

Open Door Women's Shelter Rules and Regulations

Open Door Women's Shelter (Shelter or ODWS), a program of Open Door Community Center, 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 in achieving 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.**

DAILY SCHEDULE

Morning Schedule:

- 7:00 AM: Residents awake/preparing to leave for the day on days we are closed.
- 8:00 AM: Residents must leave the shelter on days we are closed.

****On days we are open, residents should be dressed and ready for the day by 9am OR the time enrichment class begins, whichever is earliest.**

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. We cannot accept persons who have a physical or mental health need beyond the scope of our services. RESIDENTS MUST BE ABLE TO EXIT SHELTER, ON THE DAYS WE ARE CLOSED, 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 will be evaluated weekly by the Case Manager, Executive Director, and the resident herself. 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 without the consent of the Case Manager.** These individuals should not exit their vehicle. _____
4. Pets are not permitted on the premises. Registered service animals will be considered by the Case Manager. _____
5. Residents are asked to check in the Shelter by 7pm daily, 10pm unless pre-approved by Case Manager. If you do not make curfew and do not communicate with ODWS staff for 24 hours, the Shelter considers you to have abandoned your residence with us. Any personal items left behind over two (2) days without communication 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. It is understood that if a resident is away more often, then the resident has another option for housing. _____
8. Residents should communicate transportation needs to Case Manager providing at least 48 hours notice. _____
9. No smoking, vaping, use of e-cigs, etc. inside the house. 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. 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 ODWS. 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 with probable cause. _____
12. Residents with any active substance use disorder 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 ODWS 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. _____
15. Respect the privacy of others by staying out of their affairs and staying focused on your goals and plans. 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 ODWS property or the property of other residents will not be tolerated. _____
17. Residents are asked to complete their assigned chores on a daily basis to the standard that is set and explained by the Shelter's staff. _____
18. Please be considerate of other residents in regards to time spent in rest rooms. Time limits will be set when conflicts arise. Minimize shower time to conserve utilities and out of consideration for others _____
19. Locker/storage inspections can 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 they are considered available to all residents or might be disposed of. PLEASE NO GUM IN THE SHELTER. _____

20. Personal audio devices are allowed when used with headphones/earbuds. _____
21. 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. _____
22. Please store all personal belongings neatly in plastic containers provided so as to keep your bedroom space safe and clear for emergency exit. A staff member will request that any belongings placed on unoccupied beds, in aisles, or on railings be removed by residents.

23. Appropriate, non-revealing clothing and footwear (to protect your feet) should be worn at all times. _____
24. 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 earbuds to view phone/device after lights out. Please dim the screen in consideration of roommates. _____
25. No audio device, other than the shelter TV, should be used in the living area or in a shared bedroom without headphones/earbuds unless the resident is alone. If you need earbuds please ask the staff. *They will be provided if available.* _____
26. Residents are not permitted to let anyone into the Shelter without staff permission. Residents should not answer the doors should someone knock/ring. _____
27. 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. _____
28. Please turn off the lights inside and outside during the day. Please make sure water is not left running and that all fans, etc. are turned off. _____
29. Please refer to and comply with the kitchen rules posted on the refrigerator. _____
30. 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. _____
31. Residents should not enter the office at any time. _____

The ODWS 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, they can call the Board President.

FOR RESIDENTS WITH CHILDREN

- Residents are fully responsible for their children (17 and under) while residing at the Shelter, making sure their children are never left unattended for any amount of time. If mom needs to use the restroom or run out to her vehicle she should request the shift staff or volunteer watch her child(ren) for no longer than five minutes and children should be left with this individual in the living area, within sight of cameras.
- Children over 6 years of age, who are able to sit unattended in the family's bedroom or the living space, without running out, can do so while their mom runs to the restroom or vehicle for no more than 5 minutes.
- 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, administering appropriate discipline as needed. Inappropriate discipline, as defined by state statute, will be reported to the Department of Social Services. When necessary, appropriate punishment is encouraged.
- ODWS 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 without direct supervision of the mother.
- 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

ODWS will make every effort to provide staff or volunteers 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 ODWS'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 under 10 years old. 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 Policy and Release of Liability must be signed by the 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. Open Door Women's Shelter will not deny a mother entry into our shelter without her children. As long as her child(ren) is 17 years of age or younger, regardless of gender identity of children and or mother(s), and as long as we have beds available, mother can enter with her children. Open Door Women's Shelter does not discriminate against potential clients on the basis of religion or religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice.

Equal Access Policy

ODWS 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 ODWS is committed to providing services to all who qualify, ODWS retains the right to refuse shelter to any individual who presents a physical 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 ODWS does not guarantee admission into our program.

Grievance Policy

Anyone participating in ODWS 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 sally.love41@gmail.com. It is the policy of ODWS 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 illegale substance use of any kind within the confines of the Shelter. 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 and/or Executive Director.

Inclement Weather Policy

ODWS 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 and hall closet. These are the safe areas and are equipped with water and flashlights.

When hurricane warnings are posted and public shelters are opened in our area, ODWS will close and residents will be required to reside in a public shelter until ODWS 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 re-evaluated by Case Manager and Executive Director. In extreme cases, where the safety of others is a concern, resident could be terminated.

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 ODWS'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 ODWS 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.

Confirmation of Receipt and Understanding of ODWS Rules & Regulations

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

Supportive Service Access Plan

Open Door Women's Shelter, a program of Open Door Community Center

Purpose: to outline the process and resources available for accessing supportive services for individuals experiencing homelessness.

1. Introduction

The Open Door Women's Shelter is committed to providing comprehensive support to individuals experiencing homelessness in our community. This Supportive Services Access Plan is designed to facilitate access to a range of services aimed at addressing the various needs of our clients.

2. Eligibility Criteria

Open Door Women's Shelter provides emergency shelter for single women or women and their children experiencing homelessness. We are committed to providing low barrier shelter entry because all deserve equal access to safe shelter. ODWS staff will provide any eligible person facilities, services, or other benefits regardless of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, ancestry, religion, age, LGBTQ+ status, domestic or sexual violence victim status.

3. Service Offerings

- a. Emergency Shelter
 - i. Access to bed & locked personal storage
 - ii. Personal bedroom for families
- b. Case Management
 - i. One-on-one goal setting and weekly accountability
 - ii. Referrals to healthcare, mental health, substance abuse counseling
 - iii. Assistance with navigating social services and benefits programs
 - iv. Assistance with financial literacy
 - v. Assistance with access to permanent housing
- c. Enrichment Classes
 - i. Opportunities for personal growth/life skills support through client-directed enrichment classes
- d. Basic needs Support
 - i. Food assistance
 - ii. Clothing and personal hygiene supplies
 - iii. Transportation assistance
- e. Day Center (extended operating hours) open for respite 4 days per week

4. Access Procedures
 - a. Walk-in Services: Individuals can access our services by visiting our property during evening hours. Walk-ins are welcome, no appointment required, after 6pm, 7 days per week.
 - b. Referrals: Referrals can be made by other social service agencies, healthcare providers, law enforcement, community members, or self referrals.
5. Client Rights & Responsibilities

OPEN DOOR WOMEN'S SHELTER

Client Rights & Responsibilities

Open Door Women's Shelter respects the rights and dignity of the people it serves and treats them in a non-coercive manner. The rights and responsibilities are established for clients accessing services at Open Door Women's Shelter. The rights and responsibilities include:

RIGHTS:

- The right to feel safe in the shelter and associated programs.
- The right to progress through the Shelter's programs at your own pace & level of comfort.
- The right to be considered for accommodation and housing based on fair policies.
- The right to receive help finding and staying in suitable housing on a long-term basis.
- The right to be treated with respect regardless of your race, status, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, or beliefs.
- The right to be informed of your human, legal, and civil rights, and to speak up when you feel they have been violated.
- The right to be informed about the policies of ODWS that have a direct impact on you.
- The right to be informed and included in the decisions made about you and your family.
- The right to confidentiality in accordance with the *Private Information Protection Act* and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* unless a signed release is in place.
- The right to participate actively in developing your self-sufficiency plan.
- The right to receive help when applying for income assistance, employment and health services, educational opportunities and other support services.

- The right to make a complaint or appeal a decision you do not agree with and receive an answer that makes sense to you.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- The responsibility to respect the rights of others to feel safe.
- To sign 'Release of Information' forms necessary to provide appropriate services to you.
- The responsibility to respect the cultural backgrounds and privacy of other ODWS residents.
- The responsibility to follow schedules and rules of ODWS and its programs.
- The responsibility to let Case Manager know if you are unable to keep an appointment and need to reschedule.
- The responsibility to be honest regarding your personal situations and to share information that will enable staff to serve you better.
- The responsibility to attend all required orientation and program information sessions.
- The responsibility to work out problems with Case Manager and staff in a respectful manner being tolerant of opinions that differ from yours through established processes and procedures.
- The responsibility to inform staff if you feel that any staff member has breached the code of ethics, confidentiality, or has treated you unfairly.

6. Grievance Procedures

Anyone participating in ODWS 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 sally.love41@gmail.com. It is the policy of ODWS that grievances are addressed immediately.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

Our organization is committed to continuously monitoring and evaluating our services to ensure effectiveness and quality improvement. Feedback from clients, staff, and community partners is often solicited and utilized to make informed decisions about programmatic changes. We do this through use of survey forms distributed to staff during scheduled employment reviews, to clients, and to volunteers. We also regularly discuss/evaluate programs and policies at monthly staff meetings.

8. Conclusion

The Supportive Services Access Plan outlines the procedures and resources available for individuals experiencing homelessness to access assistance through Open Door Women's Shelter. We remain dedicated to supporting our clients on their journey toward stability and self-sufficiency.