

## Welcome to Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.

### Important Phone Numbers

#### Human Rights Advocacy Committee

Telephone Number (Toll Free)  
1-800-342-0825

TTY/TDD callers, please use the  
Florida Relay Service at  
1-800-955-8771

Florida Abuse Hotline  
Telephone Number (Toll Free)  
1-800-962-2873

or

1-800-453-5145 TTY/TDD

#### Advocacy Center for Persons with Disabilities

Telephone Number (Toll Free)  
1-800-342-0823

or

1-800-346-4127 TTY/TDD



Procedure II-X  
Attachment G **Meridian**  
Revised 04/09

## Your Rights and Responsibilities

*Helping us...  
to better serve you.*

### Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.

#### Emergency Services Information & Referral 24 hrs, 7 days/week

352-374-5600 (Local)  
1-800-330-5615 (Toll Free)  
Florida Relay Service  
1-800-955-8770 (Voice)  
1-800-955-8771 (TTY)



[www.mbhci.org](http://www.mbhci.org)

MBH Form #173 (Revised 4/09)

### Meridian's Responsibilities

As a person served by Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. you have a right to be treated with dignity, gentleness, courtesy and respect. The staff at Meridian is dedicated to providing the best possible service while you participate in our programs. It is every employee's responsibility to ensure that Meridian conducts business in a legal and ethical manner, consistent with federal and state statutes and regulations, as well as the ethical standards of the professions represented by Meridian's staff.

### Mission and Philosophy of Care

Meridian believes that you deserve to be treated with respect and empowered to direct the care you receive. Care is delivered in a coordinated and culturally competent manner by professionals best suited to meet your needs. Services are provided in the least disruptive manner that is consistent with your lifestyle, with the goal of increasing the quality of your life in the community of your choice. Toward these ends, Meridian delivers a range of individualized services designed to facilitate your recovery and resilience using best clinical practices. Key goals are enhancing your motivation to learn and modify behaviors that support the highest quality of life possible for you and your family.

### Non-Emergency Services

Meridian offers a variety of treatment and educational services to assist you and your family resolve problems and promote health, growth and development. Professional services combine assessment, counseling, therapy and education, and include medication evaluation and management, individual/family/couples counseling, and groups. Each counselor or case manager schedules appointments in an effort to accommodate your needs. Our business office is open Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

### Referral & Emergency Services

The Access Center at Meridian is your single point of contact for information, referral and emergency services 24 hours/day, 7 days per week. Phone numbers to contact the Access Center can be found on the front of this brochure.

### Your Rights While Receiving Services

- To be treated with respect at all times
- To be free from abuse, financial or other exploitation, retaliation, humiliation and neglect
- To appropriate treatment, regardless of your ability to pay
- To receive treatment in the least restrictive setting
- To informed consent or refusal or expression of choice regarding service delivery, concurrent services, composition of service delivery team, release of information, and involvement in research projects
- To be informed about the reason for your admission, proposed treatment, potential side effects of treatment, approximate length of stay and other possible treatments
- To take back any consent to treatment either in writing or verbally by you, your guardian, or guardian advocate
- Access or referral to legal entities for appropriate representation
- If needed to be appointed a guardian advocate through the court to make decisions regarding your treatment
- To receive services that are timely, skillfully, safely and humanly administered
- To receive appropriate medical, vocational, social, educational and rehabilitative services
- To have reasonable access to your own records
- To authorize release of information to people or agencies
- To have your records kept confidential
- To designate a person to receive any required notices
- To help make decision about your treatment and provide written comments on your treatment plan
- To help make plans for your discharge
- To have access to self-help and advocacy support groups
- Adherence to research guidelines and ethics when involved in research projects

## Your Rights While Receiving Services

- A reasonable measure of privacy and protection of your constitutional rights, including right to legal counsel
- Confidentiality in your communication with Meridian and its employees ( See
- Complete orientation to programs that are providing services and activities including explanation of all rules and guidelines

## Your Rights While in Residential Services

- To have access to a private telephone to report any possible abuse or neglect to the Florida Abuse Hotline
- To have written inventory of any of your personal clothing or belongings that are taken from you
- To be assisted in registering to vote and voting
- To question the cause and legality of your being detained (Habeus Corpus)
- To have visitors at reasonable hours within program guidelines unless restricted as a part of your treatment
- Access to mail and telephone service in accordance to program guidelines unless restricted as part of your treatment
- To have personal clothing and belongings unless restricted as a part of your treatment
- A private space in which to keep your personal clothing and other property
- Three balanced meals per day, plus a snack
- Use of private toilet and bathing facilities
- Access to social and recreational activities
- Opportunities for religious worship
- **Children have the right to receive education as appropriate in the least restrictive setting possible**

## Your Responsibilities

In order for Meridian Behavioral Healthcare to provide the best possible service during your treatment, it is important that you:

- Actively and earnestly participate in developing the plan for your treatment and follow that plan
- Follow these rules in order to protect your safety and the safety of others:
  - Respect others privacy and confidentiality
  - Be courteous and respectful
  - Smoke or use tobacco products in designated areas
  - Do not use inappropriate verbal or sexual behaviors
  - Do not use verbal or physical aggression
  - Do not bring weapons or sharp objects on the premises
  - Keep medication (including over-the-counter) in a safe, secure place while on the premises
  - Do not use or bring alcohol or illegal substances on the premises
  - Do not loiter or sleep in the buildings or on the premises
  - Do not sell, loan, borrow or steal items
  - Place clutter and trash in proper containers.
- Keep scheduled appointments, or cancel at least 24 hours in advance
- Pay for treatment in accordance with your agreement with Meridian
- Provide full information regarding any treatment you are receiving or have received in the past, including all types of counseling/therapy, medications and/or hospitalizations
- Allow staff in residential programs to conduct searches necessary to ensure the safety of everyone in the program.

## Confidentiality of Records

Federal law requires that your Meridian Behavioral Healthcare treatment record be kept confidential. Meridian staff are not allowed to tell anyone outside of the agency that you receive services here, or that you suffer a mental illness or substance use problem, unless one or more of the following is true:

- You consent in writing
- The disclosure complies with a court order
- The disclosure is made to medical personnel in a medical emergency
- The disclosure is made to qualified personnel for research purposes
- The disclosure is part of an audit or program evaluation, including approved peer and utilization reviews of service records
- Your safety or that of others is at significant risk and disclosure of some information is required for your protection or the protection of others
- The disclosure involves information reported under state law to appropriate state or local authorities about suspected abuse or neglect of a child or elderly or disabled person
- The information is about a crime committed by you either at Meridian or against any person who works for Meridian, or about any threat to commit such a crime.

Violation of federal law by Meridian is a crime. Suspected violations may be reported to appropriate authorities

## Advanced Directives

You have the right to give written instructions called Advance Directives, when you receive services from Meridian. Advanced directives allow you to state your preferences for future care, should you be unable to communicate your decisions or preferences for mental health treatment. Directives may include a living will, power of attorney or other care instructions. Before deciding to have advance directives, you should discuss the matter thoroughly with family members, your doctor and your counselor and/or case manager.

## Satisfaction with Services And Special Needs

We work hard to make you comfortable at Meridian and we want you to be satisfied with the services you receive. If there is ever something that does not meet your expectation or you have a special need, discuss it with the staff assigned to your care.

You have a right to file a **Concern Reporting/ Accommodation Request** as a formal notice of dissatisfaction with services or staff, or to request any special help you need to fully participate in the services offered by Meridian. The program supervisor will assist you in resolving your issues or accommodation request. If you feel that further assistance is needed, you may have your concerns reviewed by the administrative staff.

Any staff member can help you fill out this form, if assistance is needed. After you put your concern/request in writing, give the form to any Meridian employee. It will immediately be forwarded to the Office of Quality Improvement. Your concern/request will be reviewed and a supervisor will meet with you to discuss solutions to the problem within ten days. If you are still dissatisfied, other administrators will be asked to meet with you until an agreeable solution is found.

Meridian is continuously trying to improve the effectiveness of its services and how we deliver services. The most important information we receive is from the people we serve; therefore, we receive information from you in the following ways:

- Your participation in bi-annual consumer satisfaction surveys, and follow-up surveys after discharge
- Review of your concerns regarding services or service delivery
- Customer participation in Meridian's Stakeholders Relations Committee
- Staff reporting of unusual incidents at Meridian
- Your meetings with staff regarding progress in meeting treatment or service objectives.