

Resident Rights in Certified Nursing Facilities (cont.)

(f)(7) The resident has a right to have family member(s) or other resident representative(s) meet in the facility with the families or resident representative(s) of other residents in the facility. (f)(9) The resident has a right to choose or refuse to perform services for the facility and the facility must not require a resident to perform services for the facility. The resident may perform services for the facility, if he or she chooses, when— (i) The facility has documented the resident's need or desire for work in the plan of care; (ii) The plan specifies the nature of the services performed and whether the services are voluntary or paid; (iii) Compensation for paid services is at or above prevailing rates; and (iv) The resident agrees to the work arrangement described in the plan of care. (f)(10) The resident has a right to manage his or her financial affairs. This includes the right to know, in advance, what charges a facility may impose against a resident's personal funds. (i) The facility must not require residents to deposit their personal funds with the facility. If a resident chooses to deposit personal funds with the facility, upon written authorization of a resident, the facility must act as a fiduciary of the resident's funds and hold, safeguard, manage, and account for the personal funds of the resident deposited with the facility, as specified in this section. (ii) Deposit of Funds. (A) In general: Except as set out in paragraph (f)(10)(ii)(B) of this section, the facility must deposit any residents' personal funds in excess of \$100 in an interest-bearing account (or accounts) that is separate from any of the facility's operating accounts, and that credits all interest earned on resident's funds to that account. (In pooled accounts, there must be a separate accounting for each resident's share.) The facility must maintain a resident's personal funds that do not exceed \$100 in a non-interest-bearing account, interest-bearing account, or petty cash fund. (B) Residents whose care is funded by Medicaid: The facility must deposit the residents' personal funds in excess of \$50 in an interest-bearing account (or accounts) that is separate from any of the facility's operating accounts, and that credits all interest earned on resident's funds to that account. (In pooled accounts, there must be a separate accounting for each resident's share.) The facility must maintain personal funds that do not exceed \$50 in a noninterest-bearing account, interest-bearing account, or petty cash fund. (f)(10)(iii) Accounting and Records. (A) The facility must establish and maintain a system that assures a full and complete and separate accounting, according to generally accepted accounting principles, of each resident's personal funds entrusted to the facility on the resident's behalf. (B) The system must preclude any commingling of resident funds with facility funds or with the funds of any person other than another resident. (C) The individual financial record must be available to the resident through quarterly statements and upon request. (f)(10)(iv) Notice of certain balances. The facility must notify each resident that receives Medicaid benefits— (A) When the amount in the resident's account reaches \$200 less than the SSI resource limit for one person, specified in section 1611(a)(3)(B) of the Act; and (B) That, if the amount in the account, in addition to the value of the resident's other nonexempt resources, reaches the SSI resource limit for one person, the resident may lose eligibility for Medicaid or SSI. (f)(10)(v) Conveyance upon discharge, eviction, or death. Upon the discharge, eviction, or death of a resident with a personal fund deposited with the facility, the facility must convey within 30 days the resident's funds, and a final accounting of those funds, to the resident, or in the case of death, the individual or probate jurisdiction administering the resident's estate, in accordance with State law. (f)(10)(vi) Assurance of financial security. The facility must purchase a surety bond, or otherwise provide assurance satisfactory to the Secretary, to assure the security of all personal funds of residents deposited with the facility. (f)(11) The facility must not impose a charge against the personal funds of a resident for any item or service for which payment is made under Medicaid or Medicare (except for applicable deductible and coinsurance amounts). The facility may charge the resident for requested services that are more expensive than or in excess of covered services in accordance with §489.32 of this chapter. (This does not affect the prohibition on facility charges for items and services for which Medicaid has paid. See §447.15 of this chapter, which limits participation in the Medicaid program to providers who accept, as payment in full, Medicaid payment plus any deductible, coinsurance, or copayment required by the plan to be paid by the individual.) (i) Services included in Medicare or Medicaid payment. During the course of a covered Medicare or Medicaid stay, facilities must not charge a resident for the following categories of items and services: (A) Nursing services as required at §483.35. (B) Food and Nutrition services as required at §483.60. (C) An activities program as required at §483.24(c). (D) Room/bed maintenance services. (E) Routine personal hygiene items and services as required to meet the needs of residents, including, but not limited to, hair hygiene supplies, comb, brush, soap, disinfecting soaps or specialized cleansing agents when indicated to treat special skin problems or to fight infection, razor, shaving cream, toothbrush, toothpaste, denture adhesive, denture cleaner, dental floss, moisturizing lotion, tissues, cotton balls, cotton swabs, deodorant, incontinence care and supplies, sanitary napkins and related supplies, towels, washcloths, hospital gowns, over the counter drugs, hair and nail hygiene services, bathing assistance, and basic personal laundry. (F) Medically-related social services as required at §483.40(d). (G) Hospice services elected by the resident and paid for under the Medicare Hospice Benefit or paid for by Medicaid under a state plan. (ii) Items and services that may be charged to residents' funds. Paragraphs (f)(11)(ii)(A) through (L) of this section are general categories and examples of items and services that the facility may charge to residents' funds if they are requested by a resident, if they are not required to achieve the goals stated in the resident's care plan, if the facility informs the resident that there will be a charge, and if payment is not made by Medicare or Medicaid: (A) Telephone, including a cellular phone. (B) Television/radio, personal computer or other electronic device for personal use. (C) Personal comfort items, including smoking materials, notions and novelties, and confections. (D) Cosmetic and grooming items and services in excess of those for which payment is made under Medicaid or Medicare. (E) Personal clothing. (F) Personal reading matter. (G) Gifts purchased on behalf of a resident. (H) Flowers and plants. (I) Cost to participate in social events and entertainment outside the scope of the activities program, provided under §483.24(c). (J) Non-covered special care services such as privately hired nurses or aides. (K) Private room, except when therapeutically required (for example, isolation for infection control). (L) Except as provided in (e)(11)(ii)(L)(1) and (2) of this section, specially prepared or alternative food requested instead of the food and meals generally prepared by the facility, as required by §483.60. (1) The facility may not charge for special foods and meals, including medically prescribed dietary supplements, ordered by the resident's physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or clinical nurse specialist, as these are included per §483.60. (2) In accordance with §483.60(c) through (f), when preparing foods and meals, a facility must take into consideration residents' needs and preferences and the overall cultural and religious make-up of the facility's population. (ii) Requests for items and services. (A) The facility can only charge a resident for any non-covered item or service if such item or service is specifically requested by the resident. (B) The facility must not require a resident to request any item or service as a condition of admission or continued stay. (C) The facility must inform, orally and in writing, the resident requesting an item or service for which a charge will be made that there will be a charge for the item or service and what the charge will be.

(g) **Information and Communication.** (g)(1) The resident has the right to be informed of his or her rights and of all rules and regulations governing resident conduct and responsibilities during his or her stay in the facility. (g)(16) The facility must provide a notice of rights and services to the resident prior to or upon admission and during the resident's stay. (i) The facility must inform the resident both orally and in writing in a language that the resident understands of his or her rights and all rules and regulations governing resident conduct and responsibilities during the stay in the facility. (ii) The facility must also provide the resident with the State-developed notice of Medicaid rights and obligations, if any. (iii) Receipt of such information, and any amendments to it, must be acknowledged in writing. (g)(2) The resident has the right to access personal and medical records pertaining to him or herself. (i) The facility must provide the resident with access to personal and medical records pertaining to him or herself, upon an oral or written request, in the form and format requested by the individual, if it is readily producible in such form and format (including in an electronic form or format when such records are maintained electronically), or, if not, in a readable hard copy form or such other form and format as agreed to by the facility and the individual, within 24 hours (excluding weekends and holidays); and (ii) The facility must allow the resident to obtain a copy of the records or any portions thereof (including in an electronic form or format when such records are maintained electronically) upon request and 2 working days advance notice to the facility. The facility may impose a reasonable, cost-based fee on the provision of copies, provided that the fee includes only the cost of: (A) Labor for copying the records requested by the individual, whether in paper or electronic form; (B) Supplies for creating the paper copy or electronic media if the individual requests that the electronic copy be provided on portable media; and (C) Postage, when the individual has requested the copy be mailed. (g)(3) With the exception of information described in paragraphs (g)(2) and (g)(11) of this section, the facility must ensure that information is provided to each resident in a form and manner the resident can access and understand, including in an alternative format or in a language that the resident can understand. Summaries that translate information described in paragraph (g)(2) of this section may be made available to the patient at their request and expense in accordance with applicable law. (g)(4) The resident has the right to receive notices orally (meaning spoken) and in writing (including Braille) in a format and a language he or she understands, including: (i) Required notices as specified in this section. The facility must furnish to each resident a written description of legal rights which includes— (A) A description of the manner of protecting personal funds, under paragraph (f)(10) of this section; (B) A description of the requirements and procedures for establishing eligibility for Medicaid, including the right to request an assessment of resources under section 1924(c) of the Social Security Act. (C) A list of names, addresses (mailing and email), and telephone numbers of all pertinent State regulatory and informational agencies, resident advocacy groups such as the State Survey Agency, the State licensure office, the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman program, the protection and advocacy agency, adult protective services where state law provides for jurisdiction in long-term care facilities, the local contact agency for information about returning to the community and the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit; and (D) A statement that the resident may file a complaint with the State Survey Agency concerning any suspected violation of state or federal nursing facility regulations, including but not limited to resident abuse, neglect, exploitation, misappropriation of resident property in the facility, non-compliance with the advance directives requirements and requests for information regarding returning to the community. (ii) Information and contact information for State and local advocacy organizations including but not limited to the State Survey Agency, the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman program (established under section 712 of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended 2016 (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) and the protection and advocacy system (as designated by the state, and as established under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15001 et seq.)) (iii) Information regarding Medicare and Medicaid eligibility and coverage; (iv) Contact information for the Aging and Disability Resource Center (established under Section 202(a)(20)(B)(iii) of the Older Americans Act); or other No Wrong Door Program; (v) Contact information for the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit; and (vi) Information and contact information for filing grievances or complaints concerning any suspected violation of state or federal nursing facility regulations, including but not limited to resident abuse, neglect, exploitation, misappropriation of resident property in the facility, non-compliance with the advance directives requirements and requests for information regarding returning to the community. (g)(5) The facility must post, in a form and manner accessible and understandable to residents, resident representatives: (i) A list of names, addresses (mailing and email), and telephone numbers of all pertinent State agencies and advocacy groups, such as the State Survey Agency, the State licensure office, adult protective services where state law provides for jurisdiction in long-term care facilities, the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman program, the protection and advocacy network, home and community based service programs, and the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit; and (ii) A statement that the resident may file a complaint with the State Survey Agency concerning any suspected violation of state or federal nursing facility regulation, including but not limited to resident abuse, neglect, exploitation, misappropriation of resident property in the facility, and non-compliance with the advanced directives requirements (42 CFR part 489 subpart I) and requests for information regarding returning to the community. (g)(6) The resident has the right to have reasonable access to the use of a telephone, including TTY and TDD devices, and a place in the facility where calls can be made without being overheard. This includes the right to retain and use a cellular phone at the resident's own expense.

(g)(7) The facility must protect and facilitate that resident's right to communicate with individuals and entities within and external to the facility, including reasonable access to: (i) A telephone, including TTY and TDD services; (ii) The internet, to the extent available to the facility; and (iii) Stationery, postage, writing implements and the ability to send mail. (g)(8) The resident has the right to send and receive mail, and to receive letters, packages and other materials delivered to the facility for the resident through a means other than a postal service, including the right to: (i) Privacy of such communications consistent with this section; and (ii) Access to stationery, postage, and writing implements at the resident's own expense. (g)(9) The resident has the right to have reasonable access to and privacy in their use of electronic communications such as email and video communications and for internet research. (i) If the access is available to the facility (ii) At the resident's expense, if any additional expense is incurred by the facility to provide such access to the resident. (iii) Such use must comply with State and Federal law. (g)(10) The resident has the right to (i) Examine the results of the most recent survey of the facility conducted by Federal or State surveyors and any plan of correction in effect with respect to the facility; and (ii) Receive information from agencies acting as client advocates, and be afforded the opportunity to contact these agencies. (g)(11) The facility must— (i) Post in a place readily accessible to residents, and family members and legal representatives of residents, the results of the most recent survey of the facility. (ii) Have reports with respect to any surveys, certifications, and complaint investigations made respecting the facility during the 3 preceding years, and any plan of correction in effect with respect to the facility, available for any individual to review upon request; and (iii) Post notice of the availability of such reports in areas of the facility that are prominent and accessible to the public. (iv) The facility shall not make available identifying information about complainants or residents. (g)(12) The facility must comply with the requirements specified in 42 CFR part 489, subpart I (Advance Directives). (i) These requirements include provisions to inform and provide written information to all adult residents concerning the right to accept or refuse medical or surgical treatment and, at the resident's option, formulate an advance directive. (ii) This includes a written description of the facility's policies to implement advance directives and applicable State law. (iii) Facilities are permitted to contract with other entities to furnish this information but are still legally responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this section are met. (iv) If an adult individual is incapacitated at the time of admission and is unable to receive information or articulate whether or not he or she has executed an advance directive, the facility may give advance directive information to the individual's resident representative in accordance with State Law.

(v) The facility is not relieved of its obligation to provide this information to the individual once he or she is able to receive such information. Follow-up procedures must be in place to provide the information to the individual directly at the appropriate time. (g)(13) The facility must display in the facility written information, and provide to residents and applicants for admission, oral and written information about how to apply for and use Medicare and Medicaid benefits, and how to receive refunds for previous payments covered by such benefits. (g)(14) Notification of Changes. (i) A facility must immediately inform the resident; consult with the resident's physician; and notify, consistent with his or her authority, the resident representative(s) when there is— (A) An accident involving the resident which results in injury and has the potential for requiring physician intervention; (B) A significant change in the resident's physical, mental, or psychosocial status (that is, a deterioration in health, mental, or psychosocial status in either life-threatening conditions or clinical complications); (C) A need to alter treatment significantly (that is, a need to discontinue an existing form of treatment due to adverse consequences, or to commence a new form of treatment); or (D) A decision to transfer or discharge the resident from the facility as specified in §483.15(c)(1)(ii). (ii) When making notification under paragraph (g)(14)(i) of this section, the facility must ensure that all pertinent information specified in §483.15(c)(2) is available and provided upon request to the physician. (iii) The facility must also promptly notify the resident and the resident representative, if any, when there is— (A) A change in room or roommate assignment as specified in §483.10(e)(6); or (B) A change in resident rights under Federal or State law or regulations as specified in paragraph (e)(10) of this section. (iv) The facility must record and periodically update the address (mailing and email) and phone number of the resident representative(s). §483.10(g)(15) Admission to a composite distinct part. A facility that is a composite distinct part (as defined in §483.5) must disclose in its admission agreement its physical configuration, including the various locations that comprise the composite distinct part, and must specify the policies that apply to room changes between its different locations under §483.15(c)(9). (g)(17) The facility must— (i) Inform each Medicaid-eligible resident, in writing, at the time of admission to the nursing facility and when the resident becomes eligible for Medicaid of— (A) The items and services that are included in nursing facility services under the State plan and for which the resident may not be charged; (B) Those other items and services that the facility offers and for which the resident may be charged, and the amount of charges for those services; and (ii) Inform each Medicaid-eligible resident when changes are made to the items and services specified in §483.10(g)(17)(i)(A) and (B) of this section. (g)(18) The facility must inform each resident before, or at the time of admission, and periodically during the resident's stay, of services available in the facility and of charges for those services, including any charges for services not covered under Medicare/ Medicaid or by the facility's per diem rate. (i) Where changes in coverage are made to items and services covered by Medicare and/or by the Medicaid State plan, the facility must provide notice to residents of the change as soon as is reasonably possible. (ii) Where changes are made to charges for other items and services that the facility offers, the facility must inform the resident in writing at least 60 days prior to implementation of the change. (iii) If a resident dies or is hospitalized or is transferred and does not return to the facility, the facility must refund to the resident, resident representative, or estate, as applicable, any deposit or charges already paid, less the facility's per diem rate, for the days the resident actually resided or reserved or retained a bed in the facility, regardless of any minimum stay or discharge notice requirements. (iv) The facility must refund to the resident or resident representative any and all refunds due the resident within 30 days from the resident's date of discharge from the facility. (v) The terms of an admission contract by or on behalf of an individual seeking admission to the facility must not conflict with the requirements of these regulations.

(h) **Privacy and Confidentiality.** The resident has a right to personal privacy and confidentiality of his or her personal and medical records. §483.10(h)(1) Personal privacy includes accommodations, medical treatment, written and telephone communications, personal care, visits, and meetings of family and resident groups, but this does not require the facility to provide a private room for each resident. §483.10(h)(2) The facility must respect the residents right to personal privacy, including the right to privacy in his or her oral (that is, spoken), written, and electronic communications, including the right to send and promptly receive unopened mail and other letters, packages and other materials delivered to the facility for the resident, including those delivered through a means other than a postal service. §483.10(h)(3) The resident has a right to secure and confidential personal and medical records. (i) The resident has the right to refuse the release of personal and medical records except as provided at §483.70(i)(2) or other applicable federal or state laws. (ii) The facility must allow representatives of the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman to examine a resident's medical, social, and administrative records in accordance with State law.

(i) **Safe Environment.** The resident has a right to a safe, clean, comfortable and homelike environment, including but not limited to receiving treatment and supports for daily living safely. The facility must provide— (i)(1) A safe, clean, comfortable, and homelike environment, allowing the resident to use his or her personal belongings to the extent possible. (ii) This includes ensuring that the resident can receive care and services safely and that the physical layout of the facility maximizes resident independence and does not pose a safety risk. (ii) The facility shall exercise reasonable care for the protection of the resident's property from loss or theft. (i)(2) Housekeeping and maintenance services necessary to maintain a sanitary, orderly, and comfortable interior; (i)(3) Clean bed and bath linens that are in good condition; (i)(4) Private closet space in each resident room, as specified in §483.90(e)(2)(iv); (i)(5) Adequate and comfortable lighting levels in all areas; (i)(6) Comfortable and safe temperature levels. Facilities initially certified after October 1, 1990 must maintain a temperature range of 71 to 81°F; and (i)(7) For the maintenance of comfortable sound levels.

(j) **Grievances.** §483.10(j)(1) The resident has the right to voice grievances to the facility or other agency or entity that hears grievances without discrimination or reprisal and without fear of discrimination or reprisal. Such grievances include those with respect to care and treatment which has been furnished as well as that which has not been furnished, the behavior of staff and of other residents, and other concerns regarding their LTC facility stay. §483.10(j)(2) The resident has the right to and the facility must make prompt efforts by the facility to resolve grievances the resident may have, in accordance with this paragraph. §483.10(j)(3) The facility must make information on how to file a grievance or complaint available to the resident. §483.10(j)(4) The facility must establish a grievance policy to ensure the prompt resolution of all grievances regarding the residents' rights contained in this paragraph. Upon request, the provider must give a copy of the grievance policy to the resident. The grievance policy must include: (i) Notifying resident individually or through postings in prominent locations throughout the facility of the right to file grievances orally (meaning spoken) or in writing; the right to file grievances anonymously; the contact information of the grievance official with whom a grievance can be filed, that is, his or her name, business address (mailing and email) and business phone number; a reasonable expected time frame for completing the review of the grievance; the right to obtain a written decision regarding his or her grievance; and the contact information of independent entities with whom grievances may be filed, that is, the pertinent State agency, Quality Improvement Organization, State Survey Agency and State Long-Term Care Ombudsman program or protection and advocacy system; (ii) Identifying a Grievance Official who is responsible for overseeing the grievance process, receiving and tracking grievances through to their conclusions; leading any necessary investigations by the facility; maintaining the confidentiality of all information associated with grievances, for example, the identity of the resident for those grievances submitted anonymously, issuing written grievance decisions to the resident; and coordinating with state and federal agencies as necessary in light of specific allegations; (iii) As necessary, taking immediate action to prevent further potential violations of any resident right while the alleged violation is being investigated; (iv) Consistent with §483.12(c)(1), immediately reporting all alleged violations involving neglect, abuse, including injuries of unknown source, and/or misappropriation of resident property, by anyone furnishing services on behalf of the provider, to the administrator of the provider; and as required by State law; (v) Ensuring that all written grievance decisions include the date the grievance was received, a summary statement of the resident's grievance, the steps taken to investigate the grievance, a summary of the pertinent findings or conclusions regarding the resident's concern(s), a statement as to whether the grievance was confirmed or not confirmed, any corrective action taken or to be taken by the facility as a result of the grievance, and the date the written decision was issued; (vi) Taking appropriate corrective action in accordance with State law if the alleged violation of the residents' rights is confirmed by the facility or if an outside entity having jurisdiction, such as the State Survey Agency, Quality Improvement Organization, or local law enforcement agency confirms a violation for any of these residents' rights within its area of responsibility; and (vii) Maintaining evidence demonstrating the result of all grievances for a period of 90 days less than 3 years from the issuance of the grievance decision.

(k) **Contact with External Entities.** A facility must not prohibit or in any way discourage a resident from communicating with federal, state, or local officials, including, but not limited to, federal and state surveyors, other federal or state health department employees, including representatives of the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman and any representative of the agency responsible for the protection and advocacy system for individuals with mental disorder (established under the Protection and Advocacy for Mentally Ill Individuals Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 10801 et seq.), regarding any matter, whether or not subject to arbitration or any other type of judicial or regulatory action.