



Women's Rural Advocacy Programs, Inc.

Individual Bill of Rights & Complaint and Grievance Procedures

Individuals receiving domestic violence victim advocacy services have rights in the following areas:

CONFIDENTIALITY: All WRAP employees and volunteers are required to keep all information confidential unless you give written and/or verbal consent for the information to be share with someone else. This is with the **exception** of laws which mandate the reporting of suspected child abuse and/or suspected abuse of vulnerable adults, other statutorily defined crimes, subpoenas, search warrants, and other court orders.

DATA PRIVACY PRACTICES & PROCEDURES: Information about your rights are governed under MN Data Practices Act and Data Privacy Rules. MN Data Practices Act requires that when we ask you to provide us with private or confidential information about yourself, that you are instructed: the purpose for which the secure information will be used; the legal requirements, if any, of supplying it; the consequences to you of providing the information or refusing to supply it; and the identity of other persons or agencies authorized by statute to secure the information. The purpose: To better assist you with support and/or services, the information will be used to fulfill the necessary legal record keeping requirements, by funders, to indicate the provisions of services. The information from service contacts will be held on file.

Legal Requirements and Consequences: (Tennessee Warning) You are not required to provide information about yourself; however, without it we may not be able to provide services.

Sharing of information: Information that is maintained about you may be shared with other agencies or individuals only under the following circumstances:

- You have signed a consent form for release of this information.
- It is subpoenaed or if law enforcement presents a search warrant for your file.
- To abide by Child Abuse and Vulnerable Adult Abuse reporting laws.
- To other agency employees, as necessary in providing support and/or services.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: WRAP employees and volunteers may not be able to assist you if you are a friend, relative, or otherwise considered closely associated with that staff. Other qualified advocates will work closely with you to assist you with your needs.

DISCRIMINATION: WRAP will provide services without regard to race, religion, creed, color, gender, age, national origin, ethnicity, disability, pregnancy, military status, sexual preference, membership or non-membership in a labor organization, status with respect to public assistance, or any other characteristic protected under federal, state, or local laws. You will be treated with courtesy and respect while receiving services.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION: WRAP employees and volunteers **should not under any circumstances** suggest, be, or become involved with you in a sexual manner. WRAP employees and volunteers **should not under any circumstances** "date" or in any way become romantically involved with you.

COMPLAINT/ GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE: Individuals receiving services have the right to initiate a complaint by following a grievance procedure. The following steps may be taken:

1. Seek out the individual you have a grievance with and report how you feel about the manner in which you were treated.
2. If unsatisfied with that outcome or if you feel you cannot approach that individual directly, request a meeting with the Executive Director. The E.D. can:
 - A. Assist you in verbalizing or putting your concerns in writing, and
 - B. Arrange a three-way meeting to facilitate dialog amongst the parties.
3. If unsatisfied with the meeting or outcome of the meeting, you may ask to speak to the chairmen of the Board
4. If the nature of your grievance is due to illegal behavior, as statutorily defined, you have the right to report to the police.

MANDATED REPORTING: WRAP employees and volunteers are mandated reporters of abuse, neglect, and/or maltreatment of children/minors and vulnerable adults.

NOTICE ABOUT WRAP PHONE LINES: If you are utilizing the WRAP phone lines after hours, on the weekend or during a Holiday, the WRAP phone lines will be forwarded to and answered by the Safe Avenues staff. *(Safe Avenues is a domestic abuse shelter located in Willmar, MN. The staff answering the calls are certified domestic abuse and sexual assault advocates.)*

Please note: If the WRAP staff is attending a training or out of the office for any other reason during regular business hours, the phone lines may also be answered by the Safe Avenues Staff.

If you call during any of the times listed above, please feel free to leave a message with their staff and they will relay the information to your advocate. If it is an EMERGENCY *(an unforeseen combination of circumstances or the resulting state that calls for immediate action)* and you need to speak to your advocate right away, please request that they reach out to us ASAP and someone from WRAP will return your call.

PROGRAM INFORMATION/RECORDS: WRAP and its subsidiary programs are require to maintain certain client information (eg. releases of information, program intake forms, program departure forms, agency correspondence, etc.) for an extended period of time after the completion of services. This essential information will be kept confidential and released only with your permission or by court order. At the end of the required time, records will be shredded.

WRAP is an Equal Opportunity Employer and an Equal Opportunity Provider.

I understand my rights as a recipient of WRAP services and have been informed of the grievance procedures.

Signature

Date