

## **Community Living Guidelines**

*Heart and Home (H+H) Women's Shelter*



*Heart and Home Women's Shelter* is a collaboration between participants, staff and volunteers. This agreement explains the rules, responsibilities and rights of all collaborators, and helps all of us be co-creators of this shelter experience. When you sign this agreement, you are agreeing to participate in making the shelter safe and welcoming for all participants, staff and volunteers.

*Safe and Welcoming* means more than just physically safe. H+H works together with our host churches to ensure that the physical space is safe and habitable. Safety also includes how people treat each other. All participants in this collaboration commit to the following behaviors:

- We use kind and appropriate language.
- We assume first that everyone's intention is good.
- We don't offer unasked-for opinions.
- We don't criticize those who are not present.
- When we make a mistake, we apologize. We are accountable to the community and take ownership of the impact of our behavior on others.
- We focus on our own business and responsibilities. We use time available to rest, heal and plan for our future.
- We recognize that during shelter, we will encounter all kinds of people. Some of them may be like us, others not. We accept that we will have differences of opinion.
- We recognize that we may not become friends with everyone we meet at shelter, and that's ok.
- We communicate our boundaries with others in an appropriate way.
- We respect reasonable boundaries that others set.
- We ask for help when we need it.
- We don't get in the way of another person doing their work assignments.
- We understand that sometimes individual compromise is necessary for the shelter to function.
- We protect each other's confidentiality.

## Participant Rules

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In order to maintain a safe and harmonious living environment for everyone in the shelter community, H+H asks that all participants agree to the following rules:

### **30-DAY PROVISIONAL ADMISSION, 14-DAY EXTENSIONS**

Each participant who is admitted to the shelter will be initially admitted for 30 days. At the end of those 30 days, she may be invited to continue for another 14 days., or asked to leave. Every 14 days, each participant will again either be extended by 14 days, or asked to leave. There will be no reasons given for a 30-day discharge, or a 14-day renewal discharge. A participant may be asked to leave after 30 days, or after a 14 day renewal period even if she has not received any formal warnings for specific rule violations.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Participants are expected to be at the shelter each night of their stay. Participants should inform a shelter staff member in writing, using the Communication Form, if they will be absent from the shelter for a night. **\*\*DUE TO COVID-19, THERE WILL BE NO ABSENCES UNLESS PRE-APPROVED BY SHELTER DIRECTORS (TO LIMIT COMMUNITY EXPOSURE). IN ORDER TO RETURN TO SHELTER AFTER AN ABSENCE, A PARTICIPANT MUST PROVIDE A DOCTOR'S NOTE OR PROGRAM DISCHARGE PAPERWORK, AND MAY BE REQUIRED TO SHOW A NEGATIVE COVID-19 TEST FOR RE-ADMITTANCE.\*\*** If a participant is absent from the program for more than 4 consecutive nights without communication with a staff member or a program director , her bed will be given to someone on the waiting list. In this case, the participant is welcome to place her name back on the waiting list for the shelter.

### **CURFEW**

We open at 7pm (unless otherwise instructed by the staff) you need to be indoors 30 minutes before lights out at 830pm. If you need to arrive later in the evening due to work you will need to show proof of a work or school schedule. Ex. If lights are out at 9pm daily, then you need to be indoors by 830pm.

### **TIMELINESS**

Participants may arrive at the shelter no earlier than 7:00 p.m (Unless otherwise stated). each night, and are requested to arrive at the shelter no later than 8:30 p.m. each night, so that the facility may be secured in a timely fashion. For safety reasons, the doors to the shelter will be locked at 10:00 p.m. each night. Please notify a staff member the night before or call 650-600-1555 any time to let a program director know if you will be arriving after 9:00 p.m. on any given night, so staff knows to open the door for you. Participants are expected to leave the facility no later than 6:50 a.m., as the host churches start setting up their daycare facility at that time.

**ILLNESSES / COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

To protect the safety of all program participants, anyone with a contagious illness such as TB, chicken pox, pink eye, lice, scabies, COVID-19, etc., will be immediately discharged from the facility to prevent the spread of communicable illness. Participants discharged in this manner will be placed on "automatic return" status. Once the participant has provided shelter staff or program directors with a medical release signed by a physician indicating that the condition is resolved and a bed becomes available, the participant can immediately return. Staff will attempt to provide referrals and transportation to a suitable medical service, should this situation arise.

**COVID-19 PROCEDURES**

Because COVID-19 is transmitted by aerosol particles from our breath, staff, volunteers and participants must wear masks to cover mouth and nose at all times and at all locations throughout the shelter site. Maintain six feet distance. Temperatures will be required to enter the shelter, refusal to do so will result in you not being allowed onsite. If you do arrive with any symptoms or fever about 100 degrees, you will be referred to the emergency room for follow up and testing, and not allowed in. You may return after you have received your negative test and a doctor's note stating you are in no way contagious.

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In the event of an emergency, please calmly and quietly follow the direction of the staff or emergency personnel. Program staff will call 9-1-1 if necessary. Clients should call 9-1-1 only if the program staff is unable to do so. If it is necessary to evacuate the facility, follow the posted evacuation route signs. Staff and program participants should meet according to the evacuation plan posted by the host facility. If this location is also unsafe, staff and program participants should proceed to a safer place identified by staff.

**WEAPONS**

H+H operates a safe living environment. Absolutely no weapons are allowed at the shelter. Having a weapon, or threatening any person (participant, staff or volunteer) will be grounds for immediate dismissal and banning from the shelter for the duration of the season. If you arrive with a weapon, you may freely give it to a staff member who will lock it in the lockbox in the storage trailer. You may retrieve it in the morning before leaving shelter the next day. If asked by a staff member whether you have a weapon and you do, you may give it to the staff member at that time to store in the lockbox. If you hide or lie about a weapon, you will be dismissed from the program and banned for the duration of the shelter season. **NO WARNING WILL BE GIVEN.** Weapons shall include guns, knives (even swiss-army-type knives), Tasers, mace or pepper spray, and all other devices whose primary purpose is to injure or kill. In addition, any object or substance used to attack or threaten another person will be treated as a weapon, even if not locked up. In the event of a threat of violence or violent act, staff may contact the appropriate legal authorities, even if the participant is no longer on the shelter premises.

**VIOLENCE**

Absolutely no physical assault, gestures, or threats of violence directed toward H+H staff, volunteers, or other participants will be tolerated. Violence, threats of violence, or threats with a weapon are grounds for immediate dismissal from the program and for the duration of the shelter season. Staff may request intervention by police or other emergency personnel if they deem it necessary.

**MONEY & SOLICITING WORK**

Every participant is responsible for their own finances. Heart and Home will not allow participants to exchange/borrow money or any currency. Participants are not allowed to solicit any work for one another in exchange for payments. We will not be held responsible for unpaid debts.

**DRY SHELTER**

The shelter is a dry shelter. Participants, staff, and volunteers may not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while at the shelter. Participants who are found using or under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be issued a warning and asked to leave the facility for the night.

Absolutely no drugs or alcohol are allowed at the shelter. Any program participant found to be selling or storing drugs or alcohol will be given a Warning. Over-the-counter and legal prescription pills are allowed onsite. Program participants should keep these medications on their person or in their bags. If safety is a concern, consider checking the bottle into the lockbox and just removing the pills you need to take each night.

**LOCKBOX**

A lockbox is available for participant use. A participant may choose to store in the lockbox the following kinds of items: valuables, weapons (though H+H strongly prefers them not be on shelter premises at all), prescription or over-the-counter medication. A staff member may also ask that the participant store an item in the lockbox based on program guidelines or their own discretion.

Items will be kept overnight in the lockbox inside the shelter's storage trailer and will be returned to participants the following morning. Only staff members may access this box. Items that are checked in should be labeled with their owner's name and must be removed from the trailer each morning; items will not be removed from any bag or cover that they are kept in. Please note that staff will not check in any substances or objects, any alcohol, or cannabis products, food items (those can be stored in the kitchen), items containing pests (including bedbugs, ants, or maggots), or pets.

**DRUG TESTS**

New participants will not be asked to provide proof of sobriety in order to enter the program, but participants will be asked to leave the shelter for the night if they engage in any inappropriate behavior and may be asked to take a drug or alcohol test, at staff's discretion. If a participant does not want to be subject to a drug test, she will be asked to leave the shelter for the night and issued a warning.

**APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE**

Absolutely no verbal abuse including offensive language, harassment, bullying, or racial or bigoted slurs directed toward H+H staff, volunteers, or other participants will be tolerated. Bullying is seeking to harm, intimidate, or coerce (someone perceived as vulnerable). Examples include, whispering under your breath, making rude or offensive comments about another person, making faces or threatening gestures, gossiping about one person to others, spreading rumors, habitually telling on clients in hopes of getting them kicked out of the program, telling other clients what to do, encouraging others to join together with you against some other person, or any other behavior intended to intimidate or isolate another person. Any of these behaviors is grounds for a Warning, and the participant may be asked to leave the shelter for the night.

**SEXUAL CONDUCT AND PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES**

Absolutely no sexual contact, sexual harassment or other sexual activities shall occur at the shelter. This shall include sexual intercourse, oral sex, and kissing. Nudity is not allowed, and participants must be fully clothed during all hours. If you need to change your clothes, please do it in a stall in the bathroom. During sleeping you must have a shirt and pants on. Participants may direct any questions about the appropriateness of behaviors not explicitly mentioned to staff.

In general, respect the physical boundaries of others at the shelter; it is best to ask before initiating any form of physical contact (including friendly hugs and sympathetically holding hands) and entering another participant's living space. If someone has expressed discomfort with something you are doing, please stop doing it and involve a staff member.

**FRAGRANCE AND ODOR POLICY**

The shelter is a low-odor environment. Products with strong odors, such as flowers, perfumes, aerosols, fragrances, or scented lotions are not allowed. This also includes any tiger balms, essential oils, air fresheners, or icy hot products. While the shelter excludes strongly scented products, it cannot be made a completely fragrance-free environment. If you are highly sensitive, you are advised to wear a mask until the odor is aired out or dissipates in order to care for your own health. Please keep in mind that necessary cleaning products or hand sanitizers cannot be eliminated due to odors.

**INSPECTIONS**

In order to maintain the safety of all program participants, as well as the cleanliness of the program facility, inspections of participants' personal belongings may be conducted when the shelter staff believes that a participant may have items in their personal belongings that may threaten the health or well-being of other participants including (but not exclusively) drugs or drug paraphernalia, weapons, pests, or pets. If a participant or volunteer sees such items among the participant's belongings or hears the participant mention that she is in possession of

such items, they must inform staff immediately. The staff person will evaluate that statement and, if she feels it is necessary, will ask to inspect the participant's belongings. The staff person must clearly state the reason she believes there is cause for a search to the participant before making this request. If a participant does not want to be subject to an inspection, she has the option to instead leave her bag outside the shelter facility (e.g., in her car or storage area) for the rest of her stay in the program, or to discharge from the program and immediately leave the program facility.

### **WARNINGS AND DISCHARGE**

Failure to comply with these shelter rules can result in a written verbal warning, a written warning, a suspension or a discharge notice from staff. Staff will detail the reasons for the notice and provide a copy to the participant. Incidents that involve more than one participant may result in all the participants receiving warnings, suspensions or discharges. Clients may dispute a warning by filling out a Communication Form. Please also refer to the Warnings and Discharge Policy for more in depth description.

### **SMOKING**

Smoking is not permitted inside the shelter. The smoking area of every church is only on public property, specifically the sidewalk. Consult with staff for information about smoking areas and rules in each shelter location. Smoking after doors locked is absolutely not allowed, due to safety concerns of participants and staff.

### **STORAGE**

H+H does not store any belongings for non-participants and/or past participants. Clients who discharge from the program must take all their personal belongings with them at the time of discharge. Personal belongings left in the program facility after a participant discharges may be disposed of by program staff after 7 days. Storage allotted for each participant while in shelter will consist of one personal bag (a purse or bag that leaves with you daily) and one 30 gallon bag. This is separate from the sleeping/linen kit that is provided. The designated storage areas, including the trailer, are limited to staff and volunteers only.

### **CLEANLINESS**

Program participants will be assigned a bed space for the duration of their stay. Clients are expected to keep their individual living spaces neat and clean. For safety reasons, candles, incense, hot plates, any kind of plants, heaters, fans, lamps, open flames or heating elements are forbidden. All remains of food need to be either thrown out or stored appropriately in the kitchen before lights out the same night. You may keep a closed bottle of water near your sleeping space overnight. There shall be no fort building as this can create a safety hazard. Personal trash should be immediately recycled or disposed of in trash cans, in accordance with Palo Alto's guidelines on trash breakdown. Facility cleanliness, including participant living spaces, will be monitored by regular inspections.

**HELPING TO CLEAN THE SHELTER**

Participants are required to participate in cleaning the shelter on a daily basis. At the beginning of each shelter you will be assigned a task. It is your responsibility to ensure that your task is done everyday. When extra help is needed, for example when there are too few volunteers, additional chores may be required. If a participant has a medical condition that prevents her from helping, she should let the staff member know so that a more appropriate task can be assigned. The request must be accompanied by a doctor's note to outline the limitations.

**FACILITIES MAINTENANCE / HEALTH / SAFETY**

Clients should report maintenance needs immediately to program staff who will refer the needs to the appropriate party. Participants should not report maintenance issues to anyone besides H+H program staff. Program participants will be held responsible for any destruction of property belonging to H+H and our host sites.

**What You Can Expect from Heart and Home:**

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Heart and Home Collaborative members (participants, staff and volunteers) all create a safe, welcoming living environment together. Please see the following for details. Any changes to these policies will be announced at weekly mandatory house meetings and/or individually to each participant at the shelter.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

H+H clients, staff and volunteers are required by law to protect our participants' confidentiality. For this reason, staff cannot confirm nor deny any participant's involvement in this program without a signed consent. Staff are also not able to discuss any other participant's information with other participants. Please do not take any photos of other participants or reveal to any other people the names or identifying information of any program participants to anyone outside of H+H. Please do not also give out our location information to anyone. If you are being dropped or picked up by someone please do so a few doors down. Sharing information with anyone other than staff about other clients is a violation of our confidentiality. Doing so will result in a write up. If you have comments or concerns please use the communication forms to convey those comments/concerns. Refer to the Confidentiality agreement.

**COMMUNICATION AT SHELTER**

Please use the Communication Forms whenever you need to make a suggestion or request, or to express a concern. Using the forms helps staff keep track of participants' needs, and be sure that follow-up happens. You may use the form for all kinds of communication, including requesting an absence, offering a suggestion, informing staff you have a complaint, and appealing a staff decision. You may submit Communication Forms with your name or anonymously. (In the case of an absence request, your name is required). If you want staff to get back to you, you need to put your name on the form.

## **LENGTH OF STAY**

Participants will be given provisional admission to the shelter for 30 days when they are first accepted. Stays will be extended in 14-day intervals. Please see the 30-day provisional policy above for more details. Participants are urged to be proactive in planning for their time after discharge from the shelter, and encouraged to take advantage of any longer-term housing options that become available at any time during their shelter stay. The shelter is open from 7:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m. daily.

## **SCHEDULE (note - subject to change; you will be informed of any changes)**

- a. 7:00 p.m.: Shelter Opens.
- b. 7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.: Arrive at the shelter. Please notify a staff member the night before or call 650-600-1555 to let staff know if you will be arriving after 9:00 p.m.
- c. 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.: Volunteers and participants set up the sleeping area and dining area, and heat up dinner.
- d. 8:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.: Dinner is served. Staff will save a late plate for you, if you notify staff of your planned late arrival and ask for a plate. .See “Timeliness” section above for details about late arrival.
- e. 8:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.: If County Health Regulations allow, you can pack your on-the-go breakfast for the next day. Lunch materials may be available. Please review COVID-19 guidelines for information about open kitchen and snacking.
- f. 9:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.: Volunteers and participants start cleaning the kitchen and dining area.
- g. 9:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.: Quiet hours. All participants should be in the sleeping area. Lights will be dimmed and no loud disruptions.
- h. 10:00 p.m. – 5:30 a.m.: Lights out. All participants should be in the sleeping area. Doors will be locked
- i. 5:30 a.m. – 6:00 a.m.: Wake Up.
- j. 5:45 a.m. – 6:30 a.m.: Coffee / tea will be available.
- k. 5:45 a.m. – 6:30 a.m.: Get ready, pack up your bedding and belongings, and take your mattress, bedding, and personal items to the trailer.
- l. 6:30 a.m. – 7:00 a.m.: Participants clean the sleeping area, kitchen, and bathrooms.
- m. 6:50 a.m.: Shelter closes. All participants are required to leave the facility at this time.

**QUIET TIME AND NOISE DISTURBANCES**

During the hours of 10:00 pm to 5:30 am, the shelter is on Quiet Time. You are permitted to be awake before wake up time, however the lights may not be turned on until the scheduled time. Getting ready before wake up time should be done as quietly as possible. Alarms are permitted, however, they are expected to be kept very quiet and low-key. Alarms should not be heard across the room. Listening to music is acceptable wearing headphones, and others should not be able to hear your music. Other noise disturbances including yelling, loud conversations, or conversations across the room are not allowed during Quiet Time.

**BEDDING**

H+H will assign each participant one sleeping pad, a pillow, sheets, and blankets to use while at the shelter. Additional pillows and sheets are available upon request. Clients with medical issues that require them to sleep higher off the ground may request an extra sleeping pad; staff will need a doctor's note in order to accommodate this request. Clients are required to return all bedding items to H+H upon discharge.

**FOOD**

Dinner and on-the-go breakfast options are provided for participants; if there are leftovers, participants may pack a lunch to take out of the shelter. Participants may bring personal food into the program facility, but staff or kitchen volunteers may discard the food if it spoils. Participants will be limited to a maximum of 3 items per client, to store in the fridge. Refrigerated items should be labeled with the participants' name and the date when it was put into the fridge. Items that are over a week old will be discarded from the fridge every Sunday. Personal food may not be put into a participant's personal onsite storage space. All food must be stored along with the food for the shelter.

**PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Clients may have with them the equivalent of one large (30-gal.) bag of belongings during the program and one personal bag that leaves daily with the participant. The large bag may be stored in the trailer during the day while Shelter is operating. Participants should allow time in the morning to store their bag in time to leave shelter by 7 am. Participants are required to take ALL belongings with them upon discharge. Items stored in the trailer must be placed in a sealed bag; H+H will provide bags if participants don't have one.

Participants may not surround their sleeping areas with personal possessions that impede passage between beds, or block windows, electrical outlets or doors. Tents, forts, chair barricades or other barriers are not allowed, for personal and fire safety reasons.

H+H is NOT responsible for personal belongings lost, misplaced, or stolen during the participant's stay or for items left behind when the participant discharges. Participants are responsible for safeguarding their own possessions, including keeping track of where they were last left. Occasionally, if you have left some of your personal belongings in an area that is part of the public space, staff will move your belongings so that they are not in the way. When this happens, it is STILL your responsibility to keep track of your belongings, and H+H is STILL not responsible for safeguarding them. If you are having trouble locating some of your belongings, please first retrace your steps to see they have been misplaced and feel free to ask staff to help locate them. Program participants will be held responsible for any destruction or theft of other participants' property.

### **LAUNDRY**

Heart and Home only provides laundering for the sheets and blankets you are issued while in shelter. No personal laundry is accepted. If you need any clean bedding, please turn in your old bedding and it will be replaced with any available clean bedding. H+H cannot hold or return specific bedding to participants.

### **VOLUNTEERS AND WORKSHOPS**

Volunteers from Stanford and/or other local communities will be at the shelter every night, health regulations permitting. In addition, workshops and community activities may be held. Information about workshop times and topics will be published in the program's online Google calendar and advertised at the shelter. Clients are encouraged to make suggestions and provide feedback on workshop topics. Participation in activities and interacting with volunteers is optional, but H+H hopes that by working together we can find ways for everyone to get something positive out of these activities. Interfering with others' participation is grounds for a warning. Sharing information about other clients is a violation of our confidentiality.

### **PARTICIPANT-ONLY AREA**

Volunteers and onsite visitors are a regular feature and primary support of H+H. However, participation in activities and interaction with volunteers is optional. There will always be a space at the shelter where, after the nightly setup period, only participants and staff may enter. If program participants are uncomfortable participating in an activity or with a particular volunteer, they should go to this area and feel free to register their discomfort with a staff member.

### **HOUSE MEETING**

Weekly house meetings are mandatory. They will provide the opportunity for participants to discuss in-house matters, propose changes to program rules, give feedback on program elements, and make suggestions for workshops or events. All participants are encouraged to speak with the meeting coordinator to add items to the agenda during the week. Please be sure to suggest at least one possible solution for each problem you bring up.. Please see the House Meeting Policy document for more information.

## What H+H does not offer

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**Discharge planning services:** All participants will already have a case manager and should actively work with them for discharge planning. You are encouraged to bring in resources that you learn about, to share with others at the shelter. There will be a folder with all of these resources at the shelter. Feel free to ask volunteers or staff to help you go through the binder, select resources of interest, fill out applications, etc.

**Mental health services:** H+H is unable to provide direct mental health support. All participants (participants, staff and volunteers) are encouraged to provide kind and non-judgemental listening ears to each other, when possible and appropriate. If you need referrals for mental health services beyond this, let a staff member know. No participant is ever required to provide emotional support for any other participant.

**Laundry/Showers:** H+H does not have showers or machines for laundry available at the shelter site.

**Community Living Guidelines Agreement**

*Heart and Home (H+H) Women's Shelter*

**I have read, understand, and agree to comply with these Community Living Guidelines and program participation expectations.**

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**I have reviewed the Heart and Home Community Living Guidelines and rules with this Program Participant, including how these rules build our collaborative community.**

Intake Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_