

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1343**

Introduced by

Representatives Vetter, Devlin, Fegley, Paur, Richter, Rohr, M. Ruby, Vigesaa, Westlind

Senators Clemens, O. Larsen, K. Roers

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact subsection 1 of section 50-10.2-02 of the North Dakota  
2 Century Code, relating to rights of health care facility residents to use electronic communication.

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

4 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Subsection 1 of section 50-10.2-02 of the North Dakota  
5 Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

- 6 1. All facilities shall, upon a resident's admission, provide in hand to the resident and a  
7 member of the resident's immediate family or any existing legal guardian of the  
8 resident a statement of the resident's rights while living in the facility. Within thirty days  
9 after admission, the statement must be orally explained to the resident and, if the  
10 resident is unable to understand, to the resident's immediate family member or  
11 members and any existing legal guardian of the resident, and thereafter annually so  
12 long as the resident remains in the facility. The statement must include rights,  
13 responsibilities of both the resident and the facility, and rules governing resident  
14 conduct. Facilities shall treat residents in accordance with provisions of the statement.  
15 The statement must include provisions ensuring each resident the following minimum  
16 rights:
- 17 a. The right to civil and religious liberties, including knowledge of available choices,  
18 the right to independent personal decisions without infringement, and the right to  
19 encouragement and assistance from the staff of the facility to promote the fullest  
20 possible exercise of these rights.
  - 21 b. The right to have private meetings, associations, and communications with any  
22 person of the resident's choice within the facility.
  - 23 c. The right of each resident, the resident's immediate family, any existing legal  
24 guardian of the resident, friends, facility staff, and other persons to present

1 complaints on the behalf of the resident to the facility's staff, the facility's  
2 administrator, governmental officials, or to any other person, without fear of  
3 reprisal, interference, coercion, discrimination, or restraint. The facility shall adopt  
4 a grievance process and make the process known to each resident and, if the  
5 resident is unable to understand, to the resident's immediate family member or  
6 members and any existing legal guardian of the resident. An individual making a  
7 complaint in good faith is immune from any civil liability that otherwise might  
8 result from making the complaint.

- 9 d. The right to send and receive unopened personal mail and electronic mail and  
10 the right of access to and use of telephones and electronic devices for private  
11 conversations.
- 12 e. The right to assured private visits by one's spouse, or if both are residents of the  
13 same facility, the right to share a room, within the capacity of the facility, unless  
14 sharing a room is not medically advisable as documented in the medical records  
15 by the attending physician.
- 16 f. The right to manage one's own financial affairs if not under legal guardianship, or  
17 to delegate that responsibility in writing to the administrator or manager of the  
18 facility, but only to the extent of funds held in trust by the facility for the resident. If  
19 such a trust is established, then a written quarterly accounting of any transactions  
20 made on behalf of the resident must be furnished along with an explanation by  
21 the facility to the resident or the person legally responsible for the resident.
- 22 g. The right to be fully informed in writing prior to or at the time of admission and  
23 during one's stay, of services provided and the charges for those services,  
24 including ancillary charges. Residents, or their legal guardians, must be informed  
25 at least thirty days prior to any change in the costs or availability of the services.  
26 No facility may demand or receive any advance payment or gratuity to assure  
27 admission.
- 28 h. The right to be adequately informed of one's medical condition and proposed  
29 treatment and to participate in the planning of all medical treatment, including the  
30 right to refuse medication and treatment, to be discharged from the facility upon

- 1 written request, and to be notified by the resident's attending physician of the  
2 medical consequences of any such actions.
- 3 i. The right to have privacy in treatment and in caring for personal needs, to use  
4 personal belongings, to have security in storing and using personal possessions,  
5 and to have confidentiality in the treatment of personal and medical records. The  
6 resident has the right to view, and authorize release of, any personal or medical  
7 records.
- 8 j. The right to be treated courteously, fairly, and with the fullest measure of dignity.
- 9 k. The right to be free from mental and physical abuse and the right to be free from  
10 physical or chemical restraint except in documented emergencies or when  
11 necessary to protect the resident from injury to self or to others. In such cases,  
12 the restraint must be authorized and documented by a physician for a limited  
13 period of time and, if the restraint is a chemical one, it must be administered by a  
14 licensed nurse or physician. Except as provided in this subdivision, drugs or  
15 physical restraints may not be used or threatened to be used for the purposes of  
16 punishment, for the convenience of staff, for behavior conditioning, as a  
17 substitute for rehabilitation or treatment, or for any other purpose not part of an  
18 approved treatment plan.
- 19 l. The right not to be transferred or discharged except for:
- 20 (1) Medical reasons;
- 21 (2) The resident's welfare or that of other residents;
- 22 (3) Nonpayment of one's rent or fees; or
- 23 (4) A temporary transfer during times of remodeling.
- 24 m. The right to receive at least a thirty-day written advance notice of any transfer or  
25 discharge when the resident is being discharged to another facility or the  
26 resident's own home, or when the resident is being transferred or discharged  
27 because of a change in the resident's level of care; however, advance notice of  
28 transfer or discharge may be less than thirty days if the resident has urgent  
29 medical needs that require a more immediate transfer or discharge, or a more  
30 immediate transfer or discharge is required to protect the health and safety of  
31 residents and staff within the facility.

- 1           n.    The right to refuse to perform services on behalf of the facility, unless agreed to  
2                    by the resident or legal guardian and established in the plan of care.
- 3           o.    The right to a claim for relief against a facility for any violation of rights  
4                    guaranteed under this chapter.
- 5           p.    The right to have each facility display a notice that the following information is  
6                    available for public review and make the information available on request:
- 7                    (1)   A complete copy of every inspection report, deficiency report, and plan of  
8                         correction the facility received during the previous two years.
- 9                    (2)   The facility's grievance process.
- 10                  (3)   A copy of the statement of ownership, board membership, and partners.
- 11                  (4)   A statement of ownership setting forth any conflict of interest in the  
12                         operation of the facility.
- 13           q.    The right to a pharmacist of the resident's choice irrespective of the type of  
14                    medication distribution system used by the facility.
- 15           r.    The right to not be discriminated against by a facility in the admissions process or  
16                    in the provision of appropriate care on the basis of the resident's source of  
17                    payment to the facility. Any applicant for admission to a facility who is denied  
18                    admission must be given the reason for the denial in writing upon request.
- 19           s.    The right of residents and their families to organize, maintain, and participate in  
20                    resident advisory and family councils.
- 21           t.    The right of residents receiving services performed by a provider from outside the  
22                    facility to be informed, on request, of the identity of the provider.