

## **MARTHA'S HOUSE PROGRAM AND SHELTER POLICIES**

Welcome to Martha's House! This list of expectations is meant to keep the shelter a safe and comfortable living environment and provide a guardrail to help keep our residents on the path to success. Therefore it is important that all residents know and follow these policies. Please ask the Shelter Director or your mentor if there is something you don't understand. It is also important that all residents treat one another with respect and kindness at all times.

### **Overview**

For your safety and comfort it is crucial that the following policies are followed:

1. We expect that no drugs, drug devices or alcohol be brought into the shelter or on shelter property or used in any form during your stay. We do an initial drug test which includes marijuana during the interview process and a positive result will lead to denial into the program. There may be random drug testing. If anyone tests positive, your stay here will be terminated. Please bring a list of current prescriptions during the interview process.
2. All information given on your application must be true and complete. Any misrepresentation may result in your lack of acceptance into Martha's House or your stay here being terminated. If there is a concern about untruthful information during your stay a meeting will be held to discuss the concern. See warning process if action needs to be taken.
3. Acts of violence, threats of violence, inappropriate language, discriminatory remarks or behaviors to staff, other residents and your children cannot be tolerated. We will speak and act respectfully at all times. We report all suspected child abuse to Child Welfare.
4. Weapons or potentially harmful items will not be allowed in the shelter or on shelter property. If you own any such items, they will need to be turned in to the office staff on entry and will be returned upon your departure.
5. There will be no displaying of gang affiliations, tagging, or any other marking of territory.
6. We will not allow any pornographic materials on shelter property.
7. Smoking is not allowed inside the shelter at any time. There is a designated area for smoking in one section of the property outside (next to the shed). It is state law, however, that no one under 18 may smoke at all. We ask that you do not roll your own cigarettes
8. No fires are allowed in or on shelter property. This includes candles, incense, sterno, or even half smoked cigarettes. Immediate eviction will be enforced if this is violated.
9. No adult or child residents will be allowed to enter another resident's room.
10. Residents are not to answer the shelter door (letting anyone into the shelter) at any time. If someone is at the door, you will need to get a staff person to open the door. During the hours of 9am to 4pm family and friends may wait for you inside the lobby (when let inside by a staff member). You may visit on the first floor common area, but not in your room. Visitors are not allowed to smoke on the premises.
11. We expect all residents to be in their rooms by 11pm (Sunday-Thurs) and midnight (Friday and Saturday). This serves to maintain a sense of stability and security for the entire household. Call the Shelter Director at 541-571-3963) if you cannot meet your curfew.

## **FEES**

We will receive from you a non-refundable fee of \$70 per adult. This fee includes your background check, urine analysis, and entry fee. This will need to be paid before you enter Martha's House.

A refundable key charge of \$20.00 is also charged. Please do not share your key with other people. Key replacement will cost \$20. Key charge will be refunded when key is returned in working order.

Verification of your income will be received before entering Martha's House.

## **FAMILY FUND**

During your stay, you will be expected to pay into your family fund 30% of any income you receive (including TANF, Welfare, unemployment, work wages, disability, tax refunds, etc). Self-responsibility is an important value at Martha's House. The ability to manage finances while maintaining rent payments and other expenses is crucial to overcoming homelessness. 30% is an approximation of rent to landlord.

The purpose of the family fund is to...

- \*help residents learn to set aside payments every month
- \*provide residents with financial assistance when they move out
- \*provide residents with financial assistance up to a year after they leave Martha's House.

These funds are held in a "family fund" for you the first 3 months. During the next 3 months half of these payments go to your "family fund" and half toward the care of the Martha's House facility. From six months on, all of these funds will go to the sustainment of Martha's House.

This money must be paid in cash (no checks or money orders, please). This will need to be received by the Shelter Director within one day of your being paid. If not, you may incur a \$10 late fee. You will receive a receipt on payment. Please save these for your future records.

These funds will be given back only for your use in future housing needs (deposits, first/last mo. rent, utility deposits, etc) and will be paid to a third party (your next landlord or utility). However, if there is damage to your room on exiting Martha's House, money will be taken from this fund for any repairs needed.

You may ask to have an extra amount taken for your past evictions or delinquencies. These funds will be designated for that purpose only.

## **ACTION PLAN**

You may be assign a mentor to help you achieve the goals you set on this journey. During your stay, considering employment and stable housing will be on top of the list. Other goals may include classes to help with finances, cooking, parenting, and/or general life skills, etc. In the beginning, you will want to meet with your mentor once a week, for about an hour, to share your concerns and set your goals. It would be best to get childcare for these meetings.

Your mentor will be your support and helper during your stay at Martha's House. They will be the first one you call if you need help and will do their best to recourse you and help you track your progress.

## **HOUSEHOLD RULES**

### **Warning Process**

Warnings are designed to help you succeed! They warn you when you are crossing the line in our program so that you can correct your mistakes. Warnings will be issued for violating household rules, not going to a class, not attending a goal meeting, not going to an appointment/sign-up which you initiated, not doing your chores regularly, \*missing curfew, failing a drug test (automatic three nights out or permanently removed), disrespect, and *not following staff direction*.

You will receive one (1) verbal warning. If the situation does not improve, you will receive three (3) written warnings (This could include different rules). If improvement is not satisfactory, then you will receive three nights out and if still no improvement is seen, you will be required to leave Martha's House. If the Shelter Director believes you intentionally broke the rule(s) or it might have caused harm to the rest of the residents, they have the right to require you to take three (3) nights out or leave the shelter without verbal or written warnings.

### **Office Hours**

Since our Shelter Manager works off site, there are no set office hours. We want to be available to you if you truly need to visit with us, especially if there is a crisis at that moment. But, please respect our privacy! Even though we live onsite, it doesn't mean we are available at all hours of the day & night. If we are out and about, ALWAYS feel free to ask questions or visit...YOU are part of the family here (and I LOVE to talk)!

### **Classes**

You may be required to attend certain classes. If you are required to take a class you will be notified in plenty of time to make any arrangements needed.

Possible classes you may be required to take would be: Life Skills, Cooking, Parenting and Financial. Most of our classes, if not all, are outsourced through our partners in the community. For all classes, please observe the following rules.

1. No cell phone usage is allowed during class
2. Arrive at class prepared with homework, books, and pen, if required
3. Drop your child(ren) off at childcare with enough time to make it to class on time (If applicable)
4. If you are late for class or miss altogether, you will be issued a warning.

## Dress Code

Dress should be modest. Footwear must be worn at all times in the common areas (socks and flip-flops are fine). If you are unsure of what may be acceptable attire, please ask the Shelter director. Boys must wear a shirt at all times. If you're not sure, modesty is the best policy. The Shelter Director may also use their discretion at any time if they feel you are not appropriately dressed and will ask you to change clothing if they feel it is necessary.

## Rooms

We want you to keep a tidy room (dishes washed, clothes picked up, etc.) Room inspections will be on a random basis. See warning process if your room check does not pass.

## Chores

We want to keep the common areas of our shelter rooms clean at all times. You will be provided a list of chores each week and will be responsible for getting those done. Chores will be done either before 9am or between the hours of 5pm & 8pm. Please check them off when completed. Unless you have made arrangements with the Shelter Director, failure to perform your chores will subject to the warning process

## Resident Conduct

Martha's House is not for finding a partner. Romantic relationships within the house are inappropriate and will be dealt with accordingly. Single men and women in our program are ***not allowed to date each other during their stay***. This goes for teens as well.

## Progress Management

You will meet regularly with your mentor or Shelter Director or your mentor to follow-up on the progress you're making with your goals outline in your personal and unique action plan. If you are continually not meeting goals or management feels you're not putting in the effort to meet your goals you will be subject to the warning process.

We are not a licensed counselor, and as such are ***not*** required to keep everything confidential. We want to maintain confidentiality whenever possible, but in matters of safety and/or program concerns, we may speak to the Eastern Oregon Board for guidance.

## Curfew [*what time you must be back to the shelter*]

We want to keep our house safe for our guests. ***Curfew is 10:00PM, Sunday through Thursday and 11:00PM on Friday and Saturday.*** \*Anyone remaining out will be subject to the warning process. If you are working, you must supply an official work schedule to the Shelter Director before you will be excused past curfew. If you have not cleared your late arrival in advance, you will be subject to the warning process.

If you are going to be late for curfew, you **MUST** call the Shelter Director's cell phone at (541) 571-3963 to request acceptance for your tardiness. Your request may be denied if it is not a legitimate reason for

being late. Staff will evaluate your request and will issue a warning if your request is not valid. In most cases, proof will be required to verify the actual circumstances of your request.

## **Employment**

Martha's House requires that every adult resident look for **full time employment** (unless on disability) during their stay. Full time employment is defined as 30+ hours per week. *Our* goal is that you obtain employment so that you can reach *your* goal of obtaining safe and stable housing within 3-4 months.

## **Volunteering**

If you work less than 30 hours per week, you are considered part-time and you will be ***required to volunteer 2 hours per week*** at a local nonprofit of your choosing. If you do not volunteer your 2 hours per week you will be subject to the warning process, unless you have made other arrangements with the Shelter Manager). It is up to you to find childcare while you volunteer.

## **Work Schedules**

If you are working anything other than day shift, you must have an official work schedule or letter from your employer stating when you work on file with the office.

## **On Call**

If you are called into work at the last minute, and/or you are asked to stay later than your schedule shift, AND your shift conflicts with curfew, please call the Shelter Manager's cell phone at **541-571-3963** and inform her or leave her a message you will be working late. Residents must present a signed (by their Employment Manager) work schedule to the Shelter Director within 48 hours verifying the validity of the on-call shift.

## **Nights Out and Late Night Pass ~ these are a privilege not a given!**

All Nights Out for children and adults must be pre-arranged between you and the Shelter Director. Residents **MUST** fill out a Nights Out Form 24 hours prior to going unless it is an emergency. Adult residents will not be granted nights/late night pass during the first 30 days unless they have completed their 30 day entry goals. Some exceptions apply (i.e. family emergency, job, or death in the family). Children may be granted nights out during the first 30 days only for approved circumstances such as visitation with an absent parent or a grandparent. Children's nights out will be determined individually according to the situation and/or custody/visitation ruling. Children are allowed no more than 4 nights out per month unless approved by the Shelter Director. The only exception to children having more than 4 nights out, is if there is a parenting plan in place and a copy of such plan is on file in the office.

*Copies of the "Nights Out Form" are in the bottom slots of the mailbox area!*

## **Evening Hours and Bedtimes**

*Because of the number of people who live at Martha's House, it is necessary to set up some general rules about bedtime for children and quiet time for the adults.*

### **Sunday through Thursday: (Week Nights)**

Children 0 through 4<sup>th</sup> grade should be in their rooms and quiet by **8:30PM**.

5<sup>th</sup> grade through High School can stay up until **9:30PM**.

Adults must use soft voices after **9:00PM** so they are not disturbing children.

Adults must be in their room and quiet by **12:00AM (midnight)**, not disturbing their neighbors.

### **Friday and Saturday: (Week Ends & Summer...when school is out)**

Children 0 through 4<sup>th</sup> grade should be in their rooms and quiet by **10:00PM**.

5<sup>th</sup> grade through High School can stay up until **11:00PM**.

Adults must be in their rooms and quiet by **1:00AM**, not disturbing their neighbors.

### **Children and Childcare**

Parents are responsible for their children (0-18 if still in school) at all times while at Martha's House. There is a Park ½ block away. Children may not be unattended in the facility and should not roughhouse indoors. Parents are highly encouraged to take their kids outside to the park during nice weather or accompany them in the living room to play games on a daily basis.

*Parents... please remember that **yelling and screaming** at your children is not an appropriate way to discipline them. It also, disrupts the rest of the residents.*

**Residents are not allowed to watch each other's children for any reason!** Children of any age are not allowed in any other resident rooms. ***School-aged children are to be enrolled in school on the first school day after your arrival.*** They must have regular attendance. If they do not go to school because of sickness they must stay in their room (*That goes for adults who are sick as well*). A phone call to the school by **9:00AM** is expected & bus barn by 7:00 AM.

### **Parents**

You will be subject to the warning process if your children are not within **Sight AND Sound**. YOU are responsible for teaching and training your children these guidelines during your stay at Martha's House. We understand that there are times when children will break the rules or run out of Sight and Sound. When this happens, the Shelter Director expects the parent to be actively engaged in parenting their children and restoring Sight and Sound. Any adult or child who crosses the threshold of someone else's door is considering "inside" the room and will receive a warning. Please stay in the hallway!

**Infants** (definition: not walking or talking)

**Infants must be within Sight AND Sound of a parent at all times. Martha's House accepts NO responsibility for unsupervised children at the shelter.**

Parents may not leave their room while their infant is asleep in the room.

### **Children ages 1-12**

**Children must be within Sight AND Sound of a parent at all times. Martha's House accepts NO responsibility for unsupervised children at the shelter.**

- If the parent wants to take a smoke break, they must keep their child(ren) within Sight and Sound at all times. Parents are encouraged to take toys or books to keep the children occupied.
- Children may not have food, including feeding bottles, in any common area at any time.
- Parents may not leave their room while their children are asleep in the room.

**Teens** (definition: those on teen contract. *May occasionally include 12 year old only if they are responsible/mature*)

**Children who are in 6th grade and older must sign a Teen Contract in order to be left at the shelter by themselves. Parents are responsible for their teen's actions when they leave them alone. Martha's House accepts NO responsibility for teens left unsupervised at the shelter.**

- Curfew for teens is **9:30PM** on school nights unless they are gone with their parent(s).
- Teens are not allowed to watch anyone else's children at the shelter for any reason at any time.
- Teens may not babysit their younger brothers or sisters (if they have any) without permission from a staff member. Permission is granted on a case-by-case basis. If teens are approved to watch their siblings, they must remain with them at all times. ***They must be in their sight at all times.*** They may not ask other residents to watch them. If they are in childcare, the teen must be there to pick them up at the right time. Failure to follow these rules will result in a loss of teen contact privileges.
- Teens left alone in the shelter for any amount of time must follow their teen level guidelines.
- Teens must be enrolled in school as of the first day of their stay at MH. They must have regular attendance. If a teen does not attend school because of sickness, they must remain in their room. Teens that have dropped out of school must reenroll in high-school or an alternative high-school.
- If teens have babysitting jobs, they are not allowed to babysit at Martha's House.

### **School**

We expect all children to be in school or enrolled in an approved home school program.

Since Martha's House is close to the schools there is no bus service unless you were currently going to school in another district and want to continue going there. In that case arrangements can be made and the bus company will pick up your child. They may be on the bus for an extended time, but they will be taken to their school.

If your children are currently going to school in another district and want this to continue, it may be possible to arrange for the bus company to transport your child to and from school. However, you will need to be present to send and receive young children.

Head Start will pick up your child (ren) at the front door of Martha's House. Usually, other ages will be picked up on the north side of Martha's House on Newport Ave.

## After School

Parents...it is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to be present when your children are picked up for school and be here and let your child(ren) in when they get home from school. For the smaller child(ren), you must be there waiting for the bus with them!

## Smoking Policy

**NO EXCEPTIONS** of any kind will be permitted:

1. Residents are required to use the receptacle/can **every** time you put out a cigarette. **Residents are *NOT* allowed to bring half smoked butts into the house. They must be put into the "smoke can" and not saved.** If you smoke or take a lighted cigarette out of the designated smoking area you will ***receive one written warning***. If it happens again ***you will be asked to leave immediately***.
2. You are not allowed to put any garbage in a "smoke can" as it may cause a fire.

## Pets and Animals

Residents are not allowed to have pets or animals of any kind at the shelter or in their rooms. This includes reptiles, fish, dogs, cats, rodents, etc.

## Rooms

We provide nearly everything you would need during your stay here with the exception of food and cleaning and laundry supplies. Please take the time to understand and put into practice the following rules in regards to keeping the shelter, your room and kitchen orderly.

- When using your grill, ***always*** turn on the fan. **If food begins to burn and smoke occurs, do NOT open the door to your room.** Instead, open your windows and continue to use the fan to remove smoke. Smoke from cooking can trigger the fire alarm if let into the hallway.
- All dishes, silverware, etc. are to be done after each meal and not left out. No ***food*** should be left out! This includes butter, grease, bread, juice, etc. The counters should remain clear, and all other small appliances should be put away in the cupboard.
- ***ABSOLUTELY NO*** holes of any kind are to be put in the walls. You can only use COMMAND hangers or tape.
- If you lock yourself out of your room or the shelter, you may be charged a ***\$1 Fee*** to let you in.

## Room Search Policy

To ensure a safe environment for our adult and child residents, Martha's House staff reserves the right to enter and search resident rooms and personal belongings at any time without warning or explanation.

Any substances, paraphernalia, or illegal items deemed to be inappropriate, potentially dangerous or in violation of house rules found will be seized and you will be subject to the warning process. Examples of items that are not allowed in shelter: firearms, drugs/alcohol, drug paraphernalia, knives, weapons of any kind, or pornography. These items will be destroyed, discarded or turned over to the proper authorities. You may collect these items at the end of your stay at Martha's House.

### **Common Areas**

These areas are for the benefit of all residents. Please speak with the Shelter Manager if you have concerns or questions in any area. We want your stay to be safe, enjoyable and successful.

No food or drinks (other than water) are allowed in these areas unless expressly approved by Shelter Manager or during shelter-organized events. Water bottles (containing water) with screw-on caps are acceptable in all areas of the shelter.

Failure to clean up after yourself/family could result in a warning and/or loss of privileges.

Children ages 0-12 may not be in the common area without their parent(s). Parents will be subject the warning process if they leave their child(ren) unattended.

DO NOT change the temperature on the AC/Heating units.

### **Kitchen Area**

The purpose of the Kitchen is to provide facilities for educational activities and community meals. The Kitchen may be requested for use for special events which benefit the entire facility, i.e. birthday parties, potlucks, special meetings and going-away parties. Requests for the kitchen must be made to the Shelter Director. As use of the Kitchen is considered a privilege, residents are asked to please respect Shelter Director's decisions. Please be considerate of all residents in cleaning up after yourself or your family. No food is allowed in the Community Room unless it has been approved by Shelter Director.

### **Learning Center Classroom/Community Room**

The purpose of the Learning Center Classroom/Community Room is to facilitate education and community through constructive activities for residents and their families. It is also used as a community room where you can watch TV at specified times.

### **Television and movies**

Please be courteous when watching TV...you are not the only one wanting to watch it. The TV in the Living Room may be used during the hours posted, unless the room is needed for a MH activity. We will not allow R rated movies or sexually explicit and/or inappropriate language TV shows and movies. (This is a family shelter!). Children who are not on teen contract may not operate the TV or DVD player. At any time, a staff may change or amend the TV rules. You are expected to follow staff directions.

## Computer Lab Stations ~ Open Daily...refer to signs by the computer stations for times.

- Computers are for looking for work, resumes, cover letters or anything WORK related only or for housing. You can check your emails!
- Children & teens are allowed to use the computers for homework & education only.
- You can check your social media sights during the evening hours only.
- These rules can change at the discretion of the shelter director.

## Computer Use Guidelines

1. The computer lab is designed as a tool to help families at Martha's House find jobs and housing. These computers **are not for games**. They are tools and should be used responsibly. You will not need a password to sign in to the computer. If you need a document printed, there is one computer with a printer set-up.
  - a. If you would like a document printed that is not directly related to our program. We will print them out for you at the cost \$.10 per page and you will need the exact change no exceptions.
2. Students who are 12 and older can use the computer for doing homework during posted hours(may change at the Shelter Directors discretion - **not to play games.**
3. Do not try and change any settings. (**You will** lose your privileges.) We have already set the settings that are necessary for the programs we have made available to you.
4. Always ask questions! Don't assume you know what the answer is. We will be happy to answer your questions.
5. Arguing with staff or volunteers about the computer will end in loss of privileges.
6. Usage will be limited to 60 minutes unless there is ample availability. Hours for use are posted, and are subject to change at any time. BE COURTEOUS!!
7. If at any time you are asked to log off by staff or a volunteer, you must immediately comply. If there is an emergency you may be asked to log off. If you are abusing the privilege you will be asked to log off and may lose any further privileges.
8. You the resident are responsible for saving your material before logging off. This may require a) printing your documents, b) saving your documents to a flash drive, or c) e-mailing the documents to yourself.

## Mail

During your stay, you are welcome to have mail sent to **305 SE 4<sup>th</sup> St., Hermiston OR 97838**. Just be aware that in order to change your address to your new location, you will need to contact everyone you get mail from and change your address directly with the source. The Post Office will not forward your mail to you. After you move out, we will hold your mail for up to 30 days unless you have made arrangements to come pick it up on a regular basis until everything gets changed.

## **Vehicles and Parking**

**Please do not** work or wash your car in the parking lot. If you have a car or acquire a car during your stay, please give the Shelter Director the following information: Make, Model, Color, and License Plate.

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

Agape House

If you are in need of food, you can go to Agape House during their open hours to receive a box for your family 2X per month. If you need other items or services, please let Jodene know and she may be able to help you.

Capeco

Head Start

DHS