

**ADVOCACY AT GILEAD**

**An advocate is a person who acts on behalf of another. Advocating** for our clients is a fundamental part of Gilead's mission. Most of our advocacy work is accomplished at the individual level, one-on-one. For instance, case managers may advocate for the rights of their clients in housing issues, or to have a therapy pet in their apartment.

**Self-advocacy means to take action on behalf of oneself.** Another form of advocacy work is teaching clients to advocate for themselves politically. Gilead supports our clients in making phone calls and in sending letters and emails to our Senators and Representatives advocating for or against specific legislation. In learning to express their concerns on issues that affect them, clients have become more aware of their right to effect change.

**Our clients’ reintegration within the local community** is another vital focus of Gilead’s advocacy planning. Individuals with psychiatric disabilities are supported in achieving independence and in becoming more visible and accepted in their neighborhoods.

**GILEAD’S COMMITMENT TO CLIENT RIGHTS**

Gilead Community Services strives to uphold the rights and privacy of clients at all times while providing the best possible clinical treatment. Client Rights and Responsibilities are reviewed with all clients on admission to Gilead, posted in each program, and reviewed annually.

If a client or conservator of person has a complaint regarding a client’s care or feels that the client’s privacy or other rights have been violated, they are encouraged to resolve their concerns by following Gilead’s Problem Resolution procedure, which can be accessed by visiting our website [www.gileadcs.org](http://www.gileadcs.org), clicking on the “Learn” tab, and then Advocacy/Client Rights in the drop-down tab.

For clients enrolled in any of Gilead’s DMHAS-funded programs, the client or conservator of person also has the right to file a formal grievance regarding rights violations. The Client Rights & Privacy Officer should be informed promptly of these grievances.

**Gilead’s Client Rights & Privacy Officer: Linda Walsh (860-343-5300 ext. 3426)**

NO CLIENT WILL EXPERIENCE ANY RETALIATION OR BARRIERS TO SERVICE AS A RESULT OF FILING A COMPLAINT.