.
4. Discuss the meaning and importance of confidentiality.



### Preparation

1. Make a copy of **your** state's *Resident, Patient, or Elder Bill of Rights* for each learner.
2. If desired, have prizes available, such as candy bars or movie tickets.

### Activity

1. Ask participants to name some of their basic rights as citizens, such as freedom of speech.
2. Ask participants if they can think of any situation in this country where a citizen does not have full rights. They might think of prisoners, children, and people declared incompetent by a court. Emphasize that ALL other citizens have full rights, regardless of their mental or physical status.

### Lesson

1. Explain that the federal government has enacted legislation that protects the rights of elders, patients, and clients of care facilities. These rights are in different sections of U.S. law. We have combined the rights into 10 principles that cover all the rights applicable to caregivers. Have participants read the *Client Rights* aloud; take turns so everyone reads at least one to the group. Discuss each Right, making sure participants understand what the concepts mean. Tell participants it is their responsibility to know, honor, protect, and promote these rights.
2. State governments are required by federal law to have a bill of rights for clients in care facilities. Most of the time, the state rights are identical or very similar to the federal rights, but some states have additional rights. Post the state rights prominently. Give participants a copy of your state's rights and ask them to compare them to the rights in the Learner's Guide. Discuss any differences they find.
3. The *Client Rights* in the Learner's Guide follow a pattern of A-J that participants can easily memorize. Give participants time to work together on memorizing the list. Ask if anyone is willing to repeat the list to the group. Give a small prize to everyone who can repeat the list of Client's Rights.
4. Do the case study Learning Activity. Answers: 1. **Information**; 2. **Guard Confidentiality; Dignity, Privacy, and Respect**; 3. **Express Grievances; Freedom from Abuse; and Dignity and Respect**; 4. **Freedom from Abuse and Restraints**; 5. **Choice; Dignity, Privacy, & Respect**
5. Review the information on restraints and confidentiality with your learners and be sure they understand the importance of observing confidentiality and following the rules about restraints.

### Evaluation

Ask participants to complete the test and grade their work. Ten correct answers is a passing grade. Distribute certificates to those who pass the test.

**Test Answers:** 1. d; 2. i; 3. h; 4. f; 5. e; 6. a; 7. j; 8. c; 9. b; 10. a; 11. freedom; 12. confidential; 13. restraint; 14. client



# Client Rights



## Learner's Guide

People do not give up their rights of citizenship just because they enter a care facility and depend on others to do things for them. Clients can and should exercise their rights as citizens or residents of the United States, including some special rights guaranteed by federal and state law to care facility clients. Try to memorize the Client Rights on page 3. It is your job to know these and honor them.

## Restraints

### What is a restraint?

A restraint is anything put on or near a person that the individual cannot remove easily which restricts freedom of movement or normal access to his or her own body.

### Why are restraints harmful?

Restraints can hurt clients if they are not used safely. They violate an adult's right to move freely.



### When can restraints be used?

- Restraints may be used only when necessary to treat a client's medical symptoms, and when other ways to take care of a client's medical needs do not work.
- The benefits of using a restraint must be greater than the risks, and the restraint must be used safely and properly.
- A doctor must order restraints before they can be used. They are not acceptable for purposes of discipline or convenience. Family members and legal representatives of clients (even incompetent clients) cannot give permission to use restraints.
- Restraints can only be used after the doctor and the facility have worked together to plan the best possible medical care.

### Examples of restraints:

- Side rails of any kind that prevent an individual from getting out of bed.
- A sheet tied around an individual so that it restricts freedom of movement.
- Geri-chairs or tray tables, if they prevent the individual from getting up.
- Vest restraints, arm or leg restraints, and posey jackets.



## The ABC's of Client Rights

### Every Client Has the Right To:

**A**ccess to visitors and private communication. Every client has the right to associate and communicate privately with persons of his or her choice and to send and receive his or her personal mail unopened. This includes the right to access to a telephone where calls can be made privately. Clients have the right to decide who can visit them and for how long. Married clients have the right to private visits from his or her spouse and to share a room if both live in the facility.

**B**elongings. Every client has the right to keep and use his or her own personal belongings and property as long as it doesn't interfere with the rights, health, or safety of others. Every client has the right to manage his or her own money or to choose someone else to do this that he or she trusts.

**C**hoice. Every client has the right to make choices about his or her own life. Clients should participate in planning their care, including daily schedules. Clients have the right to choose their own doctor. Clients have the right to refuse treatment.

**D**ignity, privacy, and respect. Every client has the right to be treated with consideration and respect for personal dignity, including the right to privacy in their living arrangements, personal care, medical care, communications, visits, and meetings.

**E**xpress grievances. Every client has the right to voice grievances and recommend changes in facility policies and services to persons of their choosing. Every client has the right to exercise his or her rights without interference, coercion, discrimination, or punishment.

**F**reedom from abuse and restraints. Every client has the right to be free from mental and physical abuse, punishment, or forced seclusion. Every client has the right to be free from chemical and physical restraints, except when it is necessary for medical care and is authorized in writing by a physician.

**G**uard confidentiality. Every client has the right to confidential treatment of his or her personal and medical records. Clients have the right to look at or have copies of their own records. Records may not be shown to anyone else without the client's permission unless required by law for care coordination or regulatory reasons.

**H**elp with needs. Every client has the right to receive services that accommodate individual needs and preferences as long as it doesn't endanger anyone else. Clients have the right to equal access to care and services.

**I**nformation. Every client has the right to be informed of these rights and of everything that pertains to his or her life, health, or care. This includes facility survey results, policies, services, and fees. It includes information about his or her medical condition. Any change in the client's physical, mental, or emotional condition or treatment must be discussed with the client and reported to the physician and the client's family or legal representative. This includes a change in room or roommate, and any accident that results in injury.

**J**oin activities and groups. Every client has the right to organize and participate in group activities, including social, religious, and community activities of his or her choosing, inside or outside the facility. Every client has the right to the free exercise of religion. No religious beliefs or practices may be imposed upon any client.



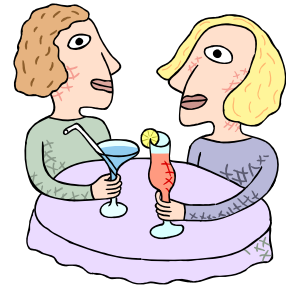


## Confidentiality

Workers in care facilities have access to a lot of information about people. This information is private and personal, and the clients of the facility and their families trust the workers to keep the information confidential, or secret, from everyone except those that need to know it to help in the care of the client.

### **What is supposed to be kept confidential?**

Written medical and care records must not be shown or given to anyone without the client's permission. Only your supervisor can decide when records should be released to other people. You should only look at records that you must write in or use to provide client care, and only show records to others that must write in or use them to provide client care.



Anything you know about the client should only be discussed with other people who care for the client, and only when you need to discuss it so you can provide good care.



## Learning Activity: Client Rights

Here are five stories about violations of Client's Rights. Read each story and decide what right or rights are being ignored. Write your answers in the spaces below.

1. Mrs. Collins is nearly blind, and she often bumps into furniture and other people. One day she falls over something in her room, hitting her head and skinning both knees. She is able to get up immediately and find an attendant to help her. The attendant helps her and calls the nurse. The nurse notifies her doctor. Two days later Mrs. Collins' daughter comes to visit, and she is very angry that no one told her about this incident.
2. Allison is an attendant in a care facility. One day she is in the grocery store and sees the daughter of one of the facility's clients. The daughter recognizes her and they stop to chat for a moment. The daughter says, "I'm so glad that Mom has settled in so nicely. She really likes it there." Allison responds, "Yes, most people do fine. Mrs. Gallagher, now, she just can't seem to get used to it. She wanders around at night and doesn't want to eat. I think she has Alzheimer's, but her doctor says she's just confused at being in a new place. She has heart trouble, you know. But your Mom is doing great; we all like her a lot."
3. Dan, a new staff member, was having a lot of trouble with time management, and during his first few weeks, he failed to get to Mr. Taylor's room on time to help him with his scheduled shower. Mr. Taylor became upset about this, because he was very punctual and concerned about doing things on time. He complained to the administrator, who met with Dan to discuss this problem and talk about ways to improve. Being counseled by the administrator made Dan angry, and he decided he would teach Mr. Taylor a lesson about complaining. Instead of just being thirty minutes late, he made sure he didn't get to Mr. Taylor's room until at least an hour after his scheduled time. When Mr. Taylor complained to him, Dan said, "You're crazy to care so much about getting a shower on time anyway. What do you have to do that's so important? I'll get here when I get here, and if you complain again I'll come even later."



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## Client Rights: Test

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number Correct: \_\_\_\_\_  
(10 correct answers required)

**Directions: Match the Client's Rights on the left with the phrases on the right that best fit the meaning of each Right. Put the letter of the matching phrase into the blank beside each Right.**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Access to visitors and private communication: _____ | a. No mental or physical abuse, no restraints.  |
| 2. Belongings: _____                                   | b. Informed of rights, surveys, services and fees, and changes in condition.              |
| 3. Choice: _____                                       | c. Receive services based on individual needs.  |
| 4. Dignity, privacy, and respect: _____                | d. Includes mail, telephone, and visits.  |
| 5. Express grievances: _____                           | e. Complain without interference or punishment.   |
| 6. Freedom from abuse and restraints: _____            | f. Consideration; privacy in living, in medical care, and in communications.              |
| 7. Guard confidentiality: _____                        | g. Organize and participate in meetings and activities; freedom of religion.              |
| 8. Help with needs: _____                              | h. Participate in planning care, choose doctor, refuse treatment, and make own decisions. |
| 9. Information: _____                                  | i. Personal property and money management.  |
| 10. Join activities and groups: _____                  | j. Confidential personal and medical records.   |

**Directions: Fill in the blanks in the statements below.**

11. Anything that restricts \_\_\_\_\_ of movement is a restraint.
12. Information about clients is protected by law and must be kept \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Only a doctor can give permission to use a \_\_\_\_\_ on a client, and only if it is necessary to treat the client's medical condition.
14. Before personal and medical records on a client can be shown to anyone else, the \_\_\_\_\_ must give signed permission.





# Certificate of Completion

Awarded to: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Participant)

**For Completing the  
One-Hour Course Entitled  
*Client Rights***



Date of Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Presented by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of presenter, or write "self-study")

