



## **CLIENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK**

### **WELCOME**

Bay Area Youth Services, Inc., D/B/A BAYS was organized and chartered as a Florida Not-For-Profit Corporation on April 19, 1982. The agency, founded by William F. Bowman, was developed with the objective of improving the quality of life and increasing the potential of Florida's youth. Since that time, BAYS has provided high quality and professional youth and family services throughout the State of Florida. Over our 40-year history, BAYS has grown into a multi-faceted organization with offices throughout the State of Florida.

Over the years, BAYS has provided a variety of delinquency prevention, diversion, and intervention services, with our strength and expertise primarily demonstrated in serving juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Our teams consist of Case Managers and Clinicians. The credentials of the team working with your family may include: Case Manager (minimum of Bachelor's Degree and/or an Associate's Degree and two years of experience), Clinician (minimum of Master's Degree and two years of experience).

All BAYS programs are offered to you at no cost.

### **Mission Statement**

BAYS works in partnership with individuals, families, and communities to inspire change, growth, and success.

### **Vision Statement**

BAYS envisions communities that believe in the value and worth of all people and their ability to change, grow, and succeed.

### **Code of Ethics and Conduct**

We will provide a safe and supportive environment for the protection of the public and staff, including a policy prohibiting seclusion or restraint.

We believe in the uniqueness, dignity, and inherent worth of every individual. Further, we are committed to assisting each person in our care in achieving their individual dignity.

We will enhance the opportunity for the youth to use their voice and advocate for their success.

We are committed to truthfulness and integrity in all of our actions. We will promote ethical conduct.

We shall conduct ourselves in a manner that prevents all forms of appearances of impropriety, placement of self-interest above public interest, prejudice, partiality, threats, favoritism, or undue influence.

We will uphold the confidentiality and privacy of all the persons we serve.

We are committed to a culture of learning, personal and professional development, and continuous improvement of services to the individuals we serve and to the public.

We will promote partnership and cooperation in order to achieve our common goals.

## **Client Rights**

- 1) You have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. This shall be construed to protect and promote human dignity and respect for individual dignity.
- 2) You have the right to receive services suited without regard to race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, age, disability, legal status, or ability to pay for the services.
- 3) You shall never be harassed, neglected and/or sexually, physically, verbally, or otherwise abused.
- 4) You have the right, without fear of reprisal, to present grievances to BAYS. For additional information, see the Complaint and Grievance Procedure.
- 5) You are being advised that BAYS shall respect your privacy and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of professional services. For more information see Confidentiality below.
- 6) You have the right to an interpreter for services. You understand that BAYS policy requires 72 hours' notice to provide an interpreter, which is based on the interpreter's policy.
- 7) You will have access to your own records.

## **Confidentiality of Client Records**

BAYS will ensure that all your files are always maintained in a safe and secure location. Assuring confidentiality and preventing loss are of utmost importance.

The information that you provide to BAYS will be kept confidential to the greatest extent allowed by law.

The information that you provide to BAYS, including your name, address, phone number, and other personal information will not be shared with other individuals or agencies without your consent.

BAYS staff may be required by law to report certain situations even if you do not give them permission to share or report the situations, such as suspected child abuse or neglect (see abuse reporting procedures).

## **Procedures/Drills**

BAYS wants you to be advised that each employee has the proper training and understanding of safety procedures and drills for the location in which you are receiving services. Each BAYS employee has access to a copy of the BAYS safety manual, through his or her supervisor, for review and future reference. A personal copy of the safety rules, policies, and procedures pertaining to the program is provided to each employee. Supervisors are responsible for making sure each of the employees they supervise comply with the safety rules described in the safety manual. The following procedures are covered in the safety manual: emergency closing, severe weather and other emergencies, fire evacuation, medical emergency, and workplace violence.

## **Weapons Policy**

To ensure that BAYS maintains an environment that is safe and free of violence for all employees and visitors, the company prohibits the possession or use of dangerous weapons on company property. If visitors bring weapons onto company property, they will be asked to remove them from the premises. In the event a minor brings a firearm onto the premises, BAYS staff is required to contact law enforcement.

## **Substance Policy**

To help ensure a safe and healthy environment for our employees and visitors, the company prohibits the possession or use of illegal substances on company property. In the event a visitor brings illegal substances onto the premises, BAYS staff are required to contact law enforcement. All legally prescribed medications and legal substances must be secured at all times. Additionally, tobacco use is prohibited on all company property. Tobacco includes all tobacco products including smokeless tobacco and vaping/e-cigarettes. Any tobacco products brought onto BAYS premises must be secured at all times.

## **Complaint and Grievance Procedure**

If you have experienced a circumstance or action on the part of the BAYS Program or employee which you deem to be unjust and warrants a complaint or a more formalized written grievance, you may do so following the process outlined below.

STEP 1: You should discuss the complaint with the BAYS program staff or the appropriate Supervisor to see if the issue can be resolved.

STEP 2: If the situation continues to be unresolved, you should submit a written grievance to the Supervisor (or next level Supervisor) informing them of the situation. Grievances may be handwritten on the form attached or submitted through the website at [bayskids.org](http://bayskids.org), or in a letter. The Supervisor must forward a copy of the grievance to the Chief Operating Officer.

STEP 3: Within 14 working days, the Supervisor must discuss the grievance with you and try to resolve the matter without further action. A letter must be sent to you summarizing the findings and disposition of the grievance; the letter must state if you found the disposition acceptable or unacceptable and must include the name and address of the Chief Operating Officer for the purposes of a potential appeal. Copies of the letter must be sent to the Chief Operating Officer.

STEP 4: If you feel that the disposition of the complaint was unacceptable, you have the right to appeal, in writing, to the Chief Operating Officer or his/her designee. The appeal must be filed within 14 working days of sending the letter. The Chief Operating Officer or designee has 14 working days to review and investigate the grievance and disposition and notify the youth and/or parent of their findings and any action taken (if warranted). The Chief Operating Officer's decision is final.

NOTE: All complaints and grievances will not result in a barrier to services. However, a grievance cannot be filed if the youth has been cited for non-compliance.

## **Child Abuse Reporting Procedures**

BAYS staff may be required by law to report certain situations even if you do not give them permission to share or report the situations, such as suspected child abuse or neglect.

BAYS shall adhere to the statutory requirements for reporting abuse, neglect, and deaths of children under Chapter 39, F.S., and of adults under Section 415.1034 and paragraph 397.501(7)(c), F.S.

In compliance with Chapter 415, Florida Statutes, an employee of the provider who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child, aged person, or disabled adult is or has been abused, neglected, exploited, shall immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the central abuse registry and tracking system of the department on the single statewide toll-free telephone number:

**1-800- 96-ABUSE**

1. BAYS staff shall never use profanity, corporal punishment, threats, or intimidation in the presence of youth.
2. BAYS shall provide an environment free of physical, psychological, and emotional abuse.
3. Youth have unimpeded access to self-report alleged abuse. The number to the Abuse Hotline shall be visibly displayed in all offices. Employees may become aware of suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

This information may come from a child, concerned individual or employee observations. Abuse of a child means “Any child whose physical or mental health or welfare is harmed or threatened with harm by acts or omissions of the parents or other persons responsible for the child’s welfare.” Examples of child abuse include but are not limited to: *Excessive corporal punishment resulting in injuries, infant born with drug dependency, sexual battery, exploitation of a child (including suspected human trafficking), abandonment of a child, failure to provide adequate supervision of a child, neglect, or failure to provide food, shelter, or health care for a child.*

- 4. The State will determine whether the abuse allegations are founded or unfounded through their investigation. It is not the employee’s role to make that judgement, **ALL REASONABLE SUSPICIONS OF CHILD ABUSE SHOULD BE IMMEDIATELY REPORTED TO THE FLORIDA ABUSE HOTLINE at 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800- 962-2873).**

### Handbook Acknowledgement Form

I \_\_\_\_\_ have received and read my copy of the parent and youth BAYS Client & Family Handbook.

X \_\_\_\_\_

Youth

X \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Legal Guardian (if youth is under the age of 18)