



**MISSION:** *The mission of the Safety Forces Support Center is to incorporate its unique understanding of and experience in the safety professions to provide confidential emotional, mental health, substance abuse counseling, spiritual and material services at no cost to law enforcement, fire safety, dispatchers, and their families.*

**OUR STORY:** Safety Forces Support Center (SFSC) began as Safety Forces Chaplaincy Center in 2009 by Reverend A. Robert Denton, Ph.D., LISW, Executive Director and as a part of Furnace Street Mission started providing confidential, cost -free counseling and support to all safety force personnel, advocacy and education. It sponsors and provides training for law enforcement and fire Chaplain's Team. Through Dr. Denton's guidance and actions, the Chaplaincy services developed oversight of the Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM) under the name of ASSIST 77. ASSIST 77 provides a full array of CISM services including peer to peer, defusing, and group debriefing. In 2017, due to serious health issues, Dr. Denton's role decreased and the Furnace Street Mission Board of Directors appointed an interim Executive Director. With the guidance and actions of the Board of Directors and the interim Executive Director, the SFSC continued their services to first responders. In 2018, the decision was made to expand the role of the SFCC to include mental health and substance abuse counseling services. In 2019, the Board of Directors applied for a new nonprofit 501(c)(3) under the name of Safety Forces Support Center. Because of enormous growth in demand for services, the Center is staffed today by a permanent Executive Director, Director of Behavioral Health and Director of CISM and Education.



The Bob Denton

**Safety Forces  
Support Center**

A 501c non-profit

## Client Rights And Responsibilities

501 West Market Street, Suite 313  
Akron, Ohio 44303  
(330) 376-0091

CLIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES: Healthcare is a shared experience involving clients and those who give care. Recognizing the personal worth and dignity of each client at Safety Forces Support Center Inc., this statement of your rights is offered as an expression of our philosophy and commitment to you.

#### RIGHTS:

- The right to be treated with consideration and respect for personal dignity, autonomy and privacy.
- The right to services in a humane setting that is the least restrictive we can feasibly provide within the treatment plan.
- The right to be informed of one's own condition, of proposed or current services, treatment or therapies, and of the alternatives.
- The right to consent to or refuse any service, treatment or therapy upon full explanation of the expected consequences of such consent or refusal. A parent or legal guardian may consent to or refuse any service, treatment or therapy on behalf of a minor client.
- The right to a copy of a current, written, individualized service plan that addresses one's own mental health, physical health, social and economic needs, and specifies the provision of appropriate and adequate services, as available, either directly or by referral.
- The right to active and informed participation in the establishment, periodic review, and reassessment of the service plan.
- The right to freedom from unnecessary or excessive medication.
- The right to freedom from unnecessary restraint or seclusion.
- The right to participate in any appropriate and available agency service, regardless of refusal of one or more other services, treatment, or therapies, or regardless of relapse from earlier treatment in that or another service, unless there is a valid and specific necessity which precludes and/or requires the client's participation in other services. This necessity shall be explained to the client and written in the client's current service plan.
- The right to be informed of and refuse any unusual or hazardous treatment procedures.
- The right to be advised of and refuse observation by techniques such as one-way vision mirrors, tape recorders, televisions, movies or photographs.
- The right to have the opportunity to consult with independent treatment specialists or legal counsel, at one's own expense.
- The right to confidentiality of communications and all personally identifying information within the limitations and requirements for disclosure of various funding and/or certifying sources, state or federal statutes, unless release of information is specifically authorized by the client, parent or legal guardian of a minor client or court-appointed guardian in of the person of an adult client in accordance with Rule 5122:2-3-11 of the Administrative Code.
- The right to be informed of the circumstances under which disclosure of personal health information may be disclosed without client prior permission.
- The right to have access to one's own psychiatric, medical or other treatment, unless access to particular identified items of information is specifically restricted for that individual client for clear treatment reasons in the client's treatment plan. "Clear treatment reasons" shall be understood to mean only severe emotional damage to the client such that dangerous or self-injurious behavior is an imminent risk. The person restricting the information shall explain to the client and other persons authorized by the client the factual information about the individual client that necessitates the restrictions. The restriction must be renewed at least annually to retain validity. Any person authorized by the client has unrestricted access to all information. Clients shall be informed in writing of agency policies and procedures for viewing or obtaining copies of personal records.
- The right to be informed in advance of the reason(s) for discontinuance of service provision, means by which to resume services, and to be involved in planning for the consequences of that event.
- The right to receive an explanation of the reason(s) for denial of service.
- The right not to be discriminated against in the provision of services on the basis of religion, race, color, creed, sex, National origin, age, lifestyle, physical or mental handicap, HTV infection, AIDS-related complex, AIDS, developmental disability or inability to pay.
- The right to know about the cost of services.
- The right to be fully informed of all rights.
- The right to exercise any and all rights without reprisal in any form including continued and uncompromised access to service.
- The right to file a grievance, and to have oral and written instructions for filing a grievance.

#### YOU HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY .....

- To be honest about matters that relate to you as a client.
- To participate in the development of your service plan and treatment recommendations.
- To attempt to follow the directions and advice offered by the staff.
- To give 24-hour notice of any appointment cancellations.
- To KNOW names of the staff who are caring for you.
- To report changes in your condition to those responsible for your care and welfare.
- To be considerate and respectful to the rights of other clients and staff.
- To honor the confidentiality and privacy of other clients.
- To notify staff or the Client Rights Officer if you feel your rights are being violated.
- To assure that the financial obligations of your healthcare are fulfilled as promptly as possible.
- To follow Safety Forces Support Center rules and regulations affecting your care and conduct.

#### PROCEDURES

This pamphlet, which details SFSC Client's Rights and outlines the SFSC Grievance process will be given to each service applicant at the time of intake or, in unusual circumstances, by the next subsequent appointment. Clients with limitations that may preclude full understanding will also have the policy explained to them. Distribution will occur as part of the financial counseling process except in a crisis emergency situation where the applicant shall be verbally advised of the immediately pertinent rights, e.g., the right to consent or to refuse any service upon full explanation of the consequences of that agreement or refusal, etc. A copy of this pamphlet shall be provided at the next subsequent appointment, if scheduled.

Persons receiving "indirect" services (consultation, education, prevention, or training) may have a copy and explanation of the Client Rights and Responsibilities Pamphlet upon request.

A copy of this pamphlet is posted in a conspicuous location in each building operated by the center.

It is expected that every staff person will be familiar with all Client Rights and the grievance process and will explain any and all aspects of the rights and the grievance procedure upon request.

A Client Rights Officer (CRO) has been assigned to help assure clients of their rights. He will accept and oversee the process of a grievance filing.

The CRO or their alternate is readily accessible by telephone or in person.

#### The Client Rights Officer is:

**Angela Richmond Rossiter, LPCC-S, LICDC, Member, Board of Directors, telephone number (330) 376-9494 ext. 213**

#### GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The client has the option of filing a grievance with an outside agency. Should a client, or another party on behalf of a client, have a grievance, that person may file the grievance at any time. Assistance will be given to help file the grievance. A client grievance form will be used. Grievances must include information of the date, time, location, names of the person(s) involved and a description of the incident situation. Grievances must be in writing, signed and dated by the client.

All grievances are to be settled through the following steps:

The Client Rights Officer will review the grievance within 48 hours. Interview the client as necessary and appropriate, conduct any investigation deemed necessary, and render a judgment within 20 working days of receipt of the written grievance or 3 working days after receiving the grievance.

All staff persons of the agency are familiar with all specific client rights and the grievance procedure and can explain the client rights to a person who receives services from this agency. When a client is new to SFSC, they will have their client rights explained to them. These rights are also posted in a conspicuous, public area of each building operated by the agency and anyone may obtain a copy of them upon request.

In a crisis or emergency situation, the person using or applying for the services shall be verbally advised of at least the immediate pertinent rights, such as the right to consent to or to refuse the offered treatment and the consequences of that agreement or refusal. Full verbal explanation of the client rights policy may be delayed to a subsequent meeting.

The grievance procedure requires that the grievance be made in writing (Client Grievance Form may be used.) The client has the right to file a grievance at any time upon request. Each client has the right to a timely response from the Client's Rights Officer. Copies of the Grievance Procedure may be requested by any employee of SFSC.

If the above attempts at resolution fail, the client may contact the President of the Board of Directors for Safety Forces Support Center, who shall act as an impartial decision-maker in resolving the grievance. The Board President shall issue a decision in writing to the grievor within five (5) working days of receipt of the grievance.

The decision of the Board President is final except in the case of alleged discrimination. In that case, clients may appeal to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Civil Rights, within 180 days.

This entire procedure for addressing the grievance filed by the grievor shall not exceed twenty (20) working days. The agency will maintain for two (2) years the records of written grievance, which includes (1) a copy of the grievance, (2) documentation of the grievance resolution, and (3) a copy of the letter to the grievant reflecting the resolution.

A client and his/her representative may at any time contact one or more of the attached

entities concerning a grievance. The names and contact information in regard to these outside entities will be available to a client upon request. A client can contact these entities at any time.

It is also possible for the grievor to initiate a complaint with any or all of several outside entities, specifically the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Disability Rights Ohio, The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and appropriate professional licensing or regulatory associations. A list of relevant addresses and telephone numbers are included with this document. If the grievor contacts one of the outside entities attached, all relevant information about the grievance shall be provided, upon request, to one or more of those organizations.

Each staff person, including administrative, clerical and support staff has a clearly understood, specified, continuing responsibility to immediately advise any client or any other person who is articulating a concern, complaint or grievance, about the name and availability of the agency's client advocate and the complainant's right to file a grievance.

#### NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

The following describes how health information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can obtain access to this information.

SFSC duty to safeguard your Protected Health Information - individually identifiable information about your past, present or future health or condition, the provision of health care to you, or payment for health care is considered 'Protected Health Information' (PHI). SFSC is required to extend certain protections to your PHI and to give you this Notice about SFSC privacy practices that explains how, when and why we may use or disclose your PHI. Except in specified circumstances, we must use or disclose only minimum necessary PHI to accomplish the intended purpose of the use or disclosure. We are required to follow the privacy practices described in this Notice though SFSC reserves the right to change our privacy practices and the terms of this Notice at any time.

SFSC may use and disclose your Protected Health Information. We have a limited right to use and/or disclose your PHI for purposes of treatment, payment and for our health care operations. For uses beyond, we must have your written authorization, unless the law permits or requires us to make the use or disclosure without your authorization. However, the law provides that we are permitted to make some uses/disclosures without your consent or authorization.