

What is the Patient Advocacy Program?

We are dedicated to ensuring the rights of people receiving behavioral health services.

Individuals receiving behavioral health services have the same legal rights afforded to every person.

Information & Assistance

(619) 282-1134 or (800) 479-2233

Fax: (619) 282-4885

www.jfssd.org/PatientAdvocacy

Hours:

8:00am–5:00pm, Monday–Friday



Patient Advocacy

For people receiving behavioral health services in San Diego County.

(619) 282-1134 | (800) 479-2233

www.jfssd.org/PatientAdvocacy

For a copy of our Notice of Privacy Practices, please visit our website or contact us.



The Patient Advocacy Program
is funded by the County of San Diego

Patient Advocacy



Your Right to Voluntary Treatment



This brochure is supplemental to the state-mandated "Rights for Individuals in Mental Health Facilities" handbook and does not replace it.

Information & Assistance
(619) 282-1134 | (800) 479-2233
www.jfssd.org/PatientAdvocacy

What is Voluntary Treatment?

Voluntary treatment is when an individual requests admission to a behavioral health unit, crisis stabilization unit, or other treatment facility, and consents to treatment as ordered by the physician. An individual can request voluntary treatment at any point during their admission.

The law requires that voluntary treatment should be offered to all patients. Those individuals who are mentally competent and willing and able to participate in treatment on a voluntary basis must be allowed to do so.

The changing of the individual's legal status to voluntary indicates that the individual is willing to take medications, participate in treatment, and is working towards a discharge plan with their provider.

If a voluntary patient begins refusing treatment, their doctor will evaluate them and may determine that voluntary status is no longer appropriate.

Individuals should not seek voluntary status as a means to immediately discharge from the facility.

What If I Change My Mind?

If you would like to discharge from the facility, you should inform a facility staff member of your desire to leave. Your doctor will then conduct an evaluation to determine if they believe that you are ready to leave the facility.

If, after the evaluation, your doctor determines that you are ready to leave the facility, you may then discharge, after completing normal discharge procedures.

If, after the evaluation, your doctor believes that you continue to require involuntary treatment (and you meet the legal criteria to be detained), the doctor may place you on an involuntary detention.

If you are placed on an involuntary detention, you will receive a certification review hearing, and will be assisted by a Patient Advocate, unless you are discharged prior to the hearing.

The hearing will provide you with an opportunity to express your desire to leave the facility to a hearing officer, who has the authority to release you, if they determine that it is safe to do so.

What are My Rights?

Individuals receiving behavioral health services have the same legal rights guaranteed to all other people by the Federal and State Constitutions and other laws.

Each individual admitted to any facility for evaluation or treatment – voluntarily or involuntarily – has rights. These rights are available to you, regardless of your legal status.

For additional information regarding your rights, please see the "Rights for Individuals in Mental Health Facilities" handbook, which you should have received upon admission.

Voluntary status does not apply to individuals on LPS conservatorship.

Please contact our office for a list of rights that individuals receiving behavioral health services retain at all times.

Patient Advocacy Services

All individuals, regardless of legal status, can receive services provided by Patient Advocates.



Need Assistance?
Have Questions?

(619) 282-1134
(800) 479-2233