

## MARTHA'S HOUSE PROGRAM AND SHELTER POLICIES

Welcome to Martha's House! Our mission is to provide a safe transitional housing environment for families. It's a place to develop life skills as you prepare for personal and professional growth.

This list of expectations is meant to keep the shelter a safe and comfortable living environment for all our residents. These exist as a guardrail to help keep you on the path to success.

It is important that all residents know and follow these policies. Please ask the house manager 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.

### TENANT POLICIES

For your safety and comfort and to ensure our tenants' goals are achieved, it is crucial that the following policies are followed:

1. No drugs or alcohol in any form are allowed at the shelter and their use is prohibited during your stay here. This includes drug devices and paraphernalia. Random drug testing will be conducted, and a positive test will lead to immediate eviction.
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.
3. Acts or threats of violence, inappropriate language, and discriminatory remarks or behaviors cannot be tolerated. Respect for everyone at Martha's House is expected.
4. Weapons or potentially harmful items will not be allowed 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 other marking of territory.
6. We will not accept 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. It is state law, however, that no one under 21 may smoke at all.
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 other residents' rooms.
10. Residents are not to answer the shelter door (letting anyone into the shelter) at any time. If someone is at the door, a staff person must let them in. During the hours of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. 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 adult residents to be in their rooms by 11 p.m. (Sunday-Thursday) and midnight (Friday and Saturday). Children less than 9 years of age must be in their rooms by 8:30pm and children 10-18yrs must be in their rooms by 9:30pm Sunday through Thursday and 10pm Friday and Saturday. This serves to maintain a sense of stability and security for the entire household. Call your mentor (or 541-571-7768) if you cannot meet your curfew.

### **ACTION PLAN:**

You will be given a mentor to help you achieve the goals you set on this journey. During your stay, seeking employment and stable housing will be on top of the list. Other goals may include finances, cooking, parenting, transportation, 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 is advised to get child care 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.

### **IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR STAY**

We will receive from you a non-refundable fee of \$61 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.

- We will also receive a \$20 fee for your room key, which will be refunded upon its return and your departure. Please do not share your key with other people, even in your own family. Key replacement will cost \$20.
- Verification of your income will be received before entering Martha's House.
- We want you to keep a tidy room (dishes washed, clothes picked up, etc.) Room inspections will be conducted by staff on a random basis, Monday through Sunday, 8 am to 7 pm.
- Each resident will be assigned chores to keep the halls and common spaces clean. The chores should be completed in a timely manner between the hours of 8 am to 7 pm to prevent disturbing other residents.
- Part-time employment (less than 32 hours per week) will enable you to volunteer 2 hours per week at the nonprofit of your choosing. You will need to acquire child care for this, as you would for regular employment. Anyone not working at all needs to be volunteering at least 1-2 hours each day for a total of 10 hours weekly.

- 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.
- Animals are not allowed for temporary residents at Martha's House. Other housing arrangements for pets will need to be made before moving in.
- Food and drink are allowed in your room only, except with prior arrangement with staff. Water in bottles or with lids is allowed in the common areas.
- When using your grill, **always** turn on the fan. If food begins to burn and smoke occurs, open your window, but not your door. The fire alarm could be triggered if the door is opened.
- Please be mindful of the clean walls. You can use command hangers or tape, but no holes are to be put in the walls.
- For everyone's safety, we require footwear to be worn outside of your room at all times. Also, modest clothing for public appearance is expected outside of your room. Please be dressed when answering your door. We may offer coaching in this area when needed.
- During your stay, you will be expected to pay Martha's House 30% of any income you receive (including TANF, welfare, unemployment, work wages, disability, tax refunds, etc). See "FAMILY FUND" section below.
- The computers in the common areas are to be shared with other residents. Therefore, we ask that if others need access to a computer, each limits their time to an hour.
- During your stay, your mailing address will be 305 SE 4<sup>th</sup> St., Hermiston, OR 97838. Please understand that on leaving Martha's House you will need to change your address to all recipients. After you move out we will only be able to hold your mail for a week. It's your responsibility to pick up mail.
- If you own or acquire a car during your stay, we will need all vehicle information; make, model, color, and license plate number. Washing of vehicles is not allowed on Martha's House property.
- If you need food, you can go to Agape House during their open hours to receive a box for your family twice per month. If you need other items or services, please let the house manager know and they may be able to help you.

### FAMILY FUND

The purpose 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

For the first three months, 30% of your income is held in your “family fund.” For the next 3 months Martha’s House will continue to receive 30% of your income, with half going to your “family fund” and the other half toward the care of the facility and support of programs. If your stay is longer than 6 months, the entire 30% funds will go to the sustainment of Martha’s House.

This may be paid in cash, check, or money order. This will need to be placed in the lock box next to the office no later than the 5th of each month. If you are paying in cash, please put it in an envelope with your name on it. If not, you may incur a \$10 late fee for each day you are late. You will receive a receipt in your mailbox. Please save these for your future records.

These funds will be given back only for your use in **future** housing needs (deposits, first/last months’ rent, etc) and will be paid to a third party (your next landlord). However, if there is damage to your room upon 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.

**Accountability** is an important value at Martha’s House. The ability to manage finances while maintaining rent payments and other expenses is crucial to overcoming housing insecurity. 30% is an approximation of rent to landlord.

## CHILDREN

Parents are responsible for their children (0-18) at all times while at Martha’s House. It is suggested that school children get 9 hours of sleep each night.

### **Bedtime considerations**

#### Weeknights

- Infant-4<sup>th</sup> grade in their rooms by 8:30 p.m.
  - 5<sup>th</sup> grade- high school in rooms by 9:30 p.m.
- Being quiet after these hours will be helpful. Parents will be with their children in their rooms. Adults without children will be in their rooms by midnight.*

#### Friday/Saturday

- Infant-4<sup>th</sup> grade in rooms by 11 p.m.
- 5<sup>th</sup> grade - high school in rooms by midnight

*Parents, consider that life becomes easier on Monday when your family’s schedule is kept consistent, including weekends.*

## Child care

- Please do not care for other residents' children. Outside child care is highly recommended.
- Children should not be left unattended in common areas. We highly encourage taking them to the park nearby when the weather permits.
- Any residents who are sick should stay in their room.
- School-aged children must be enrolled in school and have regular attendance. The school should be called by 8 a.m. and the bus barn by 7 a.m. if your child is sick or will be absent for any reason.

## COMMON SPACES

These areas are for the benefit of all residents. If you desire a special gathering with food in this space, you will need to get advanced permission from the house manager. Please be considerate of all residents in cleaning up after yourself and your family. We encourage speaking to each other with quiet, respectful voices for everyone's well-being.

The purpose of the computer learning center is to facilitate education and community through constructive activities for residents and their families. The television, games and puzzles are to be shared. The computer is for education and work, rather than for gaming. Check social media sites in the evening if the computer is not being used for education or work. Children under 12 years will be accompanied by a parent.

## WARNINGS

We want all the residents of Martha's House to be successful and comfortable during their stay here, so there will be consequences for not following the above policies. We will use a warning system that will allow all residents to quickly correct any errors or mistakes that they make to ensure that everyone's stay is as positive as possible.

Warnings are meant to help everyone succeed and notify them when a line has been crossed by not following the written policies:

- not completing chores in a timely manner,
- not passing room checks,
- not submitting monthly payment for family fund,
- leaving children unattended in hallways and common areas,
- not cleaning up the kitchen or laundry rooms after using, etc.
- not attending classes provided by Martha's House
- Smoking in a non-smoking area
- Coming in past curfew

- not using quiet, respectful tones and voices when speaking to other residents or your own family members
- missing appointments with your mentor

The following steps will be taken when any of the above concerns are occurring:

1. A verbal warning will be given from the House Manager or the Executive Director for the first violation of any of the house policies and documented in the resident's file.
2. Continued violation of house policies will then result in a written warning, which will also go into the file.
3. A third violation will result in the creation of an improvement plan created by the House Manager, the Executive Director, the mentor and the resident to assist the resident to follow the policies as written, to improve compliance, and remove barriers that may be contributing to the violations. The resident will be given a period of 1 month to complete the improvement plan and will meet weekly with the House Manager for check off of tasks, and weekly with their mentor to ensure compliance with the plan . **Failure to complete in the time allotted will result in the resident losing their place at Martha's House.**
4. **Using alcohol or drugs, being violent with anyone will result in immediate termination of contract and removal from Martha's House.**

**Please speak with your mentor, house manager or executive director if you have concerns or questions in any area. We want your stay to be safe, enjoyable and successful.**

**I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the above document and had a chance to ask any questions I may have. I agree to comply with Martha's House Policies throughout my stay in the facility. I understand the consequences of not following the policies and that continued non-compliance can result in my losing my place at Martha's House.**

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**Signature**

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**Date**

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**Witness Signature**

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**Date**