DISCLAIMER

By viewing, accessing and/or using all or any portion of this complimentary informational database and the Materials (hereinafter defined), you agree that you have read, understood and agree to the following terms and conditions on which they are being made available to you by the National Women's Shelter Network ("NWSN"). If you do not agree with all of the following terms and conditions, then you must not view, access, or use the Materials (hereinafter defined).

The NWSN is providing the documents, policies, procedures, information, forms and other materials in this database (collectively, "Materials") for your information purposes only and as samples used by other contributors to the NWSN, free of charge. Neither the NWSN nor any provider in the NWSN contributing to the Materials assumes any liability for the Materials and their contents. Provision of the Materials in this database is not intended to be an approval, endorsement or recommendation of any kind on the part of the NWSN or any contributor of all or any part of the Materials. The Materials are not a substitute for professional advice. The Materials are only samples, may be changed and/or updated in the future without notification, and may not be applicable to your or any other person or organization's particular situation. Your use of the Materials is entirely at your own risk, and you should not use the Materials for any purpose without seeking the advice of an attorney licensed to practice in your jurisdiction for your particular circumstances.

Further to that end, the NWSN and all contributors of the Materials assume no responsibility for and make no representations as to the accuracy, usefulness, completeness, legal effect, or suitability of the Materials for any particular purpose. THE MATERIALS ARE PROVIDED "AS-IS" AND "AS AVAILABLE," WITH "ALL FAULTS" and THE NWSN DISCLAIMS ALL WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EITHER EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, CONCERNING THE MATERIALS, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. THE NWSN FURTHER DISCLAIMS ALL LIABILITY OR RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONTENTS OF THE MATERIALS OR OTHERWISE ON THIS WEB PAGE.

Neither the NWSN or any contributor to the Materials is liable for personal injury or damages of any kind arising from the provision or use of all or any part of the Materials, including, but not limited to, whether arising directly or indirectly, death, damage, destruction, personal injury, lost profits, incidental, special or consequential damages. Further, the NWSN shall not be held liable for any use or misuse of the Materials. The posting of the Materials does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation.

The information included in this database and the Materials may not be copied, used, disseminated or published in any manner without expressly referencing the foregoing conditions.



Effective May 1, 2014
Updated December 15, 2014
Updated May 20, 2019
Updated January 2020
Updated January 2021
Updated February 2022
Updated March 2023

INCLUSIVITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

welcomes women experiencing homelessness of all ages, colors, races, religions, classes, national origins and ethnicity, without regard to mental or physical health (including HIV status and pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, including our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (both F to M and M to F), pangender/pansexual, non-conforming/fluid/non-binary, intersex, gender queer/questioning community (individually and collectively, LGBTQIA+), marital or familial status or income, without discrimination and without regard to the aforementioned characteristics or descriptions. Upon entry into the program, hereinafter referred to as "guests." xxxxxx serves as a safe haven and direct access point for unaccompanied youth ages 18-24 and victims of domestic, intimate partner and gender based violence, sexual harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sex trafficking and other gender based crimes; provided however victims of domestic and intimate partner violence in need of an undisclosed location may be referred to a certified domestic violence shelter.

Staff must show respect for all guests, including LGBTQIA+ guests, and take steps to request other guests do so as well, in furtherance of our goal to make a safe, welcoming, trauma-informed and inclusive environment for all.

One of the most important ways to respect a person is the language used to address, speak about and refer to them, using their preferred name (whether or not their legal name) and pronouns (e.g., "she/he/they, also referenced as her/him/them, and in the possessive, hers, his/theirs"). To that end, staff should address and refer to guests by their preferred names and pronouns and ask other guests to do the same.

Other policies and practices are essential to creating a safe, welcoming, trauma-informed and inclusive shelter which are included in this Inclusivity Policy, including our Zero Tolerance for Abuse Policy ("No Abuse Policy"), reflecting our commitment to non-violence principles, which are not limited to physical violence but include violence in the form of words and disrespectful conduct, and our HIPAA Manual. These policies will be regularly reviewed, supplemented and updated, at least annually each year, as necessary or appropriate, to better assure operates in ways that are true to its mission to honor the divine nature of all people.

ADMISSION POLICIES

Each person should be treated as an individual in a respectful manner that honors their chosen identity. Further to that end, it is important to us to respect each person's self-identified gender. Each person will be treated according to their self-identified gender. To do so, we will ask and honor in our admission practices and procedures their

self-identified gender. As a women's shelter, people who identify as women and our LGBTQIA+ community will be eligible for admission into the program as women or transgender individuals. By way of example, if a person says they are a woman, they will be treated as a woman, regardless of their presentation.

People who may not clearly identify as male or female or are in transition will be accepted into program if they are comfortable with such placement and feel safe. For example, a youth listed as biologically female at birth but in transition to a male identity may (or may not) feel that placement is the most appropriate option, given the alternatives within the continuum of care and their personal evaluation of which shelter placement may be safer. For those who identify as gender fluid, transitioning between female and male identities, intersex, pangender, queer or non-binary, it is important to talk with them about their privacy and safety needs and ask where they will feel most safe. We will endeavor to explore all available options within our capacity as a women's shelter. The conversation will address the individual's expressed privacy needs and personal safety, policies, available options in the continuum of care, any other housing or relocation options, support systems, and other issues of concern. Each individual should be allowed to make their own decision about the placement that best fits their safety needs, within the limits of our capacity and other available resources.

A person's gender does not depend on the gender assigned to them at birth or whether or not they have had surgery or other medical treatments. Such information will be treated confidentially by us in accordance with the terms of our written agreements.

A person's gender is not determined by their clothing choice or outward appearance, and does not have a gendered clothing requirement, other than to request that guests clothe their private parts both in public and in bedrooms/apartments, for the sake of other guests and their own privacy.

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

The Admission Application and Welcome Manual will include the following preface:

welcomes women of all ages, colors, races, religions, classes, national origins and ethnicity, without regard to mental or physical health (including HIV status or pregnancy), sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression, including our lesbian/gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, pangender/sexual, gender non-conforming/fluid/non-binary, queer and questioning community (LGBTQIA+), marital or familial status or income, or history of domestic, intimate partner and violence, sexual harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sex trafficking and other gender based crimes, without discrimination and without regard to the aforementioned characteristics or descriptions. Notwithstanding, victims of ongoing domestic and intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sex trafficking and other gender

based crimes in need of an undisclosed location may be referred to a certified domestic violence shelter; please alert us if this applies to you at any time during your stay with us. It is important to us to honor your self-identified gender, preferred name and pronouns, so please let us know this information below. Your private information will be treated confidentially by us in accordance with the terms of our written agreements."

Following the request of the legal name of an applicant, the Admission Application will include a line requesting an applicant's preferred name and preferred gender pronoun, such as:

"Your preferred name:				
"Preferred Pronoun:Other:	_She/Her _ ·"	He/	Him	They/Them
In addition and to better assure inquiry as to preferred rooming				
What is your current gender ide	ntity or which	do you identii	fy with most clo	sely?
Straight/Heterosexual	Lesbian/0	Gay	Bisexual	Intersex
Transgender				
Transwoman or in transition Transman or in transition Fe		, ,	•	ale
Pangender/pansexual QuestioningOthe				
Prefer not to answer				
All living units	troom, bathroo other guest tha	om with a priv	vate shower. D	,

Intake admission coordinators and counselors should review each person's completed application carefully to ensure they address the applicant by their preferred name and refer to the applicant at all times by their preferred pronoun. Likewise, they should endeavor to identify any special needs of the guest pertinent to mental and physical health limitations or constraints, privacy needs, and safety concerns related to placement within rooms available in the shelter.

Intake coordinators and counselors should discuss the following at intake and initial assessments:

- 1) respects all guests, including without limitation our LGBTQIA+ guests;
- 2) History of domestic, intimate partner and violence, sexual harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sex trafficking and other crimes of any kind, whether any of the foregoing is ongoing, and whether the applicant would like victims' services along with information in regard to those services. If ongoing, a determination of whether an undisclosed location for shelter is needed or desired and appropriate linkages with a certified domestic violence center and/or relocation.
- 3) Private information, such as private mental and physical health information (including HIV status and pregnancy), information about whether or not a person is LGBTQIA+ and medical treatments, and history of victimization, is treated as confidential in accordance with the terms of our written agreements;
- 4) non-violence policies, emphasizing that abuse, harassment and other violations of the non-violence policies are not allowed;
- 5) Regarding guests whose self-identified gender may be different than the one assigned at birth, it is important to talk with them about their privacy and safety needs and ask where they will feel most safe. We will endeavor to explore all available options within our capacity as a women's shelter. The conversation will address the individual's expressed privacy needs and personal safety, policies, available options in the continuum of care, any other housing or relocation options, support systems, and other issues of concern. Each individual should be allowed to make their own decision about the placement that best fits their safety needs, within the limits of our capacity and other available resources;
- 6) Mental or physical limitations and constraints, including whether a ground floor is essential to placement, difficulties with sleeping or being in close proximity to others, special privacy needs, assistance required with ADLs, and safety concerns;
- 7) Whether the guest prefers placement with LGBTQIA+ guests and available rooming placements, including the availability of private bathrooms/showers in all living units; and
- 8) Preferred names and pronouns.

In a confidential intake environment, staff should speak openly about special needs, safety concerns, demonstrating to guests that staff are aware of their concerns and safety, and staff care about their level of comfort, privacy and unique needs.

The intake coordinators and assigned counselors are responsible for notifying all other staff, including other counselors, health and wellness coordinators, employment coaches and resident managers, of preferred names and pronouns, as well as any special privacy, ADL, or safety needs.

ROOM ASSIGNMENTS AND SHARED ACCOMMODATIONS

Guests with children are sheltered in living units designed to accommodate infants and toddlers, including for example cribs, toddler beds, changing stations and other furnishings suitable for children. Two to three guests and their children share each living unit. Room assignments need to accommodate the number and size of children with

appropriate cribs, toddler beds and/or youth beds and the in-take coordinators and counselors should assure appropriate arrangements are made prior to placement.

Guests without children, age 25 and up, are generally sheltered in the living units on the second floor. Guests aged 18-24 with and without children are generally sheltered in the living units on the third floor. The third and fourth floors generally shelter adults aged 25 and up and their children. Exceptions are made depending on room availability, family configuration and special needs. Rooms are, by necessity, shared in each living unit and a single restroom bathroom with a private shower is available to all of the occupants of each living unit, though in some cases, two living units share a single private bathroom.

Individuals needing assistance with activities of daily living, such as bathing, dressing, use of restroom, eating or medication management (ADLs) must have appropriate support staff from outside the shelter, given the limitations on the shelter's staffing and resources. Counselors and resource coordinators will endeavor to identify resources to support guests needing assistance with ADLs or seek alternate placements where such support is more readily available. will accommodate to the extent possible staff from other agencies providing assistance with ADLs on-site, provided they check in with staff upon entering the grounds and adhere to rules and requirements.

To afford maximum privacy, LGBTQIA+ guests will be offered the opportunity to room with other LGBTQIA+ guests in the same living unit, if they state a preference for such, provided there is availability. will endeavor to identify at least one living unit on each floor for LGBTQIA+ guests at all times. For those who identify as gender fluid, transitioning between female and male identities, intersex, pangender, queer or non-binary, it is important to talk with them about their privacy and safety needs and ask where they will feel most safe.

At in-take, all guests should be advised of the fluid nature of room assignments and they may be asked to move from one room to another from time to time. We may not be able to explain the reasons for such a move due to privacy constraints and we ask in advance for their good spirited cooperation as we try and serve as many individuals in need, like themselves, as possible. Room reassignment is a strategy utilized in conflict prevention and resolution by management with some frequency; nonetheless, management should endeavor to honor, whenever possible, preferences of LGBTQIA+ guests as they relate to privacy and safety concerns.

All bathrooms in living units are private, single user restrooms with showers for maximum privacy. The private bathrooms in living units include locking handles to bathroom doors in each apartment to afford guests maximum privacy. Common restrooms throughout the facility are identified with welcoming signs for all genders.

The living units include an intercom system that connects to the front desk so all guests may contact staff quickly for help in the nighttime as needed.

HARASSMENT AND NON-VIOLENCE POLICIES

In furtherance of creating a welcoming, trauma-informed and inclusive environment, has adopted its No Abuse Policy, including the following zero tolerance for abuse and violence rule, which is posted visibly at the shelter and incorporated in the written agreements of all guests: ********* Seeks to maintain a sanctuary conducive to healing of body, mind and spirit for all Guests and their children. To that end, has established a "ZERO TOLERANCE" policy for abuse or violence of any kind, including both physical and verbal, and/or the use and/or possession of weapons of any kind. tolerance for abuse and violence policy includes a prohibition against all kinds of abuse (both physical and emotional), harassment, gossip, exploitation, threats, and violence or threatened violence, physical or verbal, against adults, children, animals, and property. No hitting, pinching, spanking, pushing, shoving, or physical or verbal fighting of any kind is allowed. No disrespectful conduct or language, slurs or swearing is permitted. Mothers are responsible for supervising their children to ensure their children comply with these and all rules. Everyone should be treated with respect and courtesy and addressed by their preferred name and pronoun ("she", "he" or "they"); kindly ask if you do not know. Violation of these rules may result in the immediate departure from XXXXXX of the guest involved. You will be held accountable for any violation of the rules by others who are acting or claim to act on your behalf, whether or not those persons live in the shelter. Mothers will be held accountable for any violation of the rules by their children.

Conflicts and differences between guests must be resolved peacefully with assistance from the staff and/or Clinical Directors, Deputy Directors, Director, and/or Executive Director. Ask staff to intervene in the case of emergencies; please refer to the Consciousness Raising (Grievance) Policy for the way to resolve all other issues. Failure to participate in peaceful conflict resolution may result in immediate termination from the for the guests involved."

Intake coordinators and counselors are required to review this very important rule with every guest and each guest is required to evidence their agreement to adhere to the rule in writing prior to acceptance for admission to Staff are required to adhere to the No Abuse policy in all respects at all times.

All guests should be encouraged to notify management via the Consciousness Raising (or Grievance) Policies and Procedures of any grievances, such as abuse, harassment, disrespectful conduct, and other violations of the non-violence policies, so that the

allegations can be investigated and remedial steps taken by staff, where necessary or appropriate.

Abuse and harassment of all kinds against any guest or staff is prohibited, in accordance with the Foundation's No Abuse Policy, which is not limited to physical violence and may include words, disrespectful conduct, threats, and harassment. No Abuse Policy includes both adult to adult, adult to child, and in the case of children age 12 and older, child to child violence. Hence, children are equally protected and physical forms of punishment are prohibited. In child and family therapies and parenting classes required mothers can learn nurturing parenting skills with alternative forms of effective discipline. Likewise, in both individual and group counseling guests are given tools to enhance their communication skills, cope with stress, resolve conflicts peacefully and build resilience.

If any person, staff or guests alike, violate the No Abuse Policy, staff must step in and act decisively to stop such abuse or violence, notify management, and promote compliance non-violence policies, in addition to following the specific steps outlined in the No Abuse Policy.

CONFIDENTIALITY

has adopted a HIPAA Manual, to which reference is made, to better assure the protection, integrity, and confidentiality of private health information. A LGBTQIA+ identity, mental and physical health (including HIV status) and medical treatments, as well as histories of victimization, will be treated as protected health information in accordance with the HIPAA Manual.

Nonetheless, some guests are open about their LGBTQIA+ identity, and such information may be known to one or more or all guests at the shelter. Staff should refrain from discussions about guests to other guests, regardless of their knowledge about such guests.

STAFF DIVERSITY AND TRAINING

staff is multi-racial, multicultural, ethnically diverse, with a wide range of ages and professional qualifications and includes representation by individuals that identify as LGBTQIA+. Consistent with principles of empowerment on which was founded and their unique experience, position as role models and passion for our mission, strong preference will be given in hiring to program alumni whenever there are openings where alumni may be suitable. We recognize the importance of investing in our alumni staff through education and creating opportunities and pathways for greater responsibility and promotion for alumni of the program.

Training for all staff is an essential foundation to assuring a welcoming, safe, trauma informed environment that honors and respects the diversity of all guests, including without limitation LGBTQIA+ guests. Training for all staff will be diverse and cover a wide range of topics, including basic competencies, behavioral health, HIV, substance abuse, conflict resolution, violence prevention, and racial, cultural, ethnic, sexual orientation and gender diversity. Some staff trainings will be conducted by managers and directors; other trainings may utilize the services of outside professional organizations and consultants.

has appointed at least one coordinator of LGBTQIA+ services, to create and implement specialized support services for LGBTQIA+ guests. In addition, the LGBTQIA+ Coordinator, in concert with the Director, Executive Director and Human Resources will help to oversee gender diversity education for all guests All staff are required to participate in gender diversity trainings, and this Inclusivity Policy as it relates to the operations and programming Counselors and resource coordinators should be knowledgeable about procedures for changing a person's name and gender markers, non-discrimination laws, and available resources and support services for the LGBTQIA+ community. For more detail see our Team Support Protocol.

The Health and Wellness team of which also volunteers overseeing the free clinic should endeavor to be knowledgeable about the special health issues of, care and resources for LGBTQIA+ guests and ways to make the clinic and all services provided respectful, welcoming and sensitive to LGBTQIA+ community.

SPECIALIZED SUPPORT SERVICES

will strive, within the limits of its available resources, to provide holistic, culturally competent, trauma-informed, gender specific programming and services to meet the needs of the diverse, multicultural, multi-ethnic population of adults, youth and children it shelters, including without limitation our LGBTQIA+ guests, youth and children.

Intake, counseling and resource coordination will be available in English, Spanish and Creole. The Foundation utilizes a translation service for other languages as needed. Reference is made to the Translation Services Protocol to assist those with language barriers.

Based on principles of education and empowerment, trauma-informed format, providing free shelter and wrap-around support services for up to a year, that address the gender specific needs of guests experiencing homelessness, including without limitation LGBTQIA+ guests and those with histories of victimization. Individual and group counseling, utilizing evidence based counseling series, arranging access to medical and mental health care, transportation services, educational and vocational training assistance and job readiness training, computer

classes, financial literacy workshops, linkages to child care and educational supports, and job readiness training and employment assistance are part of this wrap around support system.
also offers a host of enrichment activities for all guests providing alternative pathways to healing, growth and creative self-expression, such as yoga, meditation, arts and crafts, creative writing, and field trips in the community, like botanical gardens, museums, parks and beaches.
Specialized maternity supports assist homeless, pregnant guests and their infants with specially outfitted rooms for guests and their babies, helping to arrange prenatal and pediatric care, and providing infant mental health screening, baby supplies from strollers, car seats and blankets to bottles, formula and diapers, linkages to early childcare and education, and a host of support services needed to better assure these special families have a safe, fresh start together.
children's services supplements other programs with a host of child and family centered services, individual assessments, child and family therapies, classes in nurturing parenting skills, educational and play activities for children, meals, clothing, educational supports, access to medical and mental health care and more. operates six classrooms in the on site and linkages for early childcare and education may be offered, in addition to linkages to a wide range of child care resources available through the Early Learning Coalition.
youth programming (ages 18-24) provides specialized programming and support services to assist unaccompanied high school age youth complete high school and go on to college, the military service or vocational training and work. Designed to foster positive youth development, provides a nurturing and supportive "home" environment for these special youth, with linkages and essential support for educational and vocational success, individual and youth group counseling, and preparation for independent living.
program offers specialized support services for our LGBTQIA+ community including: weekly support groups providing positive interactions with other LGBTQIA+ individuals, enrichment, education and advocacy; linkages to LGBTQIA+ agencies and involvement with community activities for additional enrichment, advocacy and support services; coordination with school liaisons and youth programs to identify and support LGBTQIA+ youth experiencing homelessness; and community education/advocacy regarding LGBTQIA+ homelessness.
staffed by compassionate volunteers, making linkages to various federally qualified community health networks and clinics, non-profit service providers, specialty care

volunteers, , and , for medical, mental health, dental and eye care, as well as health education.
provides free clothing for guests and furnishings for their move out, and serves as a working classroom with basic job readiness training, retail job training and a barista program. Also serves as the donations center for the shelter. Managed and staffed entirely by alumni and guests, it is a living example of the principles of empowerment underlying the programming and philosophy of
More information on the research and design for each program referenced above can be found
Guests may access as many of the above programs during their stay as are appropriate to their individual needs and desires. Counselors and resource coordinators assist guests in identifying and accessing program support services and resources provided by the shelter and other agencies in the community.
WELCOMING DIVERSITY; PROMOTING A SAFE AND RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENT
will use signage, symbols and other imagery in flyers and postings in the common areas of the facilities to promote a safe, welcoming, empowering and inclusive environment in furtherance of this Inclusivity Policy (e.g., diverse, multi-cultural imagery, rainbows, pink triangle and Rainbow logo).
Prepared by:

Copyright 2014, Updated May 2019, Updated January 2020, Updated January 2021, Updated February 2022, Updated March 2023

DISCLAIMER

By viewing, accessing and/or using all or any portion of this complimentary informational database and the Materials (hereinafter defined), you agree that you have read, understood and agree to the following terms and conditions on which they are being made available to you by the National Women's Shelter Network ("NWSN"). If you do not agree with all of the following terms and conditions, then you must not view, access, or use the Materials (hereinafter defined).

The NWSN is providing the documents, policies, procedures, information, forms and other materials in this database (collectively, "Materials") for your information purposes only and as samples used by other contributors to the NWSN, free of charge. Neither the NWSN nor any provider in the NWSN contributing to the Materials assumes any liability for the Materials and their contents. Provision of the Materials in this database is not intended to be an approval, endorsement or recommendation of any kind on the part of the NWSN or any contributor of all or any part of the Materials. The Materials are not a substitute for professional advice. The Materials are only samples, may be changed and/or updated in the future without notification, and may not be applicable to your or any other person or organization's particular situation. Your use of the Materials is entirely at your own risk, and you should not use the Materials for any purpose without seeking the advice of an attorney licensed to practice in your jurisdiction for your particular circumstances.

Further to that end, the NWSN and all contributors of the Materials assume no responsibility for and make no representations as to the accuracy, usefulness, completeness, legal effect, or suitability of the Materials for any particular purpose. THE MATERIALS ARE PROVIDED "AS-IS" AND "AS AVAILABLE," WITH "ALL FAULTS" and THE NWSN DISCLAIMS ALL WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EITHER EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, CONCERNING THE MATERIALS, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. THE NWSN FURTHER DISCLAIMS ALL LIABILITY OR RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONTENTS OF THE MATERIALS OR OTHERWISE ON THIS WEB PAGE.

Neither the NWSN or any contributor to the Materials is liable for personal injury or damages of any kind arising from the provision or use of all or any part of the Materials, including, but not limited to, whether arising directly or indirectly, death, damage, destruction, personal injury, lost profits, incidental, special or consequential damages. Further, the NWSN shall not be held liable for any use or misuse of the Materials. The posting of the Materials does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation.

The information included in this database and the Materials may not be copied, used, disseminated or published in any manner without expressly referencing the foregoing conditions.