# **Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc.**

# **600 W. Cermak Road, Suite 300**

# **Chicago, IL 60616**

# **Phone: (312) 455-0007 Fax: (312) 455-0038**

UNITY PARENTING AND COUNSELING, INC.

CLIENT/FOSTER PARENT INFORMATION PAMPHLET

**MISSION**

**Unity’s mission is to provide the residents of our community**

**strong support, community advocacy and holistic services**

**designed to nurture and strengthen the inner person to promote**

**self-efficacy and family empowerment.**

**AGENCY VALUE STATEMENT**

At Unity, we believe that all people should be given the opportunity to reach their true potential, especially the population we focus on; primarily residents of the South and West neighborhoods of Chicago and the collar suburbs. This inspires a commitment to promote those ideals which lead to maturity, responsibility, and self sufficiency. We believe that all people are created equal. This inspires a commitment to give others the same respect, love and appreciation that we give to ourselves. We believe that life is interrelated. This inspires a commitment to help others reach their goals in life, for it is by helping others that we help ourselves.

# **UNITY PARENTING AND COUNSELING, INC.**

# **CODE OF ETHICS**

Unity Parenting and Counseling Center is a social service and child welfare, non-profit agency licensed by the state of Illinois and accredited by the Council on Accreditation for Children and Family Services. Unity follows all governmental regulatory laws and regulations that cover the services offered by the agency. Staff members and professional providers of direct services, whether full time employees of Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc. or providers under contract or sub-contract with Unity, must abide by the following provisions of this Code of Ethical Behavior, the IDCFS Code of Ethics for Child Welfare Professionals and their individual professional codes of behavior. Violations of these codes will result in disciplinary measures, termination and or reports to the regulatory bodies of their individual professions.

1. Unity’s clients are provided age and culturally appropriate services without regard to sex, religious beliefs, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability, or criminal record unrelated to present dangerousness. No client, by virtue of their dependence, will be abused or taken advantage of vocationally, financially or sexually by Unity staff or Unity stakeholders. Clients are informed of the services we offer and the qualifications of direct services staff members. They are also informed that they have the right of consent and participation in decisions about service, care, and/or treatment and the procedures used to provide these services.

2. Unity’s clients are informed that they have a right to refuse participation in clinical studies or other research**.**

1. Unity informs clients of and follows written policies and procedures governing access to, use of, and release of information about the persons served. These policies are reviewed to insure that they meet any applicable legal requirements. The organization demonstrates its compliance with all applicable statutory requirements pertaining to confidentiality of information about persons served by reconciling its policies, procedures, and practices with all applicable laws and regulations and obtaining legal counsel governing the confidentiality of records and the general conditions under which they may be subpoenaed. Unity seeks additional legal

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counsel when special or unusual information about an individual person served is sought by the courts, public

officials, investigative units, or law enforcement bodies. When information is to be released to another organization or individual outside Unity, informed consent of the person served, or the parent or legal guardian if the person served is a minor, stating the specific information to be given, is obtained. Information on the time period in which this permission remains in effect; to whom it is to be given and for what purpose it is to be given, except where disclosure is mandated by law or judicial action, will be included.

1. Unity uses internal utilization review (Risk/Quality Management) procedures to insure the integrity of decisions made about care and that they are based solely on the diagnostic and treatment needs of the individual.
2. Unity’s accounting and billing procedures monitor the relationship between use of service and financial arrangements. All intake documentation will reflect the source of payment for services rendered. If the service is not billable, i.e., if it is short-term emergency service for clients who’s cases have been closed, the intake documentation will reflect this fact.

1. Unity’s direct service clients are provided a means of resolving differences with regard to care and/or treatment decisions. All direct service personnel are required to give out the name and phone numbers of their supervisors when requested. Consumers are informed of their rights to call on these supervisors as a means of resolving differences with regard to care and treatment decisions. If the issue can’t be resolved at the supervisory level the clients may register a formal grievance in writing with the Agency’s Executive Director and use this means of resolving the problems. The Executive Director will insure that no adverse consequences will come from a client registering a complaint or grievance.
2. All Unity direct service staff members are “mandated reporters.” That is, they are required to report to the child abuse hot line neglect or abuse of minors when they witness such acts as: excessive corporal punishment that leaves bruises or is severe enough to traumatize the child or find evidence of such acts; witness or hear allegations of sexual abuse of a minor such as fondling, intercourse, or lewd behavior of an adult in the presence of a child; witness neglect such as not providing medical attention to a child when necessary, malnutrition in a child, not maintaining the child’s cleanliness so that the child’s health is endangered, not providing for the child’s education, not supervising or providing for the supervision of the minor so that the child is at risk, etc.
3. No Unity staff member is allowed to “restrict, limit or curtail a person’s freedom of movement to prevent harm to self or others. This includes instances in which a person is temporarily immobilized from a manual restraint used to maintain a person’s safety, to situations where a person exhibits threatening behavior and needs to be mechanically restrained to prevent harm to self or others.” No corporal means will be used to discipline or punish children. This does not include time outs where the person is isolated but may move out of isolation or away from the time out area of their own free will, i.e., they are not locked in a room or other enclosure. All behavior control must be verbal and not physical. Training in non physical de-escalation is provided to all Unity staff as it is Unity’s philosophy that violence and coercion only breed fear and anger. They do not promote the “self-efficacy” we strive for in our clients as mentioned in our mission statement. Unity expects the same for its clients. No client will be allowed to harass, intimidate, be violent with, coerce, or sexually harass or abuse another client. Clients will be given the opportunity to have anger management training if they feel out of control.
4. Consumers have the right to file grievances with DCFS or other regulatory agencies and/or this agency in accord with prescribed regulatory agency procedures and/or Unity’s procedures. No adverse repercussions or consequences will come to any client that files a grievance or complaint.
5. Unity’s policy is to prohibit accepting payment or other consideration from another provider of services for referring applicants or persons served to that provider of services.
6. Making payment or other considerations to outside agencies for referring clients to our organization is also prohibited.
7. Unity prohibits the practice of steering or directing referrals of its applicants or persons served to a private

practice in which professional personnel, consultants, or the immediate families of personnel and consultants may be engaged or steering/directing referrals to, or giving preference to clients easier or less costly to serve for the organization and practitioners within the organization. Unity also prohibits transfers of cases to workers leaving the organization for private practice.If exceptions are made, it is with senior management approval and is clearly in the interest of persons served and not in the worker’s interest.

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### Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc. Service Information

# **AGENCY HISTORY**

* Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc. is a community-based, not-for-profit social services agency created in the fall of 1983. We provide individuals and families in Chicago and surrounding communities with culturally sensitive, effective, social services designed to elevate their social and psychological functioning, standard of living and quality of life. From 1983 to 1997, Unity managed a transitional shelter for homeless, indigent, 18 to 25 year old males. During this period Unity helped residents achieve independence and stability. In 1989 Unity launched its parenting and counseling center in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Our mission is to provide the residents of our community strong support, community advocacy and holistic services designed to nurture and strengthen the inner person to promote self-efficacy and family empowerment. We are a licensed Illinois Child Welfare Agency and were accredited by the Counsel on Accreditation of Children and Family Services in 2000, 2004, and 2009.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

* Unity’s Board of Directors represents and advocates for a diverse cross section of the stakeholders in the communities we serve. They are volunteers who give freely of their time to insure that their constituents have available to them the best cost effective, human services “…designed to nurture and strengthen the inner person, to promote self-efficacy and family empowerment.”

**STAFF**

* + Unity’s staff of dedicated professionals is handpicked by the careful review of available human resources corresponding to the population we serve. Unity attempts to promote from within, giving promising employees the in-house training necessary to advance in their field.

# **FOSTER CARE SERVICES**

* As a licensed Child Welfare agency, Unity has several contracts with the State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services to provide foster care and counseling services to youth who have been removed from parental custody because of abuse and neglect.
* **Home of Relative Foster Care:** Unity provides services to children in the homes of family members who have volunteered to care for grandchildren, nieces, and nephews whose biological parents are unable to do so. Eligibility criteria are: Children removed from their homes due to neglect or abuse, referred to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, referred to Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc. for foster care services and placed in a relative’s home
* **Traditional Foster Care:** Unity recruits and trains caring persons to become licensed foster parents to provide nurturing, day-to-day care for abused/neglected children whose own relatives cannot or will not care for them. Eligibility criteria are: Children removed from their homes due to neglect or abuse, referred to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, referred to Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc. for foster care services and placed in a traditional foster home.
* **Conversion Adoptions:** Unity encourages foster parents to adopt children in their care who are unable to return to their natural parents. Eligibility criteria are: Children who are unable to return to the homes from which they were removed and placed in a home with care providers that qualify for adoption. **DCFS toll free Adoption Hotline (800) 572-2390.**

**Phone # (312) 455-0007 \* Office Hours: 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Mon.-Fri.**

# **VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND PARENT TRAINING SERVICES**

* Skills training for parents to structure methods for nurturing, caring and coping with behaviors of children at each developmental stage without the use of corporal punishment (violence). Eligibility criteria are: Biological Parents of Wards that have open Illinois Department of Children and Family Services cases and clients of our housing programs.

Phone # (312) 455-0007 \* Class Hours: 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM Monday

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**FOCUS HOPE & FOCUS HOPE II PERMANENT HOUSING PROGRAMS**

* + Focus Hope has permanent housing programs for special populations. Eligibility criteria are: individuals or families headed by homeless disabled and or special needs individuals.
  + Focus Hope II is a supportive permanent housing program for special populations. Eligibility criteria are: individuals or families headed by homeless disabled and or special needs individuals who require additional supports in stabilizing themselves and their families to prevent continued homelessness and family disruption.

Phone # (773) 955-2903 \* Office Hours 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Mon. – Fri.

**HARMONY VILLAGE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAM**

* + Harmony Village is a Supportive Housing Program for homeless teens/young adults and when appropriate, their children designed to prepare the residents for permanent housing. Eligibility criteria are: homeless youth between the ages of 17 and 21 and their families.

**Phone # (773) 783-9200 \* Office Hours 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Mon. – Fri.**

**PROJECT IGNITE**

* Project Ignite is a supportive transitional housing program for homeless young adults ages 18-24 living with HIV/AIDS. Eligibility criteria are: Homeless Male or Female without children in their care who are living with HIV/AIDS.

Phone # (773) 955-2903 \* Office Hours 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Mon. – Fri.

**UMOJA VILLAGE**

* UMOJA Village is a permanent housing program for chronically homeless, disabled young adults, male or female, ages 18-24 without children in their care. Eligibility criteria: Chronically homeless is defined as living in places unfit for human habitation or emergency shelters for a continuous year or four times over a three year period. Acceptable disabilities include mental illness, physical disabilities, developmental disabilities, chronic substance abuse and HIV/AIDS.

Phone # (773) 375-8018 \* Office Hours 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Mon. – Fri.

**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES SERVICES**

* + In conjunction with Unity’s other housing services, an employment readiness program for youth and young adults is provided. Eligibility requirements are: Membership in one of Unity’s housing programs.

Phone # (773) 375-8018 \* Office Hours 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Mon. – Fri.

**PARTNERS FOR SUCCESS (PFS)**

* The PFS Program is focused on building a community coalition composed of key stakeholders. The coalition is charged with preventing/reducing underage drinking, particularly in homeless youth and the public school system.

**Phone # (312) 455-0007, Ext. 617 \* Office Hours 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Mon. – Fri.**

**UJIMA LOW-THRESHOLD OVERNIGHT SHELTER FOR YOUTH**

* Ujima provides a safe, overnight shelter in a congregate setting for up to 24 male and female youth between the ages of 18 and 24 who are homeless as defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development and the HEARTH act. This shelter provides three healthy meals, showers and laundry facilities with a staff skilled in sensitively engaging street youth who are not ready to follow the rules and constrictions of more structured programs. The program is funded by the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services.

**Address 7320 S. Yale, Chicago, IL 60621 \* Phone (773) 891-1365 \* Hours 8:00 PM – 8:00 AM**

**UNITY PARENTING AND COUNSELING CENTER PROVIDES A FAMILY OF SERVICES**

**CRUCIAL TO THE COMMUNITY**

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**Client/Foster Parent Bill of Rights**

Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc. is committed to protecting and promoting the rights of all clients served through the agency. It is the philosophy of the agency for individuals served to be actively involved in decisions regarding their situation. Further, it is the responsibility of the agency to provide clients with a sense of well being such that it enhances their physical, emotional, mental and intellectual growth. The following rights are protected, in part, by Chapter 2 of the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code, Illinois and City of Chicago laws, codes, rules and procedures and promoted for all clients and/or foster parents by agency staff including volunteers and foster parents, if applicable.

1. If you are referred to Unity for services, you have the right to refuse the services. The possible consequences of such refusal will be explained. This includes the consequences of violating a court order if services are court-ordered. You also have the right to request a referral for similar services to another provider if such services are available. **Your responsibility:** If you have any questions about the services you are offered or the consequences of a refusal of services talk to your Case Manager or other Unity staff.

1. You have the right to an explanation of your Client’s Rights and Responsibilities in a language and terms that you understand. **Your responsibility:** If you don’t understand please tell the staff member to re-explain.
2. All information about you will be confidential in accordance with HIPAA rules when the information is medical (or psychiatric) in nature and will not be told or transferred to any public or private agency or to an individual without the written consent of you and/or your guardian, as required by the Illinois Mental Health And Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act. Exceptions in the above Act include informing appropriate authorities in the event of danger to self or other or abuse of a child and/or in the case of court orders/subpoenas. **Your responsibility:** Read and understand or ask questions about the consent for release of information and its policy.
3. You have the right to be informed of the type of services provided by the agency. Further, you have a right to use all services and resources offered by the agency that you are eligible for. **Your responsibility:** Tell your case worker if you need services that you haven’t been offered.
4. You have the right to receive high quality services, in a culturally sensitive, respectful way and in the least restrictive settings. You have a right to receive adequate services which appropriately meet your needs. **Your responsibility:** Report any incident of disrespect or inadequate services in an informal complaint, a formal complaint or a formal grievance (see grievance procedures below).
5. You have a right to read your personal records in the presence of an agency staff member qualified to explain them if necessary. In family records you may only review the part of the record which refers to you. **Your responsibility:** Add a notation to the record if you believe it needs correction by attaching a statement of disagreement in the record. You also may have an outside, qualified individual read and interpret your records in the presence of a Unity staff member.
6. You have the right, **and a responsibility,** to file grievances when you feel that your Client’s rights have been violated. You have the right to be informed of the outcome of your grievance. All grievances should be in writing. No adverse consequences or repercussions will be experienced by a client because they make a complaint or grievance.
   1. The grievance should first be given to the Supervisor or Program Director. If you don’t feel your grievance has been settled after meeting with that person, you can take the next step.
   2. If the assigned Program Director or Supervisor has not settled the grievance to your satisfaction, you have a right to submit your grievance to the agency Executive Director at 600 W. Cermak Road, Suite 300, Chicago, IL 60616.
   3. If you don’t feel that the Executive Director has handled the situation to your satisfaction, you may request in writing a meeting with a representative of the Board of Directors by addressing a letter spelling out the grievance and the steps you have taken to resolve it to the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc., 600 W. Cermak Road, Suite 300, Chicago, IL 60616. The decision of the Board of Directors is the final agency decision.

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* 1. However, you have the right to contact the agency or government organization that

funds Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc. for the program you are in (i.e.

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, DCFS Office of Advocacy, or the Guardianship and Advocacy Commission (1 - (866) 274-8023) as appropriate for Child Welfare (Foster Care) Participants, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for Harmony Village and Focus Hope II participants, the City of Chicago, Department of Housing, Low Income Trust Fund for Focus Hope participants and City of Chicago Community Economic Development Association Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program for CEDA participants. All clients including Medicare clients also have the right to contact the above organizations and the Guardianship and Advocacy Commission (1 – (866) 274-8023) or Equip for Equality (800) 537-2632 (Voice) (800) 610-2779 (TTY) . You have the right to present grievances to the above organizations and be informed of their processes for reviewing grievances. Staff will help you contact any of these agencies if you request.

e. Unity will maintain a record of all grievances and responses.

1. You will not be treated with disrespect, denied or terminated from services or have services reduced for exercising your rights. **Your responsibility:** Exercise your rights. Report denial, termination or threats of termination from services to Unity’s Chief Executive Officer for exercising your rights.
2. You have the right to actively participate in all decisions which affect you and to have the decisions explained. If you disagree with a staff decision which affects you, you have the right, **and responsibility,** to file a Unity appeal with the Director or Supervisor of your Program. If the appeal is not resolved to your satisfy action you also have a right, **and a responsibility,** to file an appeal with Unity’s Executive Director or Chief Executive Officer.
3. You have a right not to be sexually, verbally or physically abused, neglected or exploited by a Unity staff member or representative of the agency such as a foster parent or contractor. **You have a responsibility:** to report such abuse. You have a right to be treated respectfully and to have your needs met appropriately and reasonably. **You have a responsibility:** to report instances of disrespect and unmet needs.
4. You will not be subjected to any type of punishment that violates your rights such as corporal punishment, manual, mechanical or chemical restraint, locked seclusion, restrictive behavior of any kind, withholding of meals, ridicule, humiliation, verbal abuse, or any other means of discipline that would make you feel disrespected. This is true for youth in foster care as well as for clients of Unity’s other programs. All clients have a right to be safe and treated fairly. **Your responsibility is:** Report any incident of corporal punishment, physically restrictive behavior, ridicule, humiliation, withholding of meals, etc. as indicated above
5. You won’t be denied services based on age, sex, religious beliefs, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability, or criminal record. However, services can be knowingly denied if you present a danger to other clients or staff, if you are carrying a concealed firearm, or if you don’t meet program criteria. For example, for Harmony Village, residents must be between the ages of 17 and 21 and homeless and for Focus Hope I, II,III clients must be homeless and disabled, for UMOJA Village clients must be chronically homeless, disabled and between the ages of 18-24 years. **Your responsibility is:** Report discrimination in the provision of services as indicated above.
6. You will be treated by staff as able to make appropriate decisions unless a court has ordered that you can’t make your own decisions because of age (the state or parents are your guardian) or disability. **Your responsibility:** Report any treatment that implies that you can’t make appropriate decisions.
7. You (your legal guardians, if applicable,) shall be informed of any service research or experimental activities and have the right to refuse involvement in any research. **Your responsibility:** Ask questions if anyone approaches you to take part in service research or experimental activities. The Executive Director or the Chief Executive Officer of Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc. will formally announce the opportunity to take part in service research or experimentation**.**
8. You are to receive full disclosure of the facts and the consequences of your decisions from Unity staff when making decisions about services or releases of information.

If you need services not provided by Unity your case worker will tell you and refer you to

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multiple agencies or private practitioners who provide the services you need so you can choose the most appropriate provider. You will not be steered or directed to agencies or private practices in which professional personnel, consultants, or the immediate families of Unity personnel and consultants are engaged. These agencies or providers of services may be included in the multiple

providers you are given by your case worker, but only in the event that it is in your best interest.

16. If any of these rights have to be restricted justifications will be documented by Unity in the client’s or Foster Parent’s record and the Client, the (foster) parent/guardian, and, if applicable, an agency of his/her choosing will be notified of the restrictions.

**Clients also have the responsibility to:**

* Give accurate information about their mental health, substance use, and domestic violence issues as well as other circumstances which might impact upon the services we provide;
* Assist by making and keeping a safe environment;
* Notify the agency if scheduled appointments need to be changed;
* Notify the agency if there is a change, or if a change is planned, in your living arrangements;
* Work with staff in planning, reviewing and changing their individual service plans; and
* Inform staff immediately if they have any concerns or problems with the service they are receiving.
* Understand the rules (separate from your “Rights and Responsibilities”) of each program and/or service and the consequences of not complying with the rules.

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**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

***Note:*** *For the purpose of this procedure the term “Client” includes Foster Parents and other Stakeholders of Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc. This does not include Staff, volunteers, vendors or contractors as they have separate bills of rights and responsibilities and grievance procedures.*

Any time a client feels that their rights, as expressed in the Client’s Bill of Rights in this pamphlet or the Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan, UPC Plan 2100, have been violated they can file a grievance with the Executive Director with a copy going to the Quality Assurance Administrator. We at Unity would like the opportunity to resolve any complaint or grievance either informally or formally.

1. To initiate a grievance or complaint the client must write a letter to the Executive Team which is designated to resolve client grievances explaining which of the Client Bill of Rights they feel was violated, how, when and by whom. The client will receive a return reply letter setting up a meeting with the Executive Team or designee within 2 business days of receipt. A program case manager not involved in the grievance will provide assistance to clients with special needs. Written documentation will be maintained of all grievances and complaints. The investigation will be resolved within 10 days of receipt. The initial grievance meeting with the Executive Director or her designee and the Quality Improvement Administrator is not a legal hearing in a court. It is simply an administrative process we provide to resolve grievances or complaints. The client can be accompanied by anyone they want.
2. This first meeting will be to gather information so we can conduct an investigation. The information gathered and the proceedings will be protected by the same rules of confidentiality that protects all the information we have about the client and their family. If the issue is brought forth by a DCFS client or a member of an adoptive family including the adoptee and it can be resolved during the meeting to their satisfaction a copy of the grievance/complaint will be given to the client and forwarded to the DCFS licensing representative immediately after resolution and within 10 days of receipt of the complaint.
3. If more information and/or further investigation is needed, an interim report stating the reason for the delay and estimated date of completion will be sent to the complaining party and the DCFS licensing representative at the end of the 10 day period and a second meeting will be held. The client will be notified of the date of the second meeting during the first meeting. If any changes need to be made in the date of the second meeting the client will receive notification by mail and by phone if possible.
4. In the first and, if necessary, the second meeting there will be a discussion of the problems and issues between as many of the people involved as possible. The client will be allowed to speak without interruption until they have presented their case and how they feel their rights were violated. Then the client must allow the others to tell their side of the story without interruption.
5. Minutes of the proceedings will be taken. If there is a disagreement about the facts of the case further investigation may be necessary. If there is no reasonable evidence to support either side’s contentions it will be up to the Executive Director or her designee to resolve the differences.
6. The client will receive a copy of all documentation that relates to their grievance including the resolution decision.
7. At no time will this process prejudice services to or treatment of a client or influence the quality of services the client is entitled to receive from this agency. If it is determined that the client’s grievance or complaint has caused a decrease in the quality of services the client will be assigned a new Case Worker and/or Therapist and their service provision will be monitored intensely by the Program Supervisor/Director.
8. If the issues are not resolved to the client’s satisfaction, the facts of the case may be presented by letter to a representative of the Board of Directors. The grievance meeting with the board representative will occur within 48 hours of the request. In any case a final report will be sent to the complainant and, if the complainant is a DCFS client or member of a conversion adoption family, to the DCFS licensing representative within 3 days of the conclusion of the investigation. The decision resulting from this meeting will be binding to the agency. All complaints and grievances and their resolutions are reviewed by the Executive Team, the Risk and Quality Management Team and the Board of Directors at the meetings following the conclusion of the investigation.
9. If the outcome of the Board hearing doesn’t meet the client needs and the complainant is a client of our Foster Care Programs, the issue can be presented to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services’ Advocacy Office, the State Attorney General’s Office or a Civil Court. All clients, regardless of program may present their complaint or grievance to our accrediting agency, the Counsel on Accreditation of Children and Family Services. For housing clients, complaints can be made with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Participating in the Unity grievance process before going to the regulating agency will result in more effective and faster resolution of the issues. Generally, regulatory bodies will first contact the agency to ensure that all internal grievances measures have been utilized. Additionally, as a regulating body reviews the grievance, they may subpoena confidential materials regarding you and your services.

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**CONFIDENTIALITY AND MANDATED REPORTING POLICY**

All statements that a client, as a recipient of services at Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc., makes to a direct service worker during treatment (both written and verbal) are confidential. No information will be released to anyone without the client’s informed verbal consent. This is the right of all direct service clients at Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc.

**Informed, written consent includes the following elements:**

1. the signed approval of the specific information to be released by the person whose information will be released, or the parent or legal guardian of a minor or a person who has had a legal guardian appointed by the court;
2. the purpose for which the information is to be used, except where disclosure is mandated by law or the person served is receiving service under court supervision or directive;
3. the date the consent takes effect;
4. the dated that the consent expires; not to exceed 90 days from the date consent is given for one time releases of information, or one year or as otherwise required by law when the release of information is required for ongoing service provision by a contracted or cooperating service provider;
5. the name of the person to whom the information is to be given or the agency and department;
6. the name of the person within Unity who is providing the confidential information; and
7. a statement that the person or family served may withdraw his/her consent at any time.

The client will be asked to sign a release of information form so that the Case Manager or other direct service person can report treatment progress to the responsible government or other agencies or so that outsides agencies can better serve the client. The following information will be released:

* 1. Attendance
  2. Participation in treatment/services including goals and progress
  3. Behavior that significantly affects the client’s ability to progress in treatment according to treatment (service) plan goals and program requirements.

If the client or the client’s children are seeing another counselor we may also want to speak to that person so that we are working together. Again, it is the client’s right to refuse this consent, but it may be a condition of treatment.

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THERE ARE SEVERAL INSTANCES DURING WHICH WE WILL DISCUSS THE CLIENT WITHOUT THEIR PERMISSION.

1. If it is assessed during a client’s participation in Unity services that they0 are abusing or neglecting children or dependent adults we well report this to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Service and, depending on the severity of abuse, the police. We will make an attempt to let the client know when we are going to make such a report. We will also encourage the client to report themselves as the act of reporting, in itself, may be considered a positive outcome. If the client feels that their rights as described in the Client Bill of Rights have been violated, they should follow these steps:
   1. The client should put their grievance in writing. If they have trouble putting this in writing, a Unity staff member will help them write their grievance.
   2. The client should first try to resolve the grievance with the supervisor or Director of the program in which they participate.
   3. If the client can’t resolve the grievance with the Program Supervisor or Director, they can request a meeting with the agency Executive Director by giving this request in writing to the Program Supervisor or Director or by writing a letter to the Executive Director, Unity Parenting and Counseling, Inc. at 600 W. Cermak Rd., Suite 300, Chicago, IL 60616.
2. If the client threatens to kill or harm another person in the presence of a direct service worker, while participating in a direct service program, we are obligated to warn the potential victim as well as notify the police. We will attempt to tell the client if we are going to do this. Likewise, if the client threatens suicide, we will decide if we need to get the client to a psychiatrist to assess if the client needs immediate help including hospitalization. We will of course encourage the client to go to be psychiatrist voluntarily.
3. If at any time during the course of services we determine that the client is a danger to themselves or another person we will inform the client of that opinion and, in the case of the latter, we will also inform that other person. In some cases this may also include notifying the police.
4. If our records are subpoenaed by a court of law.

It is a right of each service recipient to have guaranteed confidentiality. All clients are asked to respect the rights of other service participants to confidentiality as well.

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***(FOR ALL CLIENTS AND FOSTER PARENTS)***

The signatures of the client(s) and staff member, below, verifies that they have been informed of their rights, responsibilities and protections in a language they understand, that they understand these rights, responsibilities and protections, and have received a copy of them.

***(FOR DCFS CLIENTS ONLY)***

Yes No I understand my rights and responsibilities.

Yes No I have been informed that my individual service plan will be developed.

Yes No I have received a copy of the *Service Appeal Process* brochure.

Yes No The information contained in the brochure has been explained to me.

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Client Signature Date

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Parent/Guardian Signature (if necessary) Date

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Staff Member’s Signature Date