



## **SEXUAL RIGHTS STATEMENT**

**People with disabilities have the right to:**

**1. Have body integrity, privacy and personal choice respected, including the right to know how to protect oneself.**

"I have the right to say what happens to and with my body. I have the right to privacy in showing and sharing my sexuality. I have the right to make my own choices about my sexuality. I have the right to learn how to keep myself safe from someone hurting me sexually and to use what I learned to help keep me safe."

**2. Be free from sexual harassment, abuse, assault and other forms of sexual violence.**

"I have a right to be safe and feel safe. It is wrong for anybody to hurt my body or my mind. Some things that hurt my body or mind are

- looking at or touching my private parts without permission
- making me touch someone else's private parts
- making me have sex without my permission
- saying things about my private parts
- showing me sexual pictures that I don't want to see

**3. Explore and define one's own sexuality, sexual orientation, gender identity and sexual expression without judgement or discrimination.**

"I have the right explore and to say if I am a man, a woman, a combination of both, or neither. I have the right to choose who I want to have a sexual relationship with. I have a right to choose how I define my sexuality and sexual expression, and have those choices respected."

#### **4. Decide whether and when to be sexually active.**

"I have the right to decide if I do or don't want to have sex or sexual activity. I have a right to change my mind."

#### **5. Choose one's own sexual partners and have privacy and dignity related to dating and sexual intimacy.**

"I have a right to choose who I want to date, where I go on dates, and to have privacy when I go on dates. I also have a right to not go on dates and not have sexual intimacy. I have a right to have my choices on who I date, where I go, and my sexual intimacy respected. Sexual intimacy can include hugging, touching, and kissing."

#### **6. Have safe and pleasurable sexual experiences.**

"I have the right to be safe and feel good when having sex or sexual activities."

#### **7. Decide whether, when and whom to marry and then having equality in any marriage.**

"I can decide if I want to get married, when I want to marry, and who I want to marry. My marriage will be equal to anyone else's marriage."

#### **8. Decide whether, when and by what means to have a child or children, how many children to have and the spacing of one's children.**

"I have the right to decide if I want to have children or not. I can also decide when and how many children I want to have. I can decide how I want to have children whether it be by myself, naturally, adoption, surrogacy, or a with medical help."

**9. Have readily available and equal access to education and information about sex, safe/healthy sexual relationships and reproductive health including but not limited to: resources, services, counseling, family planning, contraceptive services, sex therapy services, and sexual equipment as well as resources specific to the prevention of, investigation of and trauma-informed response to sexual abuse.**

"I have a right to learn about sex, safe and healthy sexual relationships, and reproductive health. I have to learn about condoms, birth control, and other ways of preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases to keep both myself and my partner safe. I have a right to learn about ways to help prevent sexual abuse. If I have experienced sexual abuse, I also have a right to ask for and get help and services in a way that works best for me. Help and services can include counseling and support from a sexual assault center.

**10. The right to receive that education, information, services and resources in a way that is free from discrimination, recognizes and supports one's own choices and interests, and promotes trauma-informed practices.**

"I have a right to get information and learn in a way that I can best understand through videos, large print, audio, pictures, easy-to-understand language, or a combination of all. I can choose what education, information, services and resources I want, and a right to have those choices respected."

**11. Have the highest attainable standard of sexual health.**

"Sexual health is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality. It is not just about being free of sexually transmitted diseases or not being able to have sexual activity in a way that works best for a person. I have a right to a positive and respectful approach to my sexuality and sexual relationships. I have the right to pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. I have a right to my sexual health being respected, protected, and fulfilled.

## **12. Have an effective remedy for violations of fundamental rights.**

“I have a right speak up and speak out if someone has hurt my body or my mind. I have a right to tell someone if my rights have been violated. Some of the places or people I can tell include

- Family or friends
- Staff at my agency
- Doctor, nurse, counselor or therapist
- The Human Rights Committee at my agency
- The Illinois Department of Human Services
- Illinois Guardianship and Advocacy Commission
- Equip for Equality

### **References:**

- World Health Organization. “A Time to Lead: A Roadmap for Progress on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Worldwide” (2006; Updated 2010)
- The National Disability Authority. <http://www.nda.ie/>. Item 18.9.
- Illinois Imagines: Sexual Rights of Women with Disabilities
- Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code (405 ILCS 5/2-100, 101.1, 102, 103, 112 and 5/4-211)

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