

Model Rights and Responsibilities

From the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Our Program has set up the following rights and responsibilities to clarify expectations and roles and to help keep harmony in the shelter where multiple families and individuals live together and share common spaces. We hope you will keep the common good and others' safety and comfort in mind while living here.

You have the right to be respected

You have the right to be treated with respect and without discrimination on the basis of national origin, religion, race, color or sexual orientation by everyone who lives and works here.

You have the right to be heard.

1. We encourage residents to deal with conflicts directly with the people involved whenever possible. If you need help to resolve a conflict, staff is available to problem solve or mediate.
2. If a conflict with a staff member arises that you feel has not been resolved, you can speak with the program manager. If you are not satisfied with the program manager's response, you may speak with our executive director. The agency's grievance policy is given during the intake process and it is also available in the office.
3. Advocates are available each day from ____ to _____. Advocates can help with problem solving, information, referral and support.

You have the right to self determination:

1. We are here to support you in making your own decisions. You have the right to manage your finances and set your own goals while you stay here.
2. Advocates can help you:
 - make safety plans for yourself and your children
 - clarify your goals while in shelter and create a plan to reach them
 - give you information about resources, programs, and your rights
 - support you in your parenting
 - help you pursue your own priorities.

Each family has the right to safety, privacy and to establish schedules that allow each member adequate rest, peaceful time and time to complete schoolwork as well as family obligations.

1. Please respect the comfort and peace of other residents.

You have the right to be supported in your role as a parent

1. Staff and volunteers of the Shelter Program will ask your permission before caring for your children or providing them food or medicine. We want your children to understand that you, not we, are watching out for them and meeting their needs.
2. You may make babysitting arrangements with other women. Please complete a babysitting agreement and give it to staff so that we know who is in charge of your children while you are away.
3. We want all children to be safe while they are here. **Children under 10 must be supervised by a responsible adult.** That adult must keep the children within earshot, on the same floor of the building, and be aware of what they are doing.
 - o Please be aware that children in the program may have been exposed to traumas which result in their acting out, sometimes against other children. For this reason, we ask you to be vigilant in supervising your children.

Every resident, including any children with you, has the right to live without the threat of violence.

1. Physical and verbal violence are not acceptable at the Shelter Program.
2. If you are having trouble parenting without using physical force or threats, please talk to your advocate. Your advocate and the children's advocate can help you create a plan for parenting that is effective and non-violent.
3. No weapons are allowed in the building. If you need a safe place to store a weapon, please consult with your advocate.

Every resident has the right to a healthy, sober and drug free environment

1. Some women in our program struggle with chemical dependency issues. We are here to support them in their recovery. Therefore, alcohol and illegal drugs are not permitted on the premises of the shelter.
2. Staff will support recovering residents in a non-judgmental, respectful manner. Please let us know if what kind of support you may need to maintain or reclaim your sobriety.

Every resident has the right a clean and physically safe environment

1. Please maintain your rooms in a manner that is sanitary, safe for children and considerate of future residents.
2. Please clean up after yourself in the kitchen and bathrooms, and help keep the shelter clean.
3. Smoking is not allowed in the shelter. Smoking is allowed in _____.
4. Please keep your medications locked up in your locker and ensure that no child has access to the bottles or individual pills.

Every resident has the right to keep their presence at Our Program confidential.

1. Please do not reveal to anyone who is staying in the shelter.
2. Please be aware of our security system: (describe - alarms, remote cameras, systems for getting in, etc.)
3. We would like to keep the street address of shelter as confidential as possible. For this reason, no mail will be delivered to the building, but will instead go to the agency's address: _____ Please include your name.
4. Please inform the staff of any suspicious cars or people around the property that you notice. Please call 911 if you observe prowlers or otherwise feel in danger.

You have the right to reside in a program that works for you.

1. If the Shelter Program does not work for you, your advocate can help you find alternative housing that will better suit your needs.
2. Please check in with staff in person every 24 hours. This helps us make sure we are supporting you in achieving your goals. You can skip check-in twice a week.

The Shelter Program may ask you to leave if any of the following occur:

1. Violence or threats of violence towards staff or other residents.
2. Bringing alcohol or illegal drugs into the shelter.
3. Breaking another resident's confidentiality.
4. Bringing your abuser to the shelter.

If you are having trouble with the *other* responsibilities that relate to communal living, staff will work with you individually and in house-meetings to create a plan that works for you and facilitates harmonious group living.