

The BSW Residential Handbook



Building Strong Women Inc.

"Empowering Women to Succeed"

Revised Edition November 28, 2023

Welcome to The Building Strong Women's Transitional Living Program!

The Mission of Building Strong Women is to impact you by making a positive difference in your life. We will connect you with multiple resources, provide classes, mentorship, and action plans for success. We will empower you by encouraging self-confidence and assisting you to overcome the obstacles and barriers that lead you to homelessness.

BSW services women from all different cultures of life. Our overall objective is for women to unite, empower, and support each other through times of trials and hardships. We provide a safe and secure environment for the healing process to begin.

"A successful woman is one who can build a firm foundation out of the stones others have thrown at her."

Building Strong Women is a community living environment. Included in this packet are rules and expectations which must be followed in order to ensure that the respect, comfort, and security of all who reside in the program.

Please note that this is a transitional living program as opposed to an emergency shelter; there are affordable fees to be a part of our program.

HOUSE AIDE

House aides oversee the functions of the houses. House aides are responsible for cooking, common area cleaning, delegating chore list, bedroom checks, etc. You may talk to house aides about any concerns that you have in the home or the program. **House aides do not administer medication or give medical advice, call 911.**

House aides are volunteers for us and receive subsidized room and board in the Building Strong Women program. If you receive SSI or have taxable income program fees will apply as a percentage of that. If you begin employment that will adhere from your ability to oversee as house aide you will either have to pay required program fee or no longer reside in the home; You will no longer be a house aide, but you can pay and remain in the transitional program with a plan of action.

Rules and Regulations are subject to change.

Program Fees

Fees are due on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis, and may be paid in cash or money order. Frequency of payment will be agreed upon prior to program entry and depends on your action plan. Residents are required to pay **\$500.00** a month for a shared room and **\$600.00** a month for a private room, unless otherwise specified in your contract. **In our Transitional Housing, there will be a \$30 Household supply fee to be paid with your monthly program fee.**

Residents in need of a short-term placement can be pro-rated daily with a fee of \$20.00 per day. This arrangement is only made in emergency situations.

Your personal items will be checked upon arrival at the BSW facility. To prevent any possible bug infestation, your clothing brought in will be minimal and be inspected.

Program fees are due at the time that you receive your income. The monthly fee is late after the 5th. You will have to pay a \$50 late fee each time that your payment is late.

There is no refund once you stay overnight or leave your belongings (even if you do not stay) at a Building Strong Women facility.

This is not a Landlord-Tenant contract, so if you break any rules, you could be asked to leave the program, you MUST leave immediately!!

You must provide a picture ID, EBT card, and proof of income such as a Check stub, bank statement, or a Social Security Statement, that verifies your income amount. Your income must be verified before you enter our program. We may require your photograph for our records.

- On some situations we have the right to deny you of service if you do not have a payee, and we fill that you need one.
- If you are approved in BSW program you must pay all monies due at that time.

Activities, Classes, Meeting

- We teach classes, meeting to benefit your life situations, and activities to meet your physical needs, all classes, activities, and meetings are MANDATORY!
- Two missed functions, you will receive a written warning, the third time you miss, you will receive a corrective warning, and the next time you will receive a Final Warning.

This is not a landlord and tenant contract! If any rules are broken, for example:

- If you destroy or damage any property of BSW you must pay by the following month when you pay your program fee, or you will be terminated from the program.
- Program fees are not paid on time
- Disrespect of staff or other residents
- Drugs or Alcohol, being used or in your possession.
- Fighting
- Stealing
- Fraternizing/soliciting
- Weapons of any kind

You must exit the program immediately upon violation of these rules. If you leave any of your personal belongings behind, you will have five (5) business day to retrieve your items, or it will become the property of Building Strong Women.

This is a non-profit organization. All fees collected are applied towards your cost of living, maintenance on houses, and to provide a comfortable living environment.

Utilities (water, heat, and electricity), cable, and a landline phone are included in the monthly fee.

Each bedroom is furnished with a television, if available. Common areas are fully furnished. We also try to provide an in-house washer and dryer; however, this is not guaranteed.

Also, for those who are in need, we do our best to provide basic hygiene products, clean towels, and fresh linen. We also provide clothes and other basic needs when we have them available. Availability is based on what is donated.

Wake Up Times

Daily: 9 am (7am if you're having breakfast)

You are to be up and dressed no later than 9 AM. No exceptions! Failure to follow rules may result in an infraction. Beds are to be made when you get up and to look nice throughout the day. If you rest, do not turn back the covers, use a throw to cover yourself. Straighten the bed.

Curfew Hours:

10pm (With exception for work; work schedule must be shown for adjustments)

There are also mandatory case management events. This will vary depending on a case assessment of an individual's needs. However, you must abide by curfew requirements. Late arrival without phone call or unauthorized overnight stay will result in an infraction.

Quiet Hours

Residents are required to be in their rooms between the hours of midnight and 7 AM. At 11 PM all televisions must be off. Radio volume must be low. Phone conversations must be kept to a minimum during quiet hours.

Overnight rules

For the first 30 days of this program, you will NOT be allowed to go on overnight visits.

Those privileges will begin after 30 days. Once a resident has achieved 30 days with no positive drug test and have followed all rules, and is otherwise approved, may leave overnight.

You may be required to take a drug test upon your return to BSW.

Dress Code

You must be fully dressed when you are outside of your room. Your clothing must be appropriate and non-suggestive. We ask that you present yourselves respectfully. Shorts must be

at an appropriate length. Miniskirts, belly shirts, exposed mid drifts are not allowed at BSW. You must be wearing some type of bra when in the shared common areas of the house or leaving the property. We ask that you do not wear clothing with obscene or offensive graphics or wording.

Tours

Please be aware that any given time, we may have tours of the BSW facility. So, it is important that the premises are kept clean and appropriately maintained because you never know who may stop by. If a house fails to be in appropriate condition in the event of a tour or a drop by inspection, everyone in the house will be asked to spend the following Saturday cleaning up the premises. This is mandatory. Anyone who refuses to participate in this cleaning activity will be written up.

Chores

Chores are assigned to each resident, unless otherwise told. The purpose is to keep our shared living area clean and neat for all who live in and visit our site. Residents are expected to do their chores and initial the list to verify that the chore is complete. The house aide on duty will delegate and then inspect chores and note if there was a failure to complete a chore. If you have three incomplete chores within a month, you are non-compliant, and may be terminated from the program.

Food and Kitchen

Residents are expected to clean up in the kitchen after themselves. A requirement of this program is that you contribute to the groceries. In order to save on the utilities and to keep the kitchen clean, one breakfast, one lunch, and one dinner will be prepared daily, with a snack between each meal (if available). You are not allowed in the kitchen, unless you're eating.

Meal Times:

Breakfast 8 AM-9 AM

Lunch: Noon-1 PM

Dinner 5 PM-6 PM

Personal food should be stored in a plastic tote with a lid on it, in the resident's room. Food may also be stored in a kitchen cabinet or the deep freezer, with your name and the date on it. The kitchen chores are to be completed no later than 7 PM. The kitchen will be closed at 8 PM. The kitchen must always be clean!

Bedroom

You are responsible for the cleanliness of your room.

- Plastic must always be on mattresses.
- Your bed must be made every morning by 9 AM.
- The linen must be washed weekly.
- Comforters must be washed monthly or as needed.

Bedroom floors need to be swept or vacuumed at least once a week or as needed. General cleaning also needs to be done once a week (windows, dusting, base boards, etc.). Please keep your things tidy and neat. Clothes and all other personal items must be kept in their proper places. All dirty clothes must be kept in a hamper until laundry day.

Do not paste, tape, tack, or nail anything to the walls. Space heaters, candles, and incense are not allowed in the bedroom. Please make sure all appliances are turned off or unplugged and put in their proper places before leaving the room.

The house aide will be inspecting the overall cleanliness of your room. If your room fails visual inspection, you will receive a verbal warning. If this issue continues, an infraction will be filed.

To ensure a safe and healthy environment, staff will do room checks at random. BSW reserves the right to search personal property to ensure the overall safety of all program participants.

Bathroom

Please be courteous of others and do not monopolize the bathroom. Do not spend more than 10 minutes in the shower. Make sure to take all your belongings back to your room when you are finished. None of your personal items such as shampoo/conditioner, hair care items, or dental items are to be left in the bathroom. Make sure to wash out the bathtub and sink when you're finished. Do not leave hair in the sink, floor, or counter top.

BSW is not liable for lost, damaged, or stolen property. You are solely responsible for the safe keeping of your belongings.

Laundry

If there is a washing machine and dryer available, laundry will only be done bi-weekly. A childless woman is allowed two loads. A woman with children is allowed three loads. Laundry days will be assigned according to the number of women/children residing in the house.

If you need to iron, there is an iron available. It must be returned to its proper place when you are finished.

Room Keys and Lockout

Residents are not issued a key to the house. A house aide will be available to let you into the house if you are locked out.

You may have a lock on your room door to protect your personal belongings and privacy. If you do choose to put a lock on your door, you must provide the house aide with a copy. If you share a room, your roommate must also have a copy of the key. This will be at your own expense, including all extra key copies.

Vehicles

Resident vehicles parked on BSW property, must have valid proof of insurance and registration. The resident must also have a valid driver's license. Copies of these valid proofs must be turned in upon entrance of program or vehicle purchase.

Medication

Any prescribed medication, vitamins, or over the counter medicine must be stored in your personal lock box.

Health and Overall Care

Residents in need of physical or mental health care will be given information on local resources that can assist with their medical needs. Residents will be required to take medication as prescribed by their physician and follow through with any further instructions given by their physician. Failure to follow through with physician's orders, or to take medication as prescribed may be cause for termination from the program.

Smoking

BSW buildings are non-smoking facilities. Smoking is only allowed outside in the designated area.

Telephones

- A house phone is provided for your convenience.
- Please limit calls during working hours to 10 minutes, even if no one is visibly waiting.

Visitors

Visitors must be respectful of BSW rules and may not fraternize with other residents.

BSW is a drug and alcohol-free facility. Any guest visibly under the influence of either, will be asked to leave immediately. Guests are not permitted to stay overnight. We encourage that your visitors be immediate family. Check with the director to learn if your guests need to be pre-approved prior to their arrival, or they may be asked to leave.

Issues/Concerns

If you have any issues, please first take them up with your house aide. If you can't come to a resolution with your house aide, or if the issue is with your house aide, then take the issue to another house aide. If the issue still isn't resolved, then file a grievance form.

Grievance forms may be obtained from your house aide. They are to be turned in directly to the BSW office, not the house aide. They can be mailed, emailed, or dropped off in person.

If you have an emergency, you may contact the office during business hours. Please do not call the director with petty complaints, doing so may result in an infraction.

By signing and dating you are stating that you fully understand & agree to the rules of our Transitional Home.

X _____, Resident

X _____, Intake Worker