



POLICY INTRODUCTION

Ascendigo Autism Services is committed to honoring the dignity, autonomy, and safety of every child, youth, and adult we support. Respect for individual rights is the foundation of quality service delivery. Clients, families, and guardians place significant trust in us, and it is our responsibility to ensure that each person understands their rights and experiences services free from discrimination, coercion, neglect, or harm.

The rights outlined in this policy reflect federal and state requirements across Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS), childcare licensing, clinical/behavioral health rules, vocational rehabilitation programs, private insurance standards, and Colorado Revised Statutes related to civil rights and client protections. They also reflect our values and the principles of the Ascendigo Way.

Ascendigo affirms that all individuals have the right to make choices, to direct their own lives, to access information, to receive services safely and respectfully, and to express concerns without fear of retaliation. These rights apply across all programs and service environments.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to affirm Ascendigo's commitment to protecting and promoting the rights of all individuals receiving services.

This policy establishes a consistent and organization-wide standard for how client rights are communicated, upheld, and integrated into daily practice while ensuring compliance with applicable state and federal regulations for each branch of programming we offer.

This policy also supports clients and guardians in understanding their rights and how to exercise them as well as clarifying staff expectations for staff and supervisors in ensuring rights are protected and supported across programs.

This policy serves as the foundation of the rights that underpins service planning, informed consent, privacy practices, community integration, and complaint/grievance processes.

OUR COMMITMENTS

Protecting client rights is central to person-centered care. Ascendigo will always:

1. Treat each person with dignity, respect, cultural humility, and fairness.
2. Provide services free from discrimination based on disability, age, race, ethnicity, identity, gender, language, religion, or any other personal characteristic.
3. Ensure clients receive understandable information about their rights and service options.
4. Support informed choice in all service decisions.
5. Protect individuals from abuse, neglect, mistreatment, exploitation, or rights violations.



6. Empower individuals to voice concerns and request changes without fear of retaliation.
7. Maintain environments that support safety, autonomy, independence, and community inclusion.
8. Seek guardian or legal representative involvement when applicable, while honoring the preferences and wishes of the individual to the greatest extent possible.
9. Provide accommodations, communication supports, or assistive tools needed to understand and exercise rights.

Ascendigo will never intimidate, threaten, coerce, or retaliate against anyone for asserting their rights, filing a grievance, or expressing concerns.

PROTOCOL

Scope

This policy applies to:

1. All clients, participants, program attendees, and families across Ascendigo.
2. All employees, contractors, interns, volunteers, and program partners ("staff").
3. All locations where services are provided including licensed childcare sites, clinics, community settings, homes, schools, recreation environments, and remote/telehealth contexts.

This policy governs rights related to:

10. Autonomy & choice
11. Health, safety, and freedom from harm
12. Informed consent
13. Privacy and confidentiality
14. Access to records
15. Communication and supports
16. Community inclusion (HCBS Settings Rule) (when applicable)
17. Non-discrimination
18. Grievances and problem resolution
19. Cultural and linguistic access
20. Rights modifications (when applicable)



Core Client Rights

Every individual receiving services at Ascendigo has the right to:

- 1. Dignity & Respect:** To be treated with courtesy, cultural respect, and consideration.
- 2. Safety & Freedom from Harm:** To receive services in environments free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, coercion, or mistreatment.
- 3. Privacy:** To personal privacy, including private communications, personal care, protected health information, and confidential records.
- 4. Autonomy & Choice:** To participate in decisions about their services, activities, and daily routines to the greatest extent possible.
- 5. Informed Consent:** To receive understandable information about services, risks, benefits, and alternatives.
- 6. Access to Records:** To review and request copies of their records as allowed by law.
- 7. Grievance & Due Process:** To file a complaint or grievance without fear of retaliation, and to receive timely responses.
- 8. Community Inclusion (HCBS Settings Rule) (when applicable):** To have meaningful access to the community, choice of activities, control over daily schedule, and freedom from unnecessary restrictions.
- 9. Non-Discrimination:** To receive services without discrimination on any protected basis.
- 10. Participation in Service Planning:** To direct their own service plan, goals, preferences, and supports.
- 11. Communication Supports:** To receive services in preferred language, with necessary supports (interpreters, assistive devices, plain language formats).
- 12. Rights Modifications (when applicable):** To receive clear explanation, documentation, and due process if any right must be limited based on safety or legal requirements. All modifications must comply with 10 CCR 2505-10 and be based on assessed need, the least restrictive means, and regular review.

Program-specific requirements:

1. HCBS Programs must comply with state and federal regulations including the HCBS Settings Final Rule, Rights Modifications, abuse reporting, and service planning requirements.
2. Youth/Childcare programs must meet CDEC regulations related to parent/guardian access, supervision standards, and child rights.
3. ABA/Clinical programs must follow related therapy consent, professional boundaries, privacy, and insurance requirements.
4. DVR programs must follow vocational rehabilitation rules including participant choice, Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) rights, and confidentiality



5. Adventure/recreation programs should also follow safety, supervision, risk communication, and individualized supports.

PROCEDURES

Each program area will develop and maintain procedures, as appropriate, to operationalize this policy. While procedures may differ based on the needs of each program, they should include the following elements at minimum:

1. How and when client rights are explained and reviewed.
2. How clients and guardians acknowledge receipt of rights.
3. How communication supports and accommodations are provided.
4. How grievances are filed, tracked, and resolved.
5. How rights modifications are documented, approved, reviewed, and monitored.
6. How staff respond to concerns about rights violations.
7. How rights are upheld during the provision of supports and services.
8. How staff training ensures consistent understanding of rights.
9. Regular review of rights-related practices and documentation.

AUTHORITY

Federal Authorities

- HIPAA (45 CFR 160 & 164)
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Rehabilitation Act (Section 504)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Regulations (34 CFR 361)
- CMS HCBS Settings Rule

Colorado State Authorities

- Colorado Medicaid HCBS Rules, 10 CCR 2505-10
- CDPHE PASA / Provider Requirements
- CDEC Childcare Licensing Rules, 8 CCR 1402
- BHA behavioral health service standards
- DORA professional licensure rules
- DVR participant rights and informed-choice requirements
- Colorado Revised Statutes related to client rights, civil rights, abuse/neglect reporting, and privacy

Other Authorities



- Contractual obligations with funders, school districts, insurers, and/or (other) oversight partners
- (Other) Local, state, or federal grant requirements

DEFINITIONS

Please see our Master Definitions Policy for general agency terminology. Policy specific definitions include:

Client Rights:

Protections afforded to individuals receiving services, including autonomy, safety, privacy, access, and due process.

Rights Modification:

A legally required, documented limitation of a specific right based on assessed need and least-restrictive means, consistent with HCBS rules.

Informed Consent:

The voluntary agreement to services after receiving understandable information about risks, benefits, and alternatives.

CHANGE LOG

Date	Revised By (name, title)	Approved By (name, title)	Revision Description

POLICY OWNER

Executive leadership and Compliance/QA.