



## RESOURCE CONNECTIONS OF OREGON

Main Office:  
3876 Beverly Ave NE  
Suite G-1  
Salem, OR 97305

Tel: (503) 485-2510  
Fax: (503) 485-2515

Toll Free:  
Tel: (866) 890-2048  
Fax: (866) 890-2049

Yamhill Co. Office:  
(available by appointment)  
2205 NE Evans St.  
McMinnville, OR  
97128

Tel: (503) 883-0430  
Fax: (503) 883-0433

Linn Co. Office:  
(available by appointment)  
250 Broadalbin St SW  
Suite 245  
Albany, OR 97321

Tel: (541) 704-2720  
Fax: (541) 704-2725

# WELCOME TO RCO!

Our organization is known for its beneficial role in Oregon's service delivery system as well as for the talents and skills of its staff. RCO is a Support Service Brokerage. This includes being an advocate and provider of employer supports for individuals and families to meet their needs for paid direct support services.

RCO was established in May 1998. Our customers are at least 18 years old who are eligible to receive Support Service. Eligibility is determined by the county Developmental Disability Services. We provide Brokerage services in Linn, Marion and Yamhill counties.

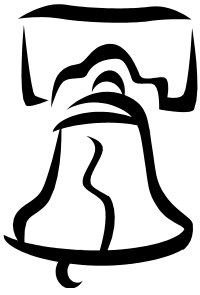


*Through a partnership with RCO, individuals and their families will enrich and control their own lives based upon the principles of freedom, authority, autonomy and responsibility.*

## YOU ARE OUR CUSTOMER



Our job is to help you decide what services meet your needs. We care about your satisfaction. Anytime you are not getting the information or services from us that you want, you should let us know! Following are three sections to help you understand your rights, your responsibilities, and what to do if you are not satisfied with our services (grievance and appeals process).



## YOUR RIGHTS

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As a customer of Resource Connections of Oregon you have these rights:

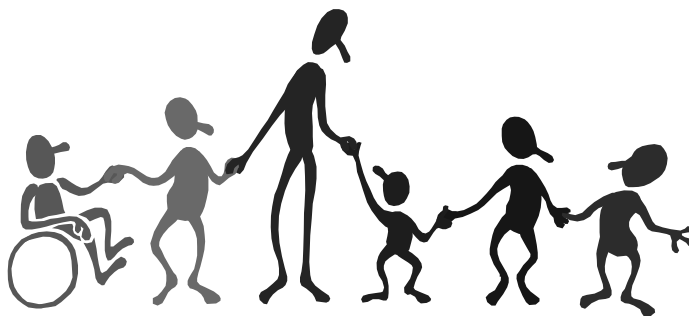
**The right to not be discriminated against:** All people who are eligible for these services can use them. No one can stop you from using this program because of your race, skin color, religion, where you were born, if you are a United States citizen, how old you are, how much money you make or how long you have lived in Oregon.

**The right to a Personal Agent (P.A.):** A Personal Agent is someone who will help you:

- figure out what supports you need and how to get those supports.
- find the resources (people, things and activities) that you need.
- get information you need to make choices about your supports and the people who help you.
- learn about having people work for you.
- make sure the people who work for you do what you want and need them to do.
- with paying people who work for you.
- talk to other people or agencies that may be able to provide assistance as well.

If you have difficulty working with your Personal Agent, you have the right to ask for another one. RCO will work to find a Personal Agent that is a good fit for you.

**The right to initiate contact with your Personal Agent:** You may initiate contact at with your Personal Agent at any time, by phone or in person, to discuss issues, needs and your plan. Your Personal Agent may not be available and may need to call you back.



**The right to a person centered plan:** You have the right to a plan that is about you and what you want and need. You have the right to know what is in your plan, how your supports will work for you and how to fix your plan if it is not working.

**The right to a written plan within 90 days:** Your plan must be written down. You have the right to have your plan working within 90 days from when you start this program. Your plan will support your whole life, so you will only need one. You or your family must sign the plan for it to start.

**The right to informed consent:** Your plan should address what you need to stay safe and healthy. You have the right to know if anything in your plan can hurt you or might be bad for you.

**The right to a nursing care plan:** If you need help from a nurse, your plan must include information and instructions on what medical, nursing and/or mental health needs you have. A nurse must write this part of the plan.

**The right to review your plan:** You have the right to go over your plan with your Personal Agent at least once every three months to make sure it is working. Your plan should do what you want it to and you should be happy with it. If not, your plan should change. If your support needs change, your plan could change then, too.

It may take a couple of weeks for a plan change to begin. Planning ahead can be very helpful.

**The right to move to another county without losing services:** You have the right to move to another county in Oregon without losing the support you have set up. Your Personal Agent will help you to make sure your plan is moved with you. Your plan will last at least until the date it was supposed to be reviewed.



**The right to a qualified provider:** You have the right to choose a helper who knows the right ways to help you. This helper must meet the state requirements and have the training and education needed to help you.

**The right to be safe from abuse:** RCO employees and qualified providers are “mandatory abuse reporters”. This means if they observe signs of abuse they must alert the authorities who will then investigate to find out if your rights have been violated.

**The right to limited payment of providers:** You have the right to not pay your helpers any extra money over and above what they are paid by RCO, or through Medicaid Personal Care.

**The right to submit grievances and appeals:** You have the right to complain about your services and get an answer that makes sense to you. Your Personal Agent can help you make the complaint and explain how your complaint will be taken care of. (See pages 7-10 for more information).

**The right to choose a Brokerage:** You have the right to choose a Brokerage from those in the county in which you live.

**The right to take part in the Board of Directors meetings:** You have the right to have your opinion about your services (and the services other people get) listened to by your Personal Agent.

The Board of Directors for RCO is comprised of self-advocates, parents and community members.

**You have the right to quality services:** The right to services that work for you and support you in the ways you want and need.

**What the brokerage should try to make happen:**

- Find ways for people and families to get the support they need.
- Make sure people with disabilities go out to the places they want to with the people they want to be with.
- Get results and do it without wasting time or money.
- Determine whether changing needs or availability of other resources has changed the need for continued use of funds.





## YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

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As a customer of RCO you have the responsibility to help insure the quality and success of your Support Services plan. Talk with your Personal Agent to let them know how they can help you.

You have the responsibility to:

- Direct the creation of your plan. Your agent will help you and give you information about alternatives but you must be the one who decides what you need.
- Understand the limits of the plan. It is important that you tell your agent if you are confused or if you have questions. Keep asking questions until you understand.
- Ask your Personal Agent to make changes to your plan when you find more effective ways of getting your needs met. Until you have made changes in the plan, you must follow the plan as it is written. Ask your Personal Agent to help you with this.
- Choose and supervise the people who work for you. Your Personal Agent has information and tools to help you with this.
- Participate in making written agreements with your support providers, either contracts or job descriptions, and to make sure that these agreements are kept. Your Personal Agent will help you.
- Approve time sheets and invoices for people who work for you. Your Personal Agent will tell you what needs to be approved for payment.
- Be aware of the funding in your plan and to make sure it is used properly. Funds can be used only as approved in the plan.
- Keep receipts for any purchases you make using plan funds. If you need help in keeping these records, your Personal Agent and RCO can do this for you.
- Be actively involved in Support Services on a monthly basis. You can do this by receiving planned services, and/or staying in touch with your Personal Agent by phone or in-person. You must have direct contact with your Personal Agent at least every 6 months.



## CUSTOMER GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS PROCESS

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“When things aren’t working for you...”

You always have the right to ask questions, get more information about your plan, or find out more about RCO. All you need to do is ask. RCO expects that every customer will be treated with the utmost respect and be given professional services. We appreciate knowing when we have not met your expectations. This will help us work better with you and others.

1. If you are unhappy with our services, you have the right to tell your Personal Agent. If you want something changed in your plan let your Personal Agent know. You, or someone you can trust, can call your Personal Agent and let them know at 503-485-2510. If you are not satisfied with what you hear, write up, or have someone help you write your complaint.
2. If you are still not satisfied, contact Beverly Herrin, Executive Director, at 503-485-2510, extension 113. If needed, the complaint (grievance) will go to the Board of Directors for review.
3. You will receive a written response from RCO within 30 days. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you may request a review of the decision by the Department. This is called an Administrative Review. You must make a request for the Administrative Review within 15 days of the date of the decision by RCO.

If you are not satisfied after these steps, talk with you Personal Agent. They will help you find out what to do next. Or, you may read the following pages for more on our Grievance and Appeals Policy.

## **Attachment:**

### **CUSTOMER GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS POLICY**

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It is the policy of Resource Connections of Oregon (RCO) that individuals served, their guardians, representatives or others acting in the individual's behalf have the right to state a complaint or grievance. It is also the policy that the party stating a grievance has the right for appropriate or necessary action to take place based on the facts of the complaint or grievance.

RCO shall inform each individual, or the individual's legal representative, orally and in writing of the grievance policy and procedures and of the right to move directly to hearing as per Oregon Administrative Rule 309-041-1800(2) at any point if RCO or the Department of Human Services (DHS) does not address the grievance satisfactorily.

RCO will ensure that in each step in the grievance procedure there is:

- 1) Immediate investigation of facts supporting or disproving the complaint or grievance;
- 2) Necessary action taken on substantiated grievances within three (3) working days of the complaint; and
- 3) Documentation in the grievant's record of the receipt, investigation, and any action taken regarding the complaint or grievance including any disciplinary action taken against staff.

#### **Grievance related to abuse: (The Mandatory Abuse Reporting Requirements will be followed to report the actual abuse and:)**

If the grievance is associated in any way with abuse, the recipient of the grievance shall immediately report the issue to the RCO Executive Director, the involved Provider Organization Director (if applicable), and the county mental health developmental disabilities program (CMHDDP).

#### **Grievance not related to abuse:**

RCO will investigate the facts supporting or disproving the grievance and will put them in writing;

Any Grievance reported will have the following steps applied:

- 1) RCO will take appropriate actions on grievances within five working days following receipt of the grievance; the person stating a grievance should express the grievance first to the person most directly involved in the complaint.

- 2) If the grievance is not resolved, it shall be submitted to the RCO Executive Director, if it involves Brokerage staff or services, for review. Such review shall be completed and a written response to the grievant provided within 15 days;
- 3) If the grievance is not resolved by the RCO Executive Director, it shall be submitted to the CMHDDP. Such review shall be completed and a written response provided to the grievant within 30 days;
- 4) If the grievance is not resolved by the CMHDDP, it may be submitted to Seniors and People with Disabilities Services (SPDS).
  - a) Such review shall be completed and a written response to the grievant provided within 45 days of submission. The decision of the SPDS Administrator or Administrator's designee shall be final; and
  - b) Documentation of each grievance and its resolution shall be filed or noted in the grievant record. If a grievance resulted in disciplinary action against a staff member, the documentation shall include a statement that disciplinary action was taken.

Copies of the documentation on all grievances shall be sent by the RCO Executive to the Support Specialist within 15 working days of initial receipt of the grievance.

**Denial, termination, suspension, or reduction of services:**

Any time RCO takes an action to deny, terminate, suspend, or reduce an individual's access to services covered under Medicaid, the Brokerage shall notify the individual or the individual's legal representative(s) of the right to a hearing and the method to obtain a hearing.

- 1) RCO shall mail the notice, or personally serve it to the individual or the individual's legal representative(s) ten (10) days or more prior to the effective date of an action.
- 2) This notification requirement shall not apply if an action is part of, or fully consistent with, the Individual Support Plan and the individual, or the individual's legal representative(s), has agreed with the action by signature to the plan.
- 3) The individual or the individual's legal representative may appeal a denial of a request for additional or different services only if the request has been made in writing and submitted to RCO.

- 4) A notice required by paragraph (2) (a) or (2) (b) of OAR 309-041-1800 shall be served upon the appealing party personally or by certified mail. The notice shall state:
- a. What action RCO intends to take;
  - b. The reasons for the intended action;
  - c. The specific regulations that support, or the change in Federal or State law that requires the action;
  - d. The appealing party's right to a contested case hearing in accordance with the Oregon Attorney General's model rules at OAR 137-003-501 through OAR 137-003-0700 and 42 CFR Part 43 1, Subpart.

The person stating a grievance will be encouraged to follow the grievance procedure as outlined. However, it is recognized that each person has the right, at any point during the grievance process, to contact resources outside of RCO in pursuit of a resolution. This includes contact with the assigned Support Specialist of the local Community Mental Health Program or to the SPDS Administrator. The person stating a grievance will be advised of this option as they engage in the grievance process. Copies of the documentation on all grievances will be sent to the assigned Case Manager within fifteen (15) working days of the initial receipt of the grievance.

This policy will be reviewed upon entry with each individual served, their guardian and/or representative. The policy will be reviewed as changes occur, with documentation of the review recorded.