



The Patients Rights Advocate Program is a program of **Advocacy, Inc.**, an independent nonprofit serving the Santa Cruz and San Benito communities.

Services are free of charge.

Tax deductible donations are appreciated.

Advocacy, Inc. is supported by:

Individual Contributions

Area Agency on Aging of Santa Cruz & San Benito

Santa Cruz & San Benito Counties

Cities of Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley & Watsonville

United Way of Santa Cruz & San Benito

The Patients' Rights Advocate

*The Advocate's Role
in the Community*



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You have the right ▲

“...to see and receive the services of a Patient Advocate who has no direct or indirect clinical or administrative responsibility for the person receiving mental health services.”

What is a Patients’ Rights Advocate

A Patients’ Rights Advocate is a state mandated position to empower and assist recipients of mental health services to exercise their civil and human rights.

What are the duties of a Patients’ Rights Advocate?

- To receive and investigate complaints from or concerning recipients of mental health services residing in licensed health or community care facilities regarding abuse, unreasonable denial or punitive withholding of rights guaranteed under California State Law.
- To monitor mental health facilities, services and programs for compliance with statutory and regulatory patients’ rights provisions.
- To provide training and education about mental health law and patients’ rights to mental health providers.
- To ensure that recipients of mental health services in all licensed health and community care facilities are notified of their rights.
- To exchange information and cooperate with the State Patients’ Rights Office.

Who may contact the Patients’ Rights Advocate?

It is always best that the person who has the complaint contact the Advocate. However, a mental health professional, with your permission, may contact the Advocate. Also, friends and family members may contact the Patients’ Rights Advocate with concerns and questions regarding treatment and/or rights violations.

What is the role of the Patients’ Rights Advocate?

The role of the Advocate is to work on your behalf, or your “expressed desire,” to insure that your civil, legal, and human rights are being upheld by mental health professionals.

The Advocate works to ensure mental health services and programs are accessible to all mental health consumers regardless of placement or residence.

What kinds of concerns or complaints does the Advocate work to resolve?

Advocates are trained to assist to resolve problems concerning:

Verbal and physical abuse	Payeeship
Patients’ Rights	Conservatorship
Informed Consent	Personal Dignity
Confidentiality	Access to Records
Quality of Care	Access to Services
Access to Medi-Cal Services	
Medi-Cal Eligibility & Enrollment	

What will happen when I meet with the Patients’ Rights Advocate?

The Advocate will make every reasonable effort to speak with you in person at a time that is agreeable to both persons. The Advocate will review the complaint as received by phone. The Advocate may ask for additional information so as to better resolve the complaint. He or she may ask you to sign an “Advocacy Agreement” if we need to speak with mental health professionals involved in your treatment. The Advocate will always fully inform you of your options regarding any complaint and will not act unless she or he is given permission by you, the client.