


Policy No: SLH009 	Policy Name: Charter of Clients Rights and Responsibilities
ASES Standards	<b>Standard 7: Service Outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requirement 7.1 Outcomes Monitored Standard</li> </ul> <b>Standard 8: Consumer Outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requirement 8.1 Consumer and Community Engagement Standard</li> </ul>
Contractual Obligation(s)	NSW DCJ Specialist Homelessness Services Funding Agreement: Lead Entity and/or Joint Working Agreements
Related Policies	Client Feedback Client Intake Complaints Management Service Access

Applies to: All Children & Young People receiving a service from St Laurence House	Version: 1
Specific responsibility: All Staff, volunteers & Management Committee Members	Date Approved: 16/12/2020
	Review Date: December 2023

## 1. SCOPE

The scope of this policy includes all people requesting or receiving a service from St Laurence House (SLH).

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline a clear expectation for all staff and volunteers of SLH to comprehend and inform clients and prospective clients of their rights and responsibilities in relation to requesting and receiving services from the organisation.

### 3. POLICY

SLH retains a Charter of Client Rights and Responsibilities (the Client Charter) that applies to all people requesting or receiving a service from the organisation.

The SLH Client Charter is the SHS Charter of Rights and Responsibilities

#### **Client rights**

- You will be treated in a professional, courteous and caring manner that respects and appreciates differences related to race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, personal values, age, disability and economic status.
- Your personal privacy will be respected, and your confidentiality will be protected, except when we have a legal obligation (and we will explain what this means when you use our service).
- You have the right to use our service if it is available and matches your needs and what we are funded to provide.
- We will work in partnership with you to identify your needs and develop a plan with you and other agencies to meet those needs.
- You have the right to raise a complaint, and we will respond in a confidential, respectful and timely manner.
- We will inform you of your rights and responsibilities when you receive a service from us.
- You will be provided opportunities to take an active role in the decision-making processes of our service.
- We will provide you with several suitable referral and support options, so you can decide with which service you prefer to work.
- We aim for you to feel safe and we will establish systems to ensure your protection from harm.
- You can expect our service to meet health and safety requirements.
- You will receive the same quality and level of service regardless of your gender, religious, cultural or linguistic background, sexual orientation, age, disability or family status.
- We will regularly ask you for your opinions and seek suggestions regarding the services that we offer.
- If you have a child under 16 years old, you have the right to have your child's needs considered and linked to suitable responses.

## Client Responsibilities

- Be respectful of others, including staff, volunteers and other clients.
- Be respectful of the organisation's property.
- Be an active participant in your service.
- Participate in the service in a fit state (not under the influence of drugs or alcohol).
- Maintain confidentiality regarding information about other clients or participants in groups or programs.
- Provide accurate information about yourself to receive the best service.

All staff and volunteers are made aware of the Client Charter and are expected to uphold the rights of clients in all aspects of their work.

All clients are made aware of their rights and responsibilities, at service entry, in a way that is aligned with their communication needs. If required, SLH provides the Client Charter in alternative formats, or in translations into community languages.

To support the implementation of the Client Charter, SLH:

- ensures that the organisation can adequately deliver the rights statements identified in the Client Charter
- implements processes at service entry to ensure that all clients are aware of their rights and responsibilities
- encourages regular feedback from clients and other stakeholders regarding the service provided
- encourages client participation in improving services
- provides an integrated service response with external service providers to meet the identified needs of clients and to uphold their rights
- employs skilled staff who respect the clients' rights and who understand the organisation's responsibilities to clients
- raises awareness about the Client Charter with all staff and volunteers at induction, in team meetings, through training and in regular supervision.

## 4. PROCEDURE

SLH understands and supports the principles of fairness and human rights in all aspects of service delivery. It ensures that services are provided in an environment that is free from discrimination, financial, sexual, physical and emotional abuse, neglect or exploitation.

## **1. Charter distribution**

The Client Charter is provided to all clients upon their entry to the service. To ensure that clients understand the Client Charter contents, the following strategies are applied:

- The client's worker explains each point in a manner that is aligned with the client's communication needs. This may mean providing the Client Charter in alternative formats, such as in plain English, Braille or translated into a community language.
- If required, an interpreter is engaged to explain the Client Charter in another language verbally.
- The client is provided with the Client Charter in writing and, if needed, in an alternative or translated format.
- A copy of the Client Charter and SLH's complaints policy is provided in the client's Welcome Pack.
- All clients are asked to sign a copy of the Client Charter to ensure that they have understood their rights and responsibilities.

## **2. Charter access**

The Client Charter is made accessible through the following mechanisms

- displaying it in key areas of the service's premises, where clients will see it
- making it available in accessible formats or in other languages
- offering copies to individual clients
- explaining it to clients as part of the assessment process.

## **3. Ongoing monitoring of the Client Charter implementation**

- Staff are reminded of the Client Charter at the team meeting and in supervision sessions. They are provided an opportunity to clarify its application in any specific situation that they may be experiencing with clients and, if needed, to receive further training.
- Clients are occasionally reminded of the Client Charter by their caseworker as a part of case reviews; clients are asked whether they feel that their rights are being respected. SLH will act promptly to address any concerns that a client raises in relation to their rights not being respected.

- If a client is not following their responsibilities, SLH will go over the responsibilities with the client again in a manner that is aligned with the client's communication needs. The Caseworker will work with each client to support them in complying with their responsibilities. If the client is still unable to meet his or her responsibilities, then the effects of this will be assessed at the workplace—such as in relation to workplace health and safety, service capacity and efficiency—by The Executive Officer . The client's non-compliance with their responsibilities will be raised with the client, along with the consequences of further non-compliance.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility	Delegation
Ensure policy and procedure adherence	All Staff & Volunteers
Obtain client consent	Case Worker – Executive Officer
Conduct intake process	Case Worker – Executive Officer

## 6. LEGISLATION

*Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth)*

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00143>

*[Privacy Amendment \(Enhancing Privacy Protection\) Act 2012 \(Cwlth\)](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2012A00197)*

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2012A00197>

*Privacy Act 1988 (Cwlth)*

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2018C00034>

*NSW Ombudsman Act 1974 (Cwlth)*

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/inforce/e2aba61e-c735-e89a-b8a2-f1b2328c0938/1974-68.pdf>

## 9. APPENDICES

Client Welcome Pack

## 10. FURTHER RESOURCES

SHS Practice Guideline (2014) Module 3

[https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/327996/GHSHPracticeGuidelines.pdf](https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/327996/GHSHPracticeGuidelines.pdf)

## REVIEW

Reviewing and approving this policy		
Frequency	Person responsible	Approval
Every Three Years	Executive Officer, Case Worker	Management Committee

Policy review and version tracking			
Review	Date approved	Approved by	Next review date
Version 1	16/12/2020	Management Committee	December 2023
Version 2			
Version 3			