

WHEREAS; individuals receiving services for developmental disabilities, mental health challenges, and substance use disorder deserve to be treated with dignity and respect; and

WHEREAS; Wisconsin has been a national leader in promoting and protecting client rights; and

WHEREAS; the relationship between service providers and recipients is more collaborative and results in improved treatment through the application of 33 rules introduced in Wis. Stat. Â§ 51.61 that guide service delivery, communications, privacy, and records; and

WHEREAS; clients have an opportunity to advocate for themselves through a grievance process that helps identify issues with their care and offers opportunities to educate service providers on best practices; and

WHEREAS; the Client Rights Office at the Wisconsin Department of Health Services is committed to working with clients and providers to ensure services follow Wisconsin client rights law; and

WHEREAS; 2026 marks 50 years of client rights enumerated in Wis. Stat. Â§ 51.61 being applied to individuals with developmental disabilities, mental health challenges, and substance use disorder after going into effect September 4, 1976; and

WHEREAS; client rights staff at the state and local level, service providers, and community advocates continue the work begun 50 years ago to advance the humane, dignified treatment of clients;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,
do hereby proclaim August 31 – September 4 2026 as

CLIENT RIGHTS AWARENESS WEEK

throughout the State of Wisconsin and I commend this observance
to all our state’s residents.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this 24th day of August 2026.

TONY EVERS, Governor

By the Governor:

SARAH GODLEWSKI, Secretary of State