

Open Door Women's Shelter Rules and Regulations

Open Door Women's Shelter (Shelter) is a non-profit Corporation whose mission is to provide safe temporary housing for women and their children who are experiencing homelessness while connecting them with skills and community resources which will enable them to transition into long-term, stable housing. Rules and regulations are designed to provide a framework to assist both the staff and residents achieve positive outcomes.

Individuals eligible for the Shelter's services include single women or women and their minor children (17 years of age and younger) who are able to meet their own physical needs outside of the Shelter during the day.

Due to the communal living environment, there is no reasonable expectation of privacy in any area of the Shelter. Residents understand that all storage areas, shelves, closets, furniture, or any area where residents, staff, or volunteers may keep clothing, money or personal items of any nature shall be subject to random, warrantless searches by ODWS staff. This is to ensure that the Shelter remains free from alcohol, illegal substances, and weapons. In addition, the Shelter is not responsible for the personal belongings of any resident.

In order to be admitted into the shelter residents must clear a national sex offender registry search. _____ Initial

DAILY SCHEDULE

Morning Schedule:

- 7:00 AM: Residents should rise by this time and prepare to leave for the day.
- 8:00 AM: Residents must leave the shelter.

Residents must take everything they need for the day with them when they leave the shelter.
_____ Initial

Evening Schedule:

- 6:00-7:00 PM: Check-in. Please notify Case Manager ASAP if you must miss curfew.
- 9:00 PM: Bedtime for children under 13 years old
- 9:30 PM: All residents must be in the Shelter for the night. Special consideration can be granted by Case Manager for job requirements or special events. Doors locked & alarm set at 10:00 PM nightly. **Residents begin preparing for lights out.**
- 10:00 PM: Kitchen closes
- 10:30 PM – Sunday – Thursday: Lights out and TV off. All residents must be in beds.
- 11:30 PM – Friday – Saturday: Lights out and TV off. All residents must be in beds.

RESIDENT BEHAVIORS AND RULES

1. Residents must be able to live independently and adhere to the Shelter's rules. We cannot accept persons who have a physical or mental health need beyond the scope of our services. RESIDENT MUST BE ABLE TO EXIT SHELTER DAILY AT 8AM AND CARE FOR HERSELF/HER FAMILY UNTIL 6PM. Once admitted, if we deem your needs to be beyond our capabilities, then your stay at the Shelter will be re-evaluated by the Case Manager. _____
2. The length of stay at the Shelter is three (3) months. Residents can be terminated for non-compliance of rules & regulations as determined by the Case Manager. A resident's stay can also be extended by the Case Manager. _____
3. Residents are not permitted to leave the premises, without staff approval, once checked in for the evening. **Visitors are not permitted on or near the premises outside of providing residents transportation.** These individuals should not exit their vehicle. _____
4. Pets are not permitted on the premises. Service animals will be considered by the Case Manager. _____
5. Residents are required to check-in the Shelter by 7pm, 10pm if pre-approved by Case Manager due to job requirement or other approved reason. Missing curfew is a rule violation. Exceptions must be approved by the Case Manager. If a resident arrives after 7:00 PM without having communicated with the Case Manager, the Case Manager has the right to determine if the resident will be admitted that night. Residents who work into some evenings must provide a copy of their job schedule to the Case Manager. If you do not make curfew and do not communicate with ODCC staff for 24 hours, the Shelter considers you to have abandoned your residence with us. All belongings can be picked up after meeting with the Case Manager and doing an Exit Interview. Any personal items left behind over two (2) days will be considered abandoned _____
6. Residents using case management services will meet with the Case Manager weekly, or as schedules permit, to work on your individual action plan. See 'Case Management' below.

7. Residents are expected to be in the Shelter every night, outside of a single night away each month, which must be pre-approved by the Case Manager. It is understood that if a resident is away more often, then the resident has another option for housing. Residents are also given two late night passes (10pm)/month. _____
8. Residents must seek transportation and assistance for themselves. If you have any problems, please see the Case Manager. _____

9. There is to be no smoking, vaping, use of e-cigs, etc. inside the house. Residents caught using these items in the building could be terminated. A designated outdoor smoking area is available. No one will be permitted to exit the building to use these items after Shelter doors are locked at 10:00 PM each evening. Please dispose of cigarette butts appropriately. Vapes and smokeless tobacco, along with cigarette lighters will be collected upon arrival each night and redistributed to use outside throughout the evening and before exiting each morning. ABSOLUTELY NO OPEN FLAMES INSIDE. _____
10. No loitering on or near the premises between the hours of 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Residents should not sit on neighboring properties, park in neighboring parking lots or on the street across from ODCC. The Shelter reserves the right to have individuals removed for trespassing in accordance with a trespassing notice filed with the Washington Police Department. _____
11. Residents are not permitted to use or possess alcohol or illegal drugs on the property for the length of their stay. Possession can result in immediate dismissal. Illegal substances WILL BE DISPOSED OF, not held. Random searches can be initiated and carried out by staff at any time.

12. Residents with a substance abuse history are able to work with the Case Manager to initiate and maintain treatment. _____
13. Firearms are not permitted on the property. If a firearm is found, the police will be contacted immediately and the resident will be dismissed from the Shelter. Personal items which may be used to cause bodily harm, as determined by the Shelter's staff, should be turned in and stored nightly and will be returned upon exiting the Shelter each morning. Nondisclosure of the possession of any weapon, deemed a threat to others by ODCC staff, can result in immediate dismissal. _____
14. Violent acts, provocative words, profanity, threats, arguing or petty bickering, physical or verbal, towards fellow residents, staff members and volunteers will NOT be tolerated and could result in immediate dismissal. _____
15. Respect the privacy of others by staying out of their affairs and staying focused on your goals and plans while here. No recording or photographing of anyone on the property is allowed. If you have difficulties with other residents, seek out the assistance of staff. _____
16. Larceny, vandalism or destruction of ODCC property or the property of other residents will not be tolerated and can result in immediate dismissal from ODCC. _____
17. No sexual activity of any form will be allowed, including but not limited to, touching, kissing, fondling, holding and sexual intercourse. _____

18. Residents are required to complete their assigned chores on a daily basis to the standard that is set and explained by the Shelter's staff. _____
19. Please be considerate of other residents in regards to time spent in rest rooms. Time limits will be set when conflicts arise. _____
20. Locker/storage inspections will be conducted randomly. No food should be stored in your room. Food and drinks are permitted ONLY IN THE KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM, with the exception of water. All personal food must be stored in the designated kitchen cabinets and your space in the refrigerator. Each item should be marked with your name or initials. If food and drinks are not marked, then it is considered available to all residents. PLEASE NO GUM IN THE SHELTER. _____
21. Small appliances will be considered on a case by case basis; however, extension cords are not permitted to be in the Shelter as they are a fire hazard. Audio devices are allowed when used with headphones. Items found in violation could be confiscated. Medical equipment must be approved by the Case Manager. _____
22. Personal hygiene should be attended to daily. This includes bathing and regular use of toiletry items as well as properly laundered clothing. If any personal hygiene items are needed, please inform the Shelter's staff. _____
23. Towels, washcloths, and laundry bags may be hung on devices provided for such use. **Please do not hang items on the railing of the beds.** Please store all personal belongings neatly in plastic containers provided. A staff member will request that any belongings placed on unoccupied beds, in aisles, or on railings be removed by residents. _____
24. Appropriate, non-revealing clothing and footwear (to protect your feet) must be worn at all times. _____
25. At 10:30 PM (11:30 PM Friday & Saturday night), cell phones are to be turned to silent and all activity should cease. Residents may use ear buds to view phone/device after lights out. Please dim screen in consideration of roommates. _____
26. Visitation between residents may not occur in bedrooms (outside of your roommates), only in the common area. _____
27. Residents are not permitted to let anyone into the Shelter without staff permission. Residents should not answer the doors should someone knock/ring. _____
28. In the event of inclement weather such as a hurricane, when emergency shelters are open, the Shelter will be closed until it is safe for residents and staff to return. _____

29. Please turn off the lights inside and outside during the day. Please make sure water is not left running and minimize shower time to conserve utilities and out of consideration for others. _____
30. Please refer to and comply with the kitchen rules posted on the refrigerator. _____
31. Residents are responsible for the safe storage and appropriate usage of all medications. **Medications are to be kept in your locker with the combination lock engaged.** Medications which require refrigeration are to be given to staff for storage in the **office refrigerator**. It is the resident's responsibility to ask for the medicine to be taken as prescribed and then returned to the employee on duty to be put back in the refrigerator. _____
32. Residents should not enter the office at any time. _____

The ODCC Case Manager and Executive Director reserve the right to dismiss any resident at any time. _____

Case Management

Case management is available, but not required, for a resident living in the Shelter. The purpose of case management is to learn skills to live a more stable and independent life. Consistent stay at the Shelter is critical to meeting mission goals. The Case Manager will utilize community resources and referrals that match closely with each resident. The resident using case management is required to meet with the Case Manager weekly to progressively work towards meeting the goals that are created and agreed upon by the Case Manager and resident.

If a resident has a grievance with the Case Manager they should contact the Executive Director at (252)833-8514. If any resident has a grievance with the Case Manager and Executive Director, call the Board President, Sally Love, at (252)945-2148.

FOR RESIDENTS WITH CHILDREN

- Residents are fully responsible for their children (17 and under) while residing at The Shelter, administering appropriate discipline as needed. Children left unattended on the premises will be reported to the Department of Social Services.
- It is the parent's responsibility to provide appropriate consequences for the child's misbehavior. Inappropriate discipline, as defined by state statute, will be reported to the Department of Social Services. When necessary, appropriate punishment is encouraged.
- ODCC does not condone any form of corporal punishment of children while on Shelter property. Corporal Punishment, commonly referred to as physical discipline or spanking, is the application of physical force, including striking with the hand or with an object, against the body of another.
- All children under 13 years of age must be in their sleeping area and quiet by 9:00 PM each evening.
- No children under 10 years of age in the kitchen at any time.
- It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to work with the school of origin to enroll the child or youth, arrange for transportation to and from the school of origin, and work with the school to arrange appropriate childcare if needed.
- In determining the best interests of the child or youth, to the extent feasible, the child or youth will be kept in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the child's or youth's parent or guardian, for the duration of homelessness. The school of origin means the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

Illness

ODCC will make every effort to provide staff to open the Shelter during the day if a child is sent home from daycare or school due to illness. The child's parent/guardian must stay at the Shelter to provide care (prepare food, clean up after vomiting, etc.) and arrange for medical diagnosis for treatment. The child will stay in the family's room (due to concern of children not correctly washing hands, runny noses, coughing without covering mouth, etc. and thereby spreading germs) until well enough to return to daycare or school. **If staff is not available, parent/guardian will have to make other arrangements.**

Fever guidelines (USING ODCC'S THERMOMETER):

Up to 3 months, if there is a fever of 100.5 or higher, they must see a doctor right away.

3 months to 1 year, if there is a fever of 100.5 or higher, they must be seen within 24 hours of fever onset.

1 year and older, if there is a fever of 100.5 or higher, they must be seen within 48 hours of fever onset.

Playground Policy

The playground is for the use of children 10 years of age and younger. The playground will be unlocked by staff at the resident's request. Please do not allow children to climb the fence. If your child(ren) is outside you must remain outside to supervise them at all times. A Playground Rules form must be signed by resident prior to use.

I have read, understood, and will comply with each of the policies above regarding my child(ren). _____

Anti-Discrimination Policy

In compliance with the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Equal Access Rule, Open Door Women's Shelter, its staff, volunteers and contractors, will not discriminate on the basis of: race, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, ancestry, religion, age, LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, etc) status, domestic or sexual violence victim status.

Equal Access Policy

ODCC staff, volunteers and contractors will not deny any eligible person facilities, services, or other benefits. We will not provide services that are different, or are provided in a different form, from that provided to others under the program. We will not subject any person to segregated or separate treatment in any facility or in any manner or process related to receipt of any service or benefit under the program. We will not restrict in any way access to, or the enjoyment of any advantage or privilege enjoyed by others in connection with facilities, services, or other benefits under the program. We will not treat any person differently from others in determining whether the person satisfies any admission, eligibility, or other requirement or condition, which individuals must meet to be provided shelter, services, or other benefits provided under the program. We will not deny meaningful access to persons with limited English proficiency, to include translated documents, notice of participant's rights, grievance forms, and other materials vital for program access or fail to work with language services or an interpreter to assist persons who speak an alternate primary language.

Right to Refuse Admission

Although ODCC is committed to providing services to all who qualify, ODCC retains the right to refuse shelter to any individual who presents a threat to staff or residents. Every reasonable effort will be made to rectify any concerns so that as many individuals as possible can be safely accommodated but ODCC does not guarantee admission into our program.

Grievance Policy

Anyone participating in ODCC services has the right to file a grievance/complaint about housing and services without retaliation from the party accused or any representative associated.

Grievances should be directed to the Executive Director at 252-833-8514 or opendoorccnc@gmail.com. If the grievance is against the Executive Director, the complainant should contact the Board President at flowerchild41@hotmail.com. It is the policy of ODCC that grievances are addressed immediately.

Adult Resident Illness

If an adult resident is unable to exit the Shelter in the morning due to illness, she must make an appointment to see a physician. ODCC staff will determine if an effort should be made to accommodate this situation by opening the Shelter for the day. If staff is unavailable to keep the Shelter open, the resident must make other arrangements outside of the Shelter.

Outdoor Grilling Policy

A barbecue grill is available for outdoor grilling. The grill should be wheeled out to the back of the parking lot. Staff will assist in starting and cleaning of the grill. Please be sure to store the bbq back under the covered back porch ONCE IT IS COOL.

Substance Abuse Policy

The Shelter does not condone substance abuse of any kind. If a resident comes into the Shelter under the influence of any substance, their behaviors will be taken into consideration concerning whether they will be allowed to stay in the Shelter that evening. Decision will be made by the Case Manager.

Inclement Weather Policy

ODCC is aware that certain severe weather may affect the physical wellbeing of those who are in need of shelter. The Shelter will make every effort to remain open when:

*The local weather indicates Extreme Weather conditions (i.e., excessive heat/cold warnings)

There is a tornado policy posted in the laundry room.

When hurricane warnings are posted and public shelters are opened in our area, ODCC will close and residents will be required to reside in a public shelter until ODCC is deemed safe for return.

Three Strike Policy

The Shelter will observe a three strikes policy. If a resident violates any of the aforementioned rules and regulations, the resident might be issued a strike.

- First Strike – Written warning signed by resident and Case Manager, noting broken rule(s).
- Second Strike – Meeting with the Case Manager to review rules and regulations. Written warning signed by resident and Case Manager, noting broken rule(s).
- Third Strike – The resident's stay will be terminated at the time of notification. Written warning signed by resident and Case Manager _____

Appeals Process

Adult residents who disagree with the reasons for dismissal may submit an appeal to the Case Manager within two business days of the original decision. If a resident is unable to write, the Case Manager will help with writing the appeal if notified within 24 hours of the original decision. Appeals are then submitted to ODCC's Appeals Committee. The resident has the right to meet with the Appeals Committee within two business days of receipt of the appeal by the Case Manager and present her case. The Appeals Committee must then render a decision within 5 business days. The resident may not stay at the Shelter until the Appeals Committee has heard the appeal and has rendered its decision.

Readmission Eligibility

Residents who received services from ODCC one time may be eligible to return as determined by the Case Manager. Residents who have received our services twice in the past may be eligible for a third stay after six months, depending on the circumstances of previous stays and current circumstances. After receiving services three times, the resident is ineligible to return.

Ineligible clients may make a Hardship Appeal through the appeals process for extenuating circumstances.

I, _____, have read and understand all rules and regulations stated above. I understand that if any rules are violated, I will be subject to any disciplinary action specified above or at the discretion of the administrative staff of the Open Door Women's Shelter. I understand that all personal belongings are my responsibility and that they can be searched at any time by the Shelter staff without warning or provocation in accordance with the policy stated above. I understand that there are reasons, as stated in the aforementioned rules & regulations that could result in my immediate dismissal from the Shelter.

Resident Signature

Date

Case Manager Signature

Date

ADDENDUM

October 1, 2023

Addition of Day Center

A 3-6 month pilot program to improve positive outcome

Open Door Women's Shelter will pilot a Day Center program beginning November 1, 2023 and continuing through January 2024, unless otherwise stated.

The Day Center will be run by staff and volunteers and will open the Shelter 8am-6pm two days a week, Sunday and Wednesday.

The purpose of the Day Center program is to 1) provide respite for residents and 2) to provide enrichment opportunities for residents.

RESPITE & ENRICHMENT

Our hope in opening the Shelter during the day twice a week is to offer residents the space to rest and to work on their personal goals. We hope this will alleviate the stress of having to find somewhere to be 7 days a week from 8am-6pm.

We will be bringing in community members that offer expertise in various areas of life. These include, but are not limited to, parenting classes, financial literacy, resume building, interview skills, and coaching. The enrichment we schedule will be client-directed so residents should share what types of classes they'd like to see brought into the Shelter with the case manager.

Resident participation is strongly encouraged and residents will earn incentives for participation.

Resident expectations and rules will be shared with current residents by the case manager and future residents upon intake.

Your input is valuable to the continuation of this program. Please share all ideas, concerns, etc. with the case manager. We hope this program proves beneficial for you short and long term.

Laurie Stewart
Executive Director
(252)833-8514

