

# Patient Bill of Rights



## Share a Compliment or a Concern

At the Brattleboro Retreat we want to ensure that patients and their families and/or guardians have a means to provide feedback about their care. We strive to provide a timely and meaningful response to the person(s) making the complaint and/or grievance. The submission of a complaint or grievance will not affect or compromise the patient's current treatment or the patient's future access to care. If you have a problem that you cannot solve with your practitioner, nurse, social worker, mental health worker, or other caregiver please contact the Patient Experience Coordinator.

You can share your concern in person, by phone, through a staff member, e-mail, or letter.

**Patient Experience Coordinator**  
Brattleboro Retreat  
P.O. Box 803  
Brattleboro, VT 05302  
802-258-6118  
Or email:  
patient-experience@brattlebororetreat.org

### External Resources:

**Disability Rights Vermont**  
(Vermont Mental Health Ombudsman)  
141 Main St., Suite 7,  
Montpelier, VT 05602  
802-229-1355, 800-834-7890

**Vermont Psychiatric Survivors**  
(Advocacy and Mutual Support Services)  
128 Merchants Row, Suite 606  
Rutland, VT 05701  
802-775-6834, 800-603-0144

## What happens after we receive your complaint or grievance?

The Patient Experience Coordinator will contact you to get more information about your concern. We will work with you to develop a plan to address the problem. If further investigation is necessary, we will let you know and will send you a letter within seven days describing what we are doing to address your grievance.

Upon the conclusion of the investigation into the grievance, the Patient Experience Coordinator (or designee) will ensure that a written response to the grievance is provided to the patient or patient's representative. There are always outside agencies you may contact with your concerns and a list of those can be found on the Patient's Bill of Rights.



**Brattleboro Retreat**  
COMPREHENSIVE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES SINCE 1834

# Patient Bill of Rights

The Brattleboro Retreat will honor the rights of all patients and their parents, families, and guardians. The patient's right to treatment or services is respected and supported. Consistent with Vermont laws that give all patients specific legal rights, while you're at the Brattleboro Retreat:

- We will treat you with consideration and respect.
- You have the right to access medically necessary treatment regardless of your race, color, sex, national origin, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or sources of payment for care.
- An attending practitioner will coordinate your care while you are being treated at the hospital. The attending practitioner will explain your diagnosis, review treatment options, anticipated prognosis, and discuss ongoing health care needs with you and any family member or person you choose to include.
- The people taking care of you will tell you who they are and what they do. You can also ask to know who is responsible for a particular treatment or procedure. You have a right to understand if our providers have professional relationships outside of our hospital.
- We will provide you information that allows you to make decisions about your treatment. With

the exception of emergency situations or court ordered treatment, we will treat you only with your permission.

- You have the right to refuse treatment and receive information about potential medical complications that might occur. You have the right to leave the hospital, even if your attending practitioner advises against it, unless you are unable to maintain your own or other people's safety as defined by law.
- We respect your privacy and dignity. You may request to have another person present during certain parts of a physical exam, treatment, or procedure. Only people directly involved in your care will be present unless you give others permission to be there.
- You can wear your own clothes and religious or other symbolic items, as long as they do not interfere with treatment.
- Your medical information will be kept confidential. In general, we will only share it with others if you give us permission or as otherwise permitted by law. You also have a right to access your treatment records unless doing so would result in serious harm to you. A detailed explanation of your rights has been provided to you in our Notice of Privacy Practices.
- Because interruptions in care can lead to setbacks, we will communicate with other

Continued inside >



# Patient Bill of Rights

professionals who provide medical care to you to ensure reasonable continuity of care. You have the right to identify providers with whom you do not want us to share treatment information.

- If you request another room in our hospital, we will do our best to accommodate you, unless the treatment team feels that this would compromise your care.
- You can request to be moved to another hospital. Before that happens, we will determine that the transfer is medically appropriate. You will be given complete information about the need for and alternatives to transfer, and the other hospital must agree to accept responsibility for your care.
- We will let you know if we are conducting research while you are in treatment with us. You can volunteer to participate but you can always say no and we will continue to work with you.
- We will use restraints or seclusion only if they are necessary to ensure physical safety and if no less restrictive intervention is possible. If you are restrained or secluded, we will talk with you afterwards to learn more about what happened and how we might avoid future restraints and seclusions.
- Family and friends are an important part of your recovery, and visiting hours and rights will be reviewed at the time of admission. Whenever possible, families may visit their children and terminally ill patients at any time.
- You will have reasonable access to make and receive phone calls.
- You will have reasonable access to send and receive unopened, uncensored, mail and electronic mail. Mail that may contain dangerous items may be opened before it comes to the unit.
- We will provide an interpreter to make sure that you understand the care and treatment that is being provided to you, if you are hearing impaired or if you have difficulty speaking or understanding English.
- We will assess and treat your pain promptly and professionally.

- We will tell you about any hospice and palliative care services that may be available.
- You have the right to know the number of nurses and the number of patients on your unit.
- Your hospital bill will be understandable and specific.

## We want to support you in getting the highest quality care. As a patient it is your responsibility to:

- Talk with us honestly and openly about any and all health issues. It is important to us to know about previous hospitalizations, medical history, present complaints, and all the medications you are taking. We strive to provide a safe and judgment-free environment to support you in talking to us.
- Participate in your treatment plan.
- Ask questions if instructions are unclear or you have concerns about your treatment.
- Observe safety regulations, including tobacco use and weapons policies.
- Be considerate of other patients, visitors, and Brattleboro Retreat staff. We are committed to creating a safe environment that fosters healing and recovery. To support this effort we ask that you demonstrate respectful speech and behavior toward other patients, visitors, and all Brattleboro Retreat staff. Offensive, threatening, or violent behavior will not be tolerated and might result in us ending non-emergent care and asking you to leave the Brattleboro Retreat campus. This includes but is not limited to any negative references to a person's age, race, color, sex, national origin, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability.
- Make a good faith effort to pay your medical bills in a timely fashion or ask for appropriate assistance.

*If you have any questions about your rights and responsibilities, ask your practitioner, nurse, social worker, mental health worker, or other hospital representative.*

## Questions and Complaints:

*If you have questions or complaints about your stay, please contact our Patient Experience Coordinator. They will listen to your concerns and work with you to address them. If your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, you have the right to file a grievance. You can find out more information about that process by contacting the Patient Experience Coordinator or any member of your treatment team.*

**Patient Experience Coordinator**  
Brattleboro Retreat  
P.O. Box 803  
Brattleboro, VT 05302  
802-258-6118  
Or email them at:  
patient-experience@brattlebororetreat.org

## You can always call the following external agencies for assistance:

**Department of Mental Health**  
*(Hospital Complaints)*  
280 State Drive NOB 2 North  
Waterbury, VT 05671-2010  
802-241-0090

**Vermont Board of Medical Practice**  
*(Concerns about physicians or physician assistants)*  
Vermont Department of Health  
108 Cherry Street, P.O. Box 70  
Burlington, VT 05402-0070  
802-657-4220

**Vermont Board of Nursing**  
*(Concerns about nurses)*  
Office of Professional Regulation  
89 Main Street, 3rd Floor  
Montpelier, VT 05620-3402  
802-828-2396

**Vermont Secretary of State**  
Office of Professional Regulation  
*(Concerns about licensed health care professionals other than physicians or nurses)*  
89 Main Street, 3rd Floor  
Montpelier, VT 05620-3402  
802-828-1505

**Division of Licensing and Protection**  
*(Concerns about regulatory compliance)*  
HC 2 South  
280 State Drive  
Waterbury, VT 05676-2060  
802-241-0480 Fax: 802-241-0343  
Intake/Complaint: 888-700-5330

**The Joint Commission**  
*(Concerns about quality or safety)*  
One Renaissance Boulevard  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181  
800-994-6610

**Ipro (Medicare Quality Improvement Organization)**  
*(Concerns specific to Medicare beneficiaries in hospital settings)*  
800-852-3685

*Continued >*

