



CONSUMER HANDBOOK



TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISSION STATEMENT	4
PHILOSOPHY	4
ABOUT SUNPATH, LLC	4
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	4
HOURS OF OPERATION	9
STAFF	9
FEES	9
HEALTH AND SAFETY/MEDICAL EMERGENCIES/ FIRST AID	10
INFECTION CONTROL	10
MEDICATION	12
NOTIFICATION OF NON-DISCRIMINATION	13
TOBACCO, DRUG AND WEAPONS POLICY	13
SEARCH AND SEIZURE	13
EMERGENCY INTERVENTIONS	14
ASSESSMENTS	14
INFORMED CONSENT	15
PERSON CENTERED PLANNING	15
24/7/365 CRISIS HOTLINE	16
YOUR CLINICAL HOME	16
TRANSITION PLANNING	16
DISCHARGE	17
FOLLOW-UP CONTACT	17
CONSUMER RIGHTS	17
ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS	20
ADVANCE DIRECTIVES	20
CONSUMER RESPONSIBILITIES	21
CONFIDENTIALITY	21
CODE OF ETHICS	22
MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD	22
FAMILY AND NATURAL SUPPORTS	23
CONSUMER COMPLIANT AND GRIEVANCE	23
SUSPENSION / EXPULSION	24
COURT ORDERED TREATMENT	25
MOTIVATIONAL INCENTIVES	26
MEDICAID APPEAL STEPS	26
STATE ADVOCATES	28

Dear Consumer/Parents/Legal Guardians:

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information to parents, legal guardians and consumers about Sunpath LLC's programs. It is the belief of Sunpath LLC that if we share with our consumers and families what our program is all about, consumers and families will become more able to make informed decisions about treatment. Our program seeks to develop each consumer's abilities for communication, social skills, and other critical skills necessary for successful living.

While receiving services from Sunpath LLC, we ask you to:

- Let your needs be known.
- Ask questions about the benefits and potential risks of services you receive, and about the different kinds of services available.
- Be involved in developing and reviewing your Person Centered plan.
- Keep all scheduled appointments or call at least 24 hours in advance to cancel.
- Work with your treatment team to meet the goals you have established.
- Let us know if you have moved so we will know how to contact you or can help link you to new services.
- Respect the rights and property of others.
- Respect the confidentiality of any persons you may see while receiving services.

We recognize that our ability to offer a positive and successful environment for you and your family depends on continuous communication and support from Sunpath LLC staff and you. Please let us know how we can best assist and support you in your efforts to get you and your family "back on track." If at any time you feel you need a conference, please do not hesitate to call. The more involved you are with us, and the more you can reinforce any progress, the more successful we will all be.

MISSION STATEMENT

Sunpath, LLC enhances our community by providing treatment to consumers with serious emotional and behavioral problems. We deliver an effective and efficient array of services, which enable our consumers and their families to exercise self-determination, achieve their potential, and become positive contributors to society.

PHILOSOPHY

Sunpath, LLC believes that every human being deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. It is under this ideology that we will redirect negative behaviors and encourage positive conduct. We want to show our clients the importance of being positive in the community and productive citizens in society. Sunpath LLC strives to pave the way and serve as a beacon for individuals on the pathway to brighter futures.

ABOUT SUNPATH, LLC

Sunpath, LLC was established in 2002. We are a provider of behavioral health services to assist individuals with their mental health, substance abuse, developmental disabilities difficulties. We have grown over the years to provide a wide array of services to help consumers with various intensities of assistance

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Sunpath LLC's service is designed to provide positive alternatives for consumers who are having problems in the public-school system, at home, or in the community. Sunpath LLC will operate with community partners/agencies, other service providers and the Area Mental Authority, who will provide referrals for consumers who have presented a need for improvement in their social skills, behavioral skills or truancy. We hope to equip the consumer with the capabilities to improve and develop their personal and academic growth.

Our program has two parts;

First, we work on aspects related to your social, emotional, and behavioral abilities. Our program centers on a structured, positive setting. The idea is to teach you ways to meet your personal goals in a positive way, rather than meeting failure and rejection because you approached the problem in the wrong way. Focus will be placed on meeting goals and constructive problem solving skills.

The second component is our commitment to your family. With your permission, we will be keeping your family/legal guardian informed of your progress and problems. We work closely with families to help with problems at home, the community as well as school. It is very important for your family to be a part of this program. By communicating with them on a regular basis, we can help you learn to deal with difficulties in a variety of places. It is also important for your family to know about your progress.

Program Services and Activities:

Community Support Team (CST) – Adults

Community Support Team (CST) services consist of community-based mental health and substance abuse rehabilitation services and necessary supports provided through a team approach to assist adults in achieving recovery goals. It is intended for individuals with mental illness, substance abuse disorders, or both who have complex and extensive treatment needs.

This is an intensive community-based rehabilitation team service that provides direct treatment and interventions as well as case management. CST is designed to

- reduce presenting psychiatric or substance abuse symptoms and promote symptom stability,
- restore the recipient's community living and interpersonal skills,
- provide first responder intervention to deescalate the current crisis, and
- ensure linkage to community services and resources.

The team approach involves structured, face-to-face, scheduled appointments to provide support and guidance in all areas of functioning in life domains: emotional, social, safety, housing, medical and health, educational, vocational, and legal.

Under the direction of the Team Leader, CST services are delivered to recipients, with a team approach, primarily in their living environments or in the community and include but are not limited to the following interventions:

- Individual therapy
- Behavioral interventions such as modeling, behavior modification, behavior rehearsal
- Substance abuse treatment interventions
- Development of relapse prevention and disease management strategies to support recovery
- Education for the recipient, families, caregivers, and/or other individuals involved with the recipient about the recipient's diagnosis, symptoms, and treatment.
- Education regarding the identification and self-management of the prescribed

medications

- Intensive case management
 - assessment
 - planning
 - linkage and referral to paid and natural supports
 - monitoring and follow up
- Arranging for psychological and psychiatric evaluations and
- Crisis management, including crisis planning and prevention

Intensive In-Home (IIH) – Child/Adolescents

Intensive In-Home (IIH) service is a team approach designed to address the identified needs of children and adolescents, who due to serious and chronic symptoms of an emotional, behavioral, and/or substance use disorders, are unable to remain stable in the community/home without intensive interventions. This is a time-limited, intensive child and family intervention based on the clinical needs of the youth.

The service is intended to:

- reduce presenting mental health or substance abuse symptoms,
- provide first responder intervention to diffuse current crisis,
- ensure linkage to community services and resources, and
- prevent out of home placement for the child.

The parent/caregiver must be an active participant in the treatment. The team provides individualized services that are developed in full partnership with the family. Services are generally more intensive at the beginning of treatment and decrease over time as the family/youth's skills develop.

IIH services are delivered to children and adolescents, primarily in their living environments, with a family focus, and include but are not limited to the following interventions as clinically indicated:

- Individual and family therapy;
- Substance abuse treatment interventions;
- Developing and implementing a home-based behavioral support plan with the youth and his or her caregivers;
- Psychoeducation, which imparts information to the recipients, families, caregivers, and/or other individuals involved with the recipient's care about the recipient's diagnosis, condition, and treatment..
- Intensive case management
 - assessment
 - planning
 - linkage and referral to paid and natural supports
 - monitoring and follow up
- Arranges for psychological and psychiatric evaluations

- Crisis management

Outpatient Therapy

Outpatient Therapy Treatment is a service designed to meet the clinically significant behavioral or psychological symptoms or patterns that have been identified as treatment needs of the recipient. Clinically significant means that the problems, symptoms and / or patterns that you as individual are experiencing are causing distress and / or problems in major areas of your life such as with your family, job, school, etc. This service is provided through scheduled therapeutic treatment sessions. The service may be provided to an individual, families or groups. This service includes:

- Individual, Family, and/or Group Counseling;
- Psychotherapy;
- Behavioral Interventions;
- Substance Use Interventions (If necessary);
- Life Skills;
- Relapse Prevention / Disease Management;
- Psychoeducation;
- Case Management;
- Medication therapy; and
- Other special therapy and collateral work with family (or substitute family) members of a consumer.

There should be a supportive and therapeutic relationship between the provider and consumer or primary caregiver which addresses and/or implements the interventions outlined in the Person Centered Plan in any one of the following:

- mental health therapy,
- medication administration and monitoring,
- behavioral counseling,
- counseling for substance abuse issues including methadone treatment and outpatient
- detoxification services,
- education about mental health and/or substance abuse issues,
- other covered services for recipients with only a primary developmental disability diagnosis, which are limited to physical, speech or occupational therapies.

Outpatient Therapy is designed as a structured face-to-face therapeutic intervention to provide support and guidance in preventing, overcoming or managing identified needs on the service plan to aid with improving level of functioning, increasing coping abilities or skills or sustaining a successful level of functioning on an outpatient basis. Sunpath, LLC would be the consumer's clinical home if the ONLY service the consumer is receiving is Outpatient Therapy.

Substance Abuse Intensive Outpatient Program (SAIOP) – Adults

SA Intensive Outpatient Program (SAIOP) includes structured individual and group addiction activities and services that are provided at an outpatient program designed to assist adult consumers to begin recovery and learn skills for recovery maintenance. The program is offered at least three (3) hours per day at least three (3) days per week with no more than two consecutive days between offered services. The recipient must be in attendance for a minimum of three (3) hours per day. SAIOP services shall include a structured program consisting of, but not limited to, the following services:

- Individual counseling and support;
- Group counseling and support;
- Family counseling, training or support;
- Drug screens to identify recent drug use;
- Strategies for relapse prevention to include community and social support systems in treatment;
- Life skills;
- Crisis contingency planning;
- Disease Management;
- Treatment Support;
- Case Management; and
- Assessment and Reassessment

While receiving SAIOP services, Sunpath LLC would be the consumer's clinical home.

Substance Abuse Comprehensive Outpatient Treatment (SACOT) - Adults

SA Comprehensive Outpatient Treatment (SACOT) Program is a periodic service that is a time limited, multi-faceted approach treatment service for adults who require structure and support to achieve and sustain recovery. SACOT Program is a service emphasizing reduction in use and abuse of substances and/or continued abstinence, the negative consequences of substance abuse, development of social support network and necessary lifestyle changes, educational skills, vocational skills leading to work activity by reducing substance abuse as a barrier to employment, social and interpersonal skills, improved family functioning, the understanding of addictive disease, and the continued commitment to a recovery and maintenance program. The program is offered at least four (4) hours per day at least five (5) days per week with no more than two consecutive days between offered services. The recipient must be in attendance for a minimum of four (4) hours per day. The following types of services are included in the SACOT Program:

- Individual counseling and support;
- Group counseling and support;

- Family counseling, training or support;
- Drug screens to identify recent drug use;
- Strategies for relapse prevention to include community and social support systems in treatment;
- Life skills;
- Crisis contingency planning;
- Disease Management;
- Treatment Support;
- Case Management; and
- Assessment and Reassessment

While receiving SACOT services, Sunpath LLC would be the consumer's clinical home.

Comprehensive Assessment

A Comprehensive Assessment is an intensive clinical and functional face to face evaluation of a consumer's mental health, developmental disability, or substance abuse condition that results in the issuance of an Assessment report with recommendations regarding which services will best address the needs and identified goals of the consumer.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Sunpath LLC administrative office is open Monday-Friday 9am to 5pm. The office will be closed for all major Federal Holidays.

STAFF

All program staff are highly trained and certified for the services they are providing. Each employee has been selected with close attention given to experience and strong commitment to work with all people and their families. Each staff member will conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. You will be assigned a care coordinator once you have completed your evaluation and have chosen a treatment program. Your care coordinator will call and introduce themselves as soon as you have been assigned to them. Your care coordinator will be responsible for the coordination of services.

FEES

Sunpath LLC will pursue collection of fees for services through State funding, and/or your insurance carrier. You and your legal guardian are not responsible for payment of

fees if your insurance covers fees. You may be responsible for copays if applicable. You and your legal guardian are responsible for informing Sunpath LLC of all health insurance policies that you are covered by, providing copies of your current insurance cards and report any changes to us immediately. Sunpath does not charge a fee for missing an appointment but reserves the right to not allow an individual to make any future appointments if more than three appointments are missed without a valid reason.

HEALTH AND SAFETY/MEDICAL EMERGENCIES/ FIRST AID

All Sunpath LLC staff who provide direct care are trained in First Aid and CPR techniques. First Aid will be provided by Sunpath LLC staff for minor scrapes and cuts. In the event that a consumer is more seriously injured or become ill, the parent/legal guardian and/or caregiver will be notified and informed as to what action has been taken. In the event of a life threatening emergency or sudden serious illness, Sunpath LLC staff will seek emergency care from the nearest hospital, medical facility or physician. Any injuries occurring to a consumer must be reported immediately to a member of Sunpath LLC Management staff. We ask you to keep your case responsible person(s) updated if there are any changes to your emergency medical information because that sheet will be used by staff in the event of any emergency.

Whenever you are in a Sunpath LLC facility, we ask that you make a note of the emergency exit signs and the emergency/evacuation maps located in each room. Whenever you are being transported by a Sunpath LLC staff, they will have in their possession an emergency kit for fire or other first aid emergencies.

INFECTION CONTROL

Sunpath LLC's policy is to provide a plan to minimize exposure to communicable disease or infection that spread through the following routes of transmission: (1) Direct contact as a result of close contact to skin and body secretions/fluids; (2) Indirect contact that occurs when organisms from an infected host are transmitted to a susceptible host via an inanimate object; (3) Droplet transmissions that occurs when infectious agents in droplets are expelled from respiratory secretions by coughing, sneezing, or talking; (4) Airborne spread that usually results from organisms spread from a distance of more than several feet between the source and the receiver.

Universal Precautions and Sanitary Procedures:

1) Rules of Universal Precautions:

- a) **STAFF** - All Sunpath, LLC staff members will observe the rules of universal precautions. All blood or other potentially infectious materials shall be

considered infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source individual. Under circumstances in which differentiation between body fluid types is difficult to detect, all body fluids shall be considered potentially infectious materials.

- b) **CONSUMER** - At no time should you, the consumer, touch or attempt to clean up blood or body fluids. If you observe blood or other type of body fluid you should immediately alert the staff.
- 2) **Hand Washing**: Hand washing is the number one method of infection control. Hands shall be washed before and after all tasks involving potential occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens. Hands will be washed when gloves are removed after performing each task that involves contact with blood or body fluids, mucous membranes, or non-intact skin. Antiseptic towelettes will be provided to mobile staff members that do not have hand-washing facilities immediately available. Hand washing facilities are available in bathrooms at each site and office. When other skin areas or mucous membranes come into contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials, the skin shall be washed with soap and water, and the mucous membranes shall be flushed with water as soon as possible.
 - a) **CONSUMER** - Wash your hands after each trip to the restrooms. Wash hands if exposed to blood or any type of body fluid with soap and hot water. Report any contact of blood or other body fluids that are not your own to staff immediately.
 - 3) **Facility Cleanliness**: Special care will be given to facility cleanliness. Bathrooms and eating areas should be disinfected regularly with a fresh solution of one part household bleach to ten (10) parts water.
 - a) **CONSUMER** -Alert staff if bathrooms or eating areas are not clean. Put all waste products in the waste basket including feminine hygiene products and not the toilet.
 - 4) **Spills**: All body fluid spills (regurgitation, diarrhea, urination, bleeding, sputum, etc.) will be cleaned promptly and the contaminated area disinfected. The area will be cleaned with a fresh solution of one (1) part bleach to ten (10) parts water. A spill kit will be maintained at all locations providing direct services or contact, and in all vehicles used in the provision of community-based services.
 - a) **CONSUMER** -Alert staff to any body fluid spills immediately and do not attempt to clean up the property or body fluids yourself.
 - 5) **Waste Disposal**: All items that contain liquid or semi-liquid blood or other bodily fluids, or items that would release blood or other infectious material if compressed (cleaning rags, tissues, dressings, gloves, gowns, masks, etc.) are to be discarded in labeled biohazard red bags. These bags are to be closed to prevent spillage or protrusion of contents during handling storage, transport or shipping. In some instances, double bagging may be necessary. These bags will be coded with the regulated waste insignia and taken to a local hospital for appropriate disposal or removed from the premises by a contract waste disposal provider.

- a) **CONSUMER** -Alert staff immediately of any exposed blood or other body fluid that needs to be cleaned up. Staff will provide a red biohazard bag and clean up the liquid/semi-liquid blood or other bodily fluids.
- 6) **Sharp Objects**: All staff members shall take precautions to prevent injuries by needles and other sharp instruments or devices during procedures that are likely to generate droplets of blood or other body fluids and prevent exposure to mucous membranes of the mouth, nose, and eyes. Broken glass is to be picked up using mechanical means such as a brush and dust pan, tweezers, tongs, or other devices that reduce the risk of accidental puncturing of the skin during the clean-up process. To prevent needle stick injuries, needles will not be recapped, purposely bent, or removed from disposable syringes. Needles should be placed in puncture resistant containers for disposal.
 - a) **CONSUMER** -Needles or other sharp objects are not to be brought into the Sunpath, LLC facility unless required for a medical condition such as diabetes. Any consumer that needs to bring a needle or sharp object into the facility must report to the front desk and alert staff of all such objects. Needles and other sharp objects should be kept on the person and not put a staff member or another consumer at risk of accidental puncture wound. If a needle or sharp object must be used for a medical purpose you should alert staff member to observe the use and to provide you a safe container to dispose of the needle or sharp object. If consumer breaks or observes any type of broken glass they should alert staff to the area immediately. Consumer should never attempt to clean up the broken item but allow staff to acquire necessary items and clean the items up.
- 7) **Clothing**: Clothing contaminated with potentially infectious materials will be handled as little as possible using gloves. Items will immediately be washed in hot water on the regular wash cycle and dried on the hot cycle if available. If the contaminated clothing is wet, it is to be placed in a plastic bag to prevent possible soak-through and/or leakage of fluids to the exterior. Gloves will be used to handle contaminated clothing and handling will be kept to a minimum. No one will leave the area with potentially contaminated items or clothing. Community-based staff will remove clothing with any bodily fluids as soon as possible and travel to the nearest facility or office to dispose or laundry clothing. Contaminated clothing is not to be taken home to be laundered. Sunpath will purchase or reimburse a staff member for the purchase of clothing up to \$20.00.
 - a) **CONSUMER** -Alert staff of any contaminated clothing items. Staff will purchase and provide clothing to you from the nearest store. The contaminated clothing will either be laundered at the closest laundry facility or disposed of in a red biohazard bag.

MEDICATION

Sunpath LLC's current policy is that no medication will be administered to a consumer by Sunpath LLC staff. If you have medication needs, please notify your case responsible person so they can make arrangements to get your needs met.

If you need to bring prescription medication onto the premises please notify the front desk so that we are aware of any and all medications. It will be your responsibility to handle and store the medication and Sunpath, LLC will not be responsible for any medication that is brought onto the property.

NOTIFICATION OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

All program services administered by Sunpath LLC are administered by law without regard for race, color, religion, national origin, sex, handicap, or marital status.

TOBACCO, DRUG AND WEAPONS POLICY

It is the policy of Sunpath LLC that no drugs (except those prescribed to you by a physician) or weapons should be brought or carried with you or any staff member while receiving services. Also you and any staff member must only smoke in designated smoking areas or at least 20 feet from the inside of a building or car. Failure to follow these policies could result in your suspension or expulsion from services with Sunpath LLC.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Staff may search a consumer if they have reasonable cause to believe that a policy or rule of the facility or a state or federal law has been broken, and that the individual whose person or private space to be searched has violated such policy or rule, and the search is necessary to confirm the belief and eliminate a danger/hazard to the consumer and/or others. These limitations basically include good cause to indicate possession of stolen property, or substances or items, which may be health threatening or dangerous such as alcohol or drugs (either over the counter or controlled drugs). Searches may consist of an appropriate pat down by the same-sex staff member. There will also be another staff member present while searches are being conducted with the exception when the staff feels that it is a life threatening situation (threatening to kill someone, drug overdose, etc.). Consumers will also be asked to turn their pockets inside out, to remove their shoes and socks, and turn their socks inside out. Prior to a search any consumer will be given the opportunity to verbally consent to the search and/or relinquish the items or substances in question.

Staff reserves the right to confiscate any item he or she deems a threat or inappropriate.

Contraband of any kind will be confiscated by the staff and will be returned to parents/legal guardians or local law enforcement officials. This rule includes, but is not limited to, the following items:

- Weapons
- Drugs
- Drug Paraphernalia
- Alcohol

Every search and seizure shall be documented along with the parent/legal guardian being notified.

Documentation shall include:

- Scope of Search
- Reason for Search
- Procedures followed in the search
- Description of any property
- An amount of the disposition seized

EMERGENCY INTERVENTIONS

Sunpath LLC does not use any kind of seclusion or restraint as a behavioral intervention in the course of treatment for any consumer, and will only conduct an emergency intervention on consumers only in the event that failure to do so could result in severe injury, death or significant property damage in the staff's professional opinion. Only staff who have been trained in the therapeutic interventions will be allowed to use this emergency intervention. We ask that you fill out the Restrictive Intervention Notification form so we are aware of whom you would like to be notified in the event of an emergency and any physical needs staff may need to be aware of.

ASSESSMENTS

Upon admission to services with Sunpath LLC, we will complete comprehensive assessments with you. The purpose of the comprehensive assessment is to identify your principal reasons for seeking services, to clarify needs and preferences, and to identify conditions that shall be the focus of the services you receive. The assessment process may include multiple visits with you and your family (with your consent). Your care coordinator will provide a copy of your comprehensive assessment to you. If you need another copy provided to you or a copy of your records you can call the main office at 704-478-6093 ext. 100 and put in a formal request for a copy of your records. A copy of your medical records can be mailed, picked-up or faxed to you within 5 business days.

INFORMED CONSENT

Before services are provided, you must agree to those services. You will be provided all the information you need, in a language that you understand, so you can make an “informed choice” about the service being offered to you. If you agree, then you will be asked to sign an “Informed Consent for Treatment.”

PERSON CENTERED PLANNING

Each consumer that receives services from Sunpath LLC will have a Person Centered Plan to address the consumer’s special strengths and needs, and is used to facilitate and monitor behavior change. The consumer, his/her family or legal guardian and clinical home professional are involved to help with setting goals for a consumer to achieve. These plans will be opened and maintained by the consumer’s clinical home professional. A copy of the consumer’s Person Centered Plan shall be provided to the parents/legal guardians. If the parent/legal guardian has not received a copy, you and/or your parent/legal guardian have the right to request a copy of the plan through your clinical home professional, if you so desire.

What is the Person Centered Process?

The process used to design your individual plan of supports, service(s) or treatment is called person-centered planning (PCP) and includes the following important points:

1. Your planning meeting occurs at a time and place that is convenient for you.
2. You can invite the people you want to your meeting.
3. You get the information you need and ask for from the people at your meeting.
4. The people at your meeting listen to you and respect your opinions and wishes.
5. The people at your meeting work together so you can be more independent and more involved in your community.
6. You help set the course of your treatment and services you receive.
7. Consider the team’s suggestions if you do not agree with the plan.
8. You are satisfied with the final plan.
9. You sign and receive a copy of the plan.

An important part of your person-centered plan is your crisis plan. Your case responsible person(s) will work with you to develop a plan to help prevent a crisis and to help you during a crisis. Your crisis plan gives information about what you would like to happen should a crisis occur. Examples of what might be in a crisis plan include friends or relatives to be called, contact numbers, preferred medicines, care of children and pets and bills to be paid. Your care coordinator will provide a copy of your person-centered plan including crisis plan to you. If you need another copy provided to you or a copy of your records you can call the main office at 704-478-6093 ext. 100 and put in a formal request for a copy of your records. A copy of your medical records can be mailed, picked-up or faxed to you within 5 business days.

24/7/365 CRISIS HOTLINE

The crisis plan that you develop with your provider will make it easier for others to help you in the event that a crisis occurs. Sometimes, unexpected things can happen during a crisis. If you are ever having a mental health crisis after hours, Sunpath LLC's 24/7/365 Crisis Hotline (**704-300-9913**) is available for you to call and speak to a Sunpath LLC Qualified Professional. We will help you work through your pre-established crisis plan and increase the level of intervention based on the severity of the crisis you are experiencing. **Should a life threatening medical emergency occur, please call 911 first.**

YOUR CLINICAL HOME

If you are receiving certain services from Sunpath LLC, then Sunpath LLC is considered your clinical home. That means that we would be the first point of contact for any of your service needs and should be fully updated on any changes with you immediately. Also we need to be notified of all other services you may be receiving from other service providers. As your clinical home, you should call our 24/7 crisis hotline if you are ever experiencing a mental health crisis after hours. Examples of services that would make Sunpath LLC your clinical home include Community Support and Outpatient Therapy (if that is the only service you are receiving from a service provider).

At Sunpath LLC, you will be given one or more case responsible persons or care coordinators. The duties of a care coordinator are: to help you assemble a team to identify your needs and develop a plan to work on those needs, to assist you in locating and coordinating services identified in your plan, to assist you in completing forms needed for services, to help you design a plan for crisis situations, to monitor the services and help you determine if those services are helping make progress toward your goals, and to help you leave services when you are ready. These individuals will be your contact for any service needs that you may have. They will contact you often and will set up periodic treatment team meetings with you, other service providers and anyone else who you wish to be involved in your care.

TRANSITION PLANNING

Sunpath LLC's ultimate goal is to ensure that you and your family are able to deal with your needs without the assistance of service providers. With this in mind, we start the planning for your success from the beginning of services. Our transition planning focuses on your needs in order to support ongoing recovery, treatment/service gains and/or increased community involvement. At least 60 days

from your planned departure from services or 14 days if you are in substance abuse services, we will work with you to complete a transition plan that you can use after services have ended.

DISCHARGE

A consumer will be discharged for the following:

1. Consumer has achieved goals of treatment plan and is deemed ready to be discharged.
2. Individual and/or parent/legal guardian request discharge.
3. Individual's behavior is such that it interferes significantly with the well being or rights of others.
4. Constantly uncooperative behavior towards treatment from the consumer, parent/legal guardian, or placing agency.
5. Consumer has refused to make contact or participate in services for 15 consecutive days.

However, should a consumer be discharged because of difficulties, we will do our best to work with the parent and consumer until a suitable placement can be found.

FOLLOW-UP CONTACT

Regardless of the circumstances of your discharge, after you leave services, Sunpath LLC will follow-up with you to determine further services are needed and offer or refer you to needed services if it is determined that such services may be beneficial to your adjustment and well-being.

CONSUMER RIGHTS

Each consumer receiving services from Sunpath LLC shall be treated with respect and to the basic human rights of dignity, privacy, and humane care. These rights are written in North Carolina State Law and this agency will uphold them.

All persons receiving services from Sunpath LLC always retains the right:

1. To all rights, benefits and privileges guaranteed by Federal, State, and local law, except those specifically lost through the due process of law. These rights include but not limited to right to privacy; freedom of association; freedom from cruel and unusual punishment; right to marry; procreate and raise children; right to vote; freedom of speech and religious expression; right to own property; equal employment and educational opportunity.

2. To be treated with courtesy and dignity, and are at all times entitled to respect for their individuality, and the recognition that their strengths, abilities, needs, and preferences are not determinable on the basis of a psychiatric diagnosis.
3. To be notified of all rights accorded them as recipients of services at time of admission or intake, and in terms that he or she understands.
4. To be treated in the least restrictive setting to meet their needs. Use of therapeutic restrictive interventions will be limited to emergency situations where there is a reasonable expectation that the situation would result in serious injury or death to the consumer or other persons in the environment.
5. To receive services conducted in a manner reflecting quality professional and ethical standards of practice, and shall be apprised of the organization's code of ethics/conduct.
6. To receive services without discrimination based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, domestic/marital status, political affiliation or opinion, veteran's status, physical/mental handicap or ability to pay for services.
7. To be treated in an environment free from physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, physical punishment, or psychological abuse by threatening, intimidating, harassing, or humiliating actions or retaliation on the part of staff.
8. To be fully informed of the services to be provided, the right to consent to services, service delivery, concurrent services, composition of the service delivery team and the right to refuse services (with the exception of legally mandated services) without fear of retribution or loss of rights.
9. To confidentiality. Information may not be released without the your written permission, except as the law permits or requires.
10. To review your record at any reasonable time upon request, including prior to an authorized release, and shall be afforded the assistance of an appropriate clinical employee in cases where a reasonable concern exists of a possible harmful effect to the consumer through the misinterpretation of information in the record.
11. To participate in your treatment and treatment planning. You have a right to a full and complete explanation of the nature of treatment and any known or potential risks involved therein.
12. To an individualized, written treatment plan to be developed promptly following admission, treatment based on the plan, periodic review and reassessment of needs, and appropriate revisions of the plan including a description of services that may be needed following discharge from services.
13. To be free from unnecessary or excessive medication as a punishment, discipline or staff convenience. Medication shall be administered in accordance with

accepted medical standards and only upon order of a physician as documented in the client record.

14. To request and receive outside (other than Sunpath LLC employees) professional consultation regarding their treatment at their own expense.
15. To refuse treatment, except in emergency situations or other circumstances required by law. You shall not be denied treatment, services, or referral as a form of reprisal, excepting that no individual provider shall be obligated to administer treatment or use methods contrary to his or her clinical judgment.
16. To information about fees for services and their rights regarding fees for services and be free from financial or other exploitation.
17. To an explanation if services are refused to them for any reason including admission ineligibility or continued care ineligibility, and have the right to appeal such decisions.
18. To informal complaint and/or formal grievance regarding practices or decisions that impact their treatment or status without fear or concern for reprisal by the organization or its staff, and have the right to have this process clearly communicated to them upon entry to services and throughout participation in services.
19. To refuse to participate in research without loss of services, and participate in research on a voluntary basis only with full written informed consent.
20. To access guardians, self-help groups, advocacy services and legal services at any time. Access will be facilitated through the person responsible for the consumer's service coordination.
21. To be treated in the least restrictive environment, be provided evidence-based information about alternative treatments, and have equal access to treatment regardless of race ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation and sources of payment.
22. To be informed of appeal procedures, initiate appeals, have access to grievance procedures, receive a grievance appeal decision in writing, and appeal a grievance decision to an unbiased source.
23. To contact the Disability Rights of North Carolina call 1-877-235-4210 (Voice toll-free) or 1-888-268-5535 (TTY). You can also email them a infor@disabilityrightsc.org. This is the agency designated under federal and state law to protect and advocates for the rights of persons with disabilities.
24. In addition to these rights, minor you also have the right to:
 - a. Have access to proper adult supervision and guidance, appropriate structure and control consistent with rights of minors.

- b. Have opportunities to enable him/her to mature physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially, and vocationally.
- c. Receive treatment apart and separate from adults unless treatment needs of minor dictate otherwise.
- d. Receive special education and vocational training in accordance with State Law.

Any person who believes that his/her rights may have been violated or are dissatisfied with services/treatment may contact the staff person responsible for their care or any Sunpath, LLC Director for information on Compliant and Grievance Procedures. This procedure ensures that key staff and managers in our agency have the opportunity to hear your concern and respond to them. If you are not satisfied with the response of our staff, you may make an appeal to the Sunpath LLC Governing Body.

ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS

Sunpath, LLC staff will be seeking your electronic signature to complete paperwork such as PCPs, service plans, release of information, forms, consents, etc. You have the right to ample opportunity to review the document(s) for completeness and accuracy prior to providing your electronic signature. The signature will only be obtained using a digitized signature - an electronic image of the individual's handwritten signature. The signature(s) must include a time and date stamp, and the signature must be entered on the electronic image of the document that you are signing. Once an entry has been signed electronically, the computer system shall prevent the entry from being deleted or altered. The entry shall include a time and date stamp. If errors are later found in the entry, or if information must be added, this shall be done by means of an addendum to the original entry. The addendum shall be signed electronically and include a time and date stamp.

ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

You have the right to a written plan called an “advanced instruction for mental health treatment” or “Advance Directives.” This written plan describes how you want to be cared for if you ever become unable to decide or speak for yourself. You can also name a “health-care proxy” in your advanced instruction. This lets another person who you have identified make decisions about your care if you become unable to do so. For help in preparing these plans, you should speak with your care coordinator. You can request a copy of instructions and the Advance Directive forms from your care coordinator or at the front desk.

CONSUMER RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to your rights, you also have responsibilities as a consumer with Sunpath LLC.

1. To treat other consumers and employees with courtesy.
2. Let your needs be known.
3. Ask questions about the benefits and potential risks of services you receive, and about the different kinds of services available.
4. Be involved in developing and reviewing your Person Centered plan.
5. Keep all scheduled appointments or call at least 24 hours in advance to cancel.
6. Work with your treatment team to meet the goals you have established.
7. Let us know if you have moved so we will know how to contact you or can help link you to new services.
8. Respect the rights and property of others.
9. To behave in such a way as to protect yourself and others from exposure to or transmission of any infectious or communicable disease.
10. You have the responsibility to follow all of Sunpath LLC's safety rules and posted signs.
11. You have the responsibility to attend services without the use of alcohol or illicit drugs.
12. Respect the confidentiality of any persons you may see while receiving services.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Among the basic human rights assured to all persons who may be or seek to be consumers of Sunpath LLC is the right to privacy, which includes the assurance that information which may be collected by the program about the you will be handled according to a strict standard of confidentiality.

All information in concerning your treatment is considered confidential under federal law and shall be available only to authorized recipients. Anyone not involved in providing your care, including family members, must first obtain your or your guardian's permission before this information is provided to them. However, it is very important for your treatment to be coordinated with other professionals who might be working with you, such as your primary care physician, school professionals, or state agencies. You can allow individuals access to your information by signing consents for release of information forms.

By law, there are some situations when information about you may be shared without your permission. These include:

- If a responsible professional determines you are in imminent danger of hurting yourself or others or if there is the likelihood that you may commit or have threatened to commit a crime;
- If the court orders that we disclose information in a legal action brought against you;
- If you bring legal action that in some way relates to your treatment;
- If you have been assigned a legal guardian or someone has been appointed to have power of attorney over your affairs, that person may authorize release of information on your behalf;
- If your medical records must be reviewed or audited to abide by government or area authority regulations, including but not limited to clinical supervision;
- To report suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child or disabled or elderly adult; regardless of active or discharged status;
- To coordinate your care between the area authority and service providers as allowed under state and federal law;
- To coordinate your care with other area or state facilities when it has been determined that disclosure of information is needed to ensure appropriate and effective care;
- If you are an inmate with the Department of Corrections and it has been determined that you are in need of treatment;
- If a physician or other health care provider who is providing emergency medical services to you determines that you are in need of treatment;
- To report any communicable disease

CODE OF ETHICS

All Sunpath LLC staff are required to perform their job in a manner that reflects the highest standards of ethical behavior. The Code of Conduct Policy is to ensure that all employees' actions reflect a competent, respectful, and professional approach when serving our consumers, their families and/or representatives, working with other providers of services, and interacting within the communities we serve. It is expected that staff and members of the governing authority will perform their duties in compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations in accordance with guidelines set forth in this policy. If you ever feel that staff may have acted unethically, please file a Grievance with Sunpath LLC.

MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD

Sunpath, LLC values your input because our priority is making sure your needs and expectations are met and exceeded. At different times while you receiving services with us and after you are no longer receiving services with us, we will be requesting your input through surveys and other methods to get your opinion on the quality of care you are receiving, your satisfaction with the services you are receiving and the

progress you are making in services with Sunpath LLC among other things. Between those times, we encourage you to voice any concerns or opinions you have to your care coordinator, Clinical Director or Sunpath LLC's Governing body.

FAMILY AND NATURAL SUPPORTS

Having family and natural supports is an important part of recovery for individuals that have mental health and substance abuse issues. Family and natural supports provide support, friendship, love and hope. Sunpath, LLC encourages participants to invite and include family and natural supports into your treatment. You will be asked to sign a release of information for each person you want to invite into treatment and you can choose what information will be released to the individual during that time. You can add or subtract family and natural supports at any time during treatment by talking to your care coordinator. You can also revoke a release of information at any point during treatment by seeing your care coordinator.

CONSUMER COMPLIANT AND GRIEVANCE

You have a right to address complaints about service provision with Sunpath LLC, and do so without fear of reprisal for doing so. The Sunpath LLC's process for addressing a complaint is as follows:

1. You are encouraged to address complaints with their direct care counselors and attempt to work out the perceived problem in an informal manner. If the contact with your worker does not resolve the problem, or if you do not feel comfortable making the complaint with the staff, contact Sunpath, LLC's Clinical Director.
2. If the informal attempt to address the complaint does not result in a satisfactory outcome for you, a formal complaint may be initiated.
3. To file a formal complaint, a compliant form can be obtained from your counselor or in the Sunpath LLC lobby. Also one is attached to this handbook.
4. Complete the complaint form and submit it to the Sunpath LLC Clinical Director.
5. Upon receipt of the complaint form, the Sunpath LLC Clinical Director will begin an investigation of the complaint, which may include interviews with the person submitting the complaint, and other persons noted on the form and/or within the Sunpath LLC that may offer relevant information in resolving the complaint.

6. Within 5 working days of receiving the complaint, the Sunpath LLC Clinical Director will respond, in writing to the person who submitted the complaint, noting the result of the investigation. The written response will be provided during a meeting between the Sunpath LLC Clinical Director and the consumer, in which the outcome of the investigation will be discussed.
7. Should you be dissatisfied with the result of the response to the complaint, an appeal can be made to the Sunpath LLC Governing Body by indicating to the Sunpath LLC Clinical Director that an appeal of the outcome is requested.
8. Within 10 working days, the Sunpath LLC Governing Body will respond in writing to you as to the outcome of the appeal review.
9. The above steps are provided in sequence; however, some steps may be eliminated if you wish. For examples, the initial complaint may be made directly to the Clinical Director.
10. At any time in the process, from the initial informal attempt to resolve the complaint to the receipt of the written response from the Sunpath LLC Governing Body, you have the right to seek assistance from an advocate outside of the organization.

Consumer Grievance Contacts

Sunpath LLC:

**Sandra Farley
Clinical Director
415 W Main Ave
Gastonia, NC 28052
704-478-6093 ext. 102**

Sunpath LLC Governing Body

**P.O. Box 864
Gastonia, NC 28053
704-478-6093**

Regional Advocate:

**Client's Rights Representative
Gaston, Lincoln, Cleveland Area
Authority (Partners)
901 S. New Hope Rd.
Gastonia, NC 28054
1-800-646-4518**

**Client's Rights Representative
Cardinal Innovations
10150 Mallard Creek Road Suite 305
Charlotte NC 28262
980.938.4100**

SUSPENSION / EXPULSION

It is the policy of Sunpath LLC that clients engaging in aggressive, threatening or sexually inappropriate behavior, in the sale or distribution of licit or illicit drugs on site, behavior resulting in property destruction or other dangerous, illegal activities or

violations may be suspended or expelled from services. The safety and welfare of clients and staff at Sunpath LLC is paramount. Therefore, there may be times when a client who is a danger to others or who is in violation of city, state or federal law is suspended or expelled from a clinical service or program or transferred to another clinical service or program to protect other clients and/or Sunpath LLC staff. It is the policy of Sunpath LLC that each consumer shall be free from threat or fear of unwarranted suspension or termination from services.

Criteria for suspension or expulsion include a) Aggressive, threatening or sexually inappropriate behavior; b) The possession, use, sale or distribution of licit or illicit drugs on site; c) Behavior resulting in property destruction; d) The consumer is a danger to self or others; e) The consumer presents a significant risk for causing serious disruption to the recovery process of others; f) Sunpath LLC has exhausted all resources to ensure health and safety of consumer; g) Violation of the rules for the facility, such as no smoking or drinking within the facility by any consumer regardless of age; h) Possession of any contraband; i) Attendance of services under the influence of drugs or alcohol; k) Other dangerous or illegal activities

When a client is suspended or expelled from a program, he/she will be notified of the reason for removal and the avenues to file an appeal through the Sunpath LLC Consumer Grievance policy. This notification will be documented in the clinical record. In the event of an appeal, the consumer will be considered in suspended status until the appeal process is completed unless otherwise determined by the Clinical Director. Clients suspended from clinical services or programs will be informed of the means by which they may resume attendance at or regain admission to the clinical service or program. Clients expelled from services will not be eligible for re-admission to services or transfer within Sunpath LLC. Every effort will be made to ensure access to appropriate alternative services for clients who are removed from clinical services or programs. When applicable, the consumer's transition/discharge plan will be utilized. When possible, Sunpath LLC clinical staff will refer clients who have been removed from clinical services or programs to more appropriate Sunpath LLC programs or outside agencies. The client will be contacted by the Clinical Director or designee for follow-up within 72 hours of suspension or expulsion from a clinical service or program to ensure linkage to appropriate care and contact will be documented in the activity notes of the clinical record.

COURT ORDERED TREATMENT

North Carolina created Structured Sentencing in 1990. Structured Sentencing is a method of sentencing and punishing individual that have broken the law. If an individual qualifies for the community punishment portion of structured sentencing

then substance use or mental health evaluation and /or treatment may be court ordered. Individual may also be ordered to continue treatment after an involuntary commitment at a psychiatric hospital has been completed and aftercare was recommended or required. The court system requires that reporting of your attendance, type of therapy, and progress being made to them on a routine basis. It is in your best interest to allow Sunpath, LLC to fulfill their request by signing a release of information form to show your compliance with the court orders. You can revoke the release of information at any time or refuse to sign one all together. If you revoke a release or refuse to sign a release of information then Sunpath, LLC will not report your information back to the court system unless subpoenaed to do so by a qualified judge.

MOTIVATIONAL INCENTIVES

Sunpath, LLC provides certificate of completion of all SAIOP / SACOT programs to show the clients level of commitment and completion to their overall mental health and substance abuse.

MEDICAID APPEAL STEPS

If you are receiving Medicaid insurance coverage, it is very important that you understand the following rights. If you want more explanation, call the Area Authority Consumer Rights Coordinator (Partners at **704-884-2575**). The policies are based on Federal Law (42CFR 431.200-244). These appeal steps are only available to Medicaid recipients.

WHAT ACTIONS MAY BE APPEALED? A Medicaid recipient may appeal when your Area Authority reduces, suspends, terminates or denies a requested service. If you have been denied Medicaid eligibility, you should direct your appeal to the Department of Social Services or the Social Security Administration. The Area Authority cannot hear appeals for Medicaid eligibility.

HOW WILL I BE NOTIFIED ABOUT MY RIGHTS? Your Area Authority will notify you in writing at least 10 working days before they reduce, suspend, or terminate your current service. If the Area Authority denies your requested service (for first-time request or when requesting a service other than the one for which you are currently authorized), they will notify you in writing.

HOW DO I APPEAL? You will receive an appeal request form with the notice letter. The notice letter will explain the appeal steps. You may either send the appeal request form to the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services (DMH/DD/SAS) or you may send a special form to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) in Raleigh, which is the final State hearing.

ACT QUICKLY: You have 11 working days from the date on the heading of the notification letter, to send in the form to DMH/DD/SAS. In situations in which the Area Program reduces, suspends, or terminates your current service, you may have your current services continued at the program's expense, until a final State OAH hearing, as long as the DMH/DD/SAS or OAH receives the appeal request form on or before the effective date of the reduction, termination, or suspension. This date will be clearly marked on the Notification Letter. The OAH office (919) 733-2698 will explain its deadlines, forms, and requirements.

- DMH/DD/SAS will schedule a hearing within 30 days from the day it receives your request form.

WHAT IF MY MEDICAL CONDITION REQUIRES FAST ACTION? Call your Area Authority's Client Rights Coordinator (Partners at **704-884-2575**) immediately and you will be told about a fast (expedited) appeals process. But this process is only for situations in which fast action is critical to the recipient's health.

MAY I DISCUSS MY SITUATION WITH THE AREA PROGRAM? Yes. We encourage you to talk to the Area Authority because this is often a fast way to settle a dispute. But you do not have to do so. After you send in your appeal form, the Area Authority will be contacted. With your permission, an Area Authority representative will call you and inquire whether you want to have an impartial area program review of your case. If you agree and you are satisfied, you can end your appeal. If you are unsatisfied or you don't want to take part in this area program review, you may wait for a State Hearing at DMH/DD/SAS or OAH.

HOW DO STATE HEARINGS WORK? The DMH/DD/SAS hearing is held before a trained Hearing Officer who is completely independent from the area program. A Division Hearing may also be held by telephone. Sworn testimony will not be taken. The scheduling letter will more fully explain the hearing process. You or anyone you choose may represent you. If you are satisfied with the hearing decision, you may withdraw your appeal. If you are unsatisfied, you can request an OAH Hearing. The OAH Hearing is the final state hearing for which benefits must be continued. You then have the right to take your case to civil court.

WHAT IF I LOSE THE FINAL STATE HEARING? Then the state has the right to require you to pay for the treatment from the date when the decision was originally intended to take effect, that is, the date noted on your notification letter, until the date the final state hearing decision was made.

IF THERE IS ANY INFORMATION IN THIS HANDBOOK THAT YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND, PLEASE ASK FOR HELP. YOU MAY ASK THE

PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR CARE, OR ANY SUNPATH LLC CLINICAL EMPLOYEE.

STATE ADVOCATES

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 their 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.

Disability Rights of North Carolina is a state agency established to protect and advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities.

1-877-235-4210 (Voice)

1-888-268-5535 (TTY) (Deaf & Hard of Hearing)

<http://www.disabilityrightsn.org>

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 Consumers Organization, Inc. is a non-profit organization made up of mental health consumers who provide support and advocacy for other mental health consumers.

1-800-326-3842 <http://www.naminc.org/consumer>

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

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

National Alliance for Mentally Ill - North Carolina (NAMI) is a nonprofit, non-governmental organization made up of mental health consumers and their families.

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

SUNPATH CONTACTS

Sunpath LLC Administrative Office
415 W Main Ave
Gastonia, NC 28052
704-478-6093 ext. 100

Sunpath LLC 24/7 Crisis Hotline
704-300-9913

Sandra Farley
Clinical Director
415 W Main Ave
Gastonia, NC 28052
704-478-6093 ext. 102

Case Responsible Person(s) - _____

(Business Card)

