

Georgia Department of Human Resources Approval Standards for Family Violence Shelter Contractors

I. Standards Creation/Maintenance

- A. These standards were created by DHR in 1996 with input from family violence contractors, the Georgia Coalition on Family Violence, Georgia Advocates for Battered Women and Children, and the Georgia Commission on Family Violence and will go into effect April 1, 1997 (with the exception of 24 hour shelter coverage which will go into effect October 1, 1998). The Standards document will be evaluated annually by DHR with input requested from interested parties.

II. Application for Approval

- A. The agency shall be a community-based organization established to serve an underserved or underserved area and/or population, as defined by the Department.
- B. The primary mission of the agency shall be to provide core services (described in section XII of this document), to clients and their children. A minimum of 80% of adults served by the agency must be victims of family violence.
- C. The agency shall receive 25 % of its total cash budget from local sources.
- D. Initial application shall be made on forms provided by the Department. Following written application, DHR will schedule an on-site inspection at which time the agency will be expected to demonstrate compliance with the standards and the ability to meet remaining contractual requirements.

III. Approval Maintenance

- A. After initial approval, unannounced annual visits to the agency will be made by the Community Programs Unit, Family Violence Program staff. Inspections may be made on a more frequent basis if deemed necessary by the Department. Results of the inspection will be given to the agency director on forms provided by the Department.
- B. An agency which is found to have deficiencies relating to the standards shall be required to submit a written plan of improvement to the Department. The plan shall list each deficiency, the method by which corrective action will be taken and the time required to make the correction. The Department shall provide technical assistance with respect to requirements for compliance with the standards and reasonable time for compliance.
- C. Approval is not transferable from one shelter to another, nor valid when there is a change in shelter location. Approval is required for each shelter located on different premises.
- D. The Department, upon written request, may grant waivers to specific rules and regulations when it is shown that the rule or regulation is not applicable or to allow experimentation and demonstration of new and innovative approaches to the delivery of services.
- E. An agency which fails to comply with the standards shall be subject to revocation of approval.
- F. Following a satisfactory inspection, an approval certificate shall be given to the agency. The approval certificate shall state the maximum number of persons

to receive shelter at that location. The approval certificate shall be readily available for inspection upon the request of interested persons.

- G. If the agency management or purpose changes, DHR shall be notified immediately. If the agency must close for any reason, all funding agencies shall be notified immediately and plans established by the agency regarding a system to insure continuation of agency services.

IV. Board

- A. Each agency shall have a Board of Directors, bylaws, a policies/procedures manual and an operations manual which shall be created, implemented and revised as needed by the board. A listing of recommended policies/procedures is in Appendix G.
- B. The board shall recognize its legal accountability and responsibility for all decisions which affect personnel, budgetary and program development policy. Board members should have an understanding of the issue and interest in the prevention of family violence and in the provision of direct services to victims of family violence.

V. Financial Management/Liability

- A. Policies and procedures regarding financial management shall be created, implemented, and revised as needed. A listing of recommended policies/procedures is in Appendix G.
- B. It is recommended that all agencies have Property Insurance and Directors and Officers Insurance. It is also recommended that agencies which allow staff/volunteers to transport clients in their personal automobiles keep on file a copy of the valid drivers license and insurance card of all staff/volunteers who transport clients.

VI. Personnel Management

- A. Policies and procedures regarding personnel management shall be created, implemented, and revised as needed. A listing of recommended policies/procedures is in Appendix G.
- B. The director is responsible for day-to-day management, staff supervision and carrying out the policies set forth by the board. The director serves as a liaison between the board and staff and is typically an ex-officio, nonvoting representative at board meetings.

VII. Use of Volunteers

- A. The agency shall demonstrate the utilization of volunteers.
- B. Policies and procedures regarding volunteer management shall be created, implemented, and revised as needed. A listing of recommended policies/procedures is in Appendix G.

VIII. Development and Training of Staff, Volunteers, and Board

- A. All staff and volunteers providing direct services shall complete a minimum of 10 hours training prior to being scheduled for work (for a listing of recommended training topics see Appendix B-1). Additionally, 10 hours of training shall be completed by each staff member and direct service volunteer annually

(for a listing of recommended training topics see Appendix B-2). A training manual shall be available to each participant.

- B. Training for all volunteers not providing direct services shall be determined by the volunteer's responsibilities, the amount of time contributed by the volunteer and administrative considerations related to the availability of training. Volunteers who do not provide direct services shall at minimum receive basic orientation about the duties they perform and sign a confidentiality statement.

C. Orientation for new board members shall include but not be limited to four hours of training (for a listing of recommended training topics see Appendix C).

IX. Residential Admission/Termination/Files

A. A qualified staff member or trained volunteer shall be available 24 hours a day to accept clients at the shelter. Residential policies and procedures shall be created, implemented, and revised as needed. A listing of recommended policies/procedures is in Appendix G.

X. Client Rights

A. Policies and procedures regarding client rights shall be created, implemented, and revised as needed. A listing of recommended policies/procedures is in Appendix G.

XI. Confidentiality for Clients

A. Policies and procedures regarding client confidentiality shall be created, implemented, and revised as needed. A listing of recommended policies/procedures is in Appendix G.

XII. Core Services

Services shall be available for male and female victims and their dependent children. Requirements for serving adult male victims may be met through referrals for shelter/housing, emotional support and legal/social service advocacy. A written resource list for male victims should be made available for staff and volunteers answering the crisis line. *Note: Recommended services (listed in Appendix D) are not required but recommended to be offered or an actively pursued goal of the agency.*

Policies and procedures regarding core services shall be created, implemented, and revised as needed. A listing of recommended policies/procedures is in Appendix G.

Core services include the following:

A. 24 Hour Crisis Line/Crisis Intervention

The crisis line shall be answered by a staff or volunteer who has completed the required training (see Section VIII of this document). An answering machine is not acceptable. A call forwarding system or answering service using trained individuals is acceptable. In this case, the victim shall make contact with an agency staff member or volunteer within 30 minutes. 24 hour crisis intervention should be available to callers and residents, which might include safety planning, emotional support, validating the victim's experience and feelings, information/ referrals regarding services, exploring options,

discussion of effects of violence on adults and children, etc. In addition, residents should have the opportunity to address grief/loss, anger, assertiveness skills, identifying coping skills etc.

B. Safe, Confidential Shelter

The agency shall provide safe, confidential shelter for clients on a 24 hour a day, 7 day a week basis. The shelter should provide 24-hour coverage with staff or volunteers who have completed the required training. All approved agencies will be required to comply with 24-hour coverage requirement by October 1, 1998.

C. Linkages with Community Agencies

The agency shall maintain linkages with community agencies/individuals for the provision of required services and train community agencies/individuals to further the aim of creating an environment that is sensitive and responsive to the needs of family violence victims and their children. Operational agreements regarding the provision of services should be established with these community agencies when possible.

D. Children's Services

Children's services (including a means, using volunteers or paid staff, for children to obtain counseling/support) shall be offered and direct service staff will be trained about these services and related policies and procedures.

E. Emotional Support

Emotional support shall be available to clients and referrals made as appropriate.

1. Individual - The agency shall provide a means for family violence victims to obtain individual counseling/support, when it is requested or deemed advisable by staff. Paid or volunteer advocates/counselors may provide this service. The service may be provided by the agency or through referral to an outside agency.
2. Support Groups - The agency shall provide support groups for clients. These structured and facilitated services shall be provided in a safe and accessible location at least twice monthly.

F. Community Education Services

The agency shall provide family violence education and prevention programs/information to the community.

G. Legal and Social Service Advocacy

The agency shall provide legal and social service advocacy to clients as needed.

H. Household Establishment Assistance

The agency shall, when requested, provide assistance to victims of family violence in establishing new permanent residences. The extent of assistance provided may depend upon resources available in the community.

I. Follow up Services

Follow up services shall be offered to each adult client as a part of the exit procedure. At minimum a safety plan should be created.

J. Parenting Support/Education

Parenting support/education shall be provided as needed for parents at the agency or through a written agreement with a referral agency.

XIII. Health and Safety Standards

- A. All facilities shall be maintained in conformity with regulations adopted by state and local fire marshals, Public Health, the GA Department of Natural Resources and those identified by DHR in Appendix E. Some regulating agencies may include annual inspections.

Appendix A

Definitions

- A. **Agency** means any program or shelter approved by DHR to provide services to family violence clients.
- B. **Approval** means authorization granted by the Department to any person or persons to operate a family violence agency. Such approval signifies satisfactory compliance with these standards and enables the family violence agency to receive monies allocated by the Department for its use.
- C. **Board** means the Board of Directors, the association, or the group of persons who maintain and control the agency and who are legally responsible for the operation of the agency. The board may be either (1) an independent governing body which has as its primary purpose the operation of a family violence agency, or (2) a coordinating body within a parent organization, which has as its primary purpose the operation of a family violence agency.
- D. **Client** means a person who has been subjected to family violence and who has sought and obtained services from a family violence agency. To qualify for residential services, a client shall be at least 18 years of age or an emancipated minor. Dependent children of clients may accompany their parent/guardian.
- E. **Department** means the Department of Human Resources of the State of Georgia or its duly authorized representatives.
- F. **Director** means the person designated by the governing body as responsible for the day-to-day management, administration and/or supervision of the family violence agency.
- G. **Family Violence** means the occurrence of one of the following acts between past or present spouses, persons who are parents of the same child, parents and children, stepparents and stepchildren, foster parents and foster children, or other persons living or formerly living in the same household
 1. Any felony; or
 2. Commission of offenses of battery, simple battery, simple assault, assault, stalking, criminal damage to property, unlawful restraint or criminal trespass. The term family violence shall not be deemed to include reasonable discipline administered by a parent to a child in the form of corporal punishment, restraint or detention. (Ga.L.1981, p. 880 1; Ga. L. 1988, p.1251 2; Ga. L. 1992, p. 1266, 3; Ga. L. 1993, p.1534, 3.)
- H. **Program** means any non-shelter agency approved by the Department which provides services to victims of family violence. A family violence program shall provide access to safe, emergency shelter. Requirements for programs are outlined in Appendix F.
- I. **Shelter** means any facility approved by the Department for the purpose of receiving on a temporary basis persons who are subject to family violence. Family violence shelters are distinguished from shelters operated for detention or placement of children only as provided in subsection (a) of Code Section 15-11-20 (Ga. Law 1981, p.663 1; Ga. Law 1983, p. 521 1).

Appendix B-1 Staff/Volunteer Initial Training

The content of the 10-hour staff/volunteer training may include, but not be limited to:

1. Awareness issues
 - a. Why men batter women - power and control issues, lethality of abusers
 - b. History of the battered women's movement
 - c. Forms of family violence (physical, emotional, etc.)
 - d. Clarification of myths and facts which perpetuate victim-blaming
 - e. Why battered women stay in or return to abusive relationships
 - f. Effects of family violence on children
 - g. Confidentiality
2. Skills development including:
 - a. Active/reflective listening
 - b. Problem solving, assisting in the development of safety plans
 - c. Crisis intervention
 - d. Values clarification
3. Information about community resources:
 - a. Information and referral; and
 - b. Confidentiality constraints
4. Legal Issues
 - a. Civil/criminal remedies
 - b. Child abuse and elder abuse reporting requirements

Appendix B-2 Staff/Volunteer Additional Training

The content of the additional 10 hours of staff/volunteer training may include but not be limited to:

1. Intervention Issues
 - a. Feminist approach to helping

- b. Empowerment and options counseling
- c. Advocacy
- d. Boundary issues
- e. Diversity issues (working with clients of different races, ages, classes, sexual preferences, religious backgrounds, persons with disabilities etc.)
- 2. Children's reaction to abuse
 - a. Coping with shelter environment
 - b. Coping with abuse, either witnessed or experienced
- 3. Victim's coping with communal living during crisis
- 4. Awareness Issues
 - 1. A discussion of sexism and violence against women to include the various forms of abuse; views of women throughout history, a history of women's victimization; other forms of violence against women
- 5. Drug and alcohol awareness and myths and realities in relation to battering
- 6. Mental health and mental retardation: myths and realities in relation to battering
- 7. Agency-related topics
 - a. History, philosophy of the agency
 - b. Organizational structure, functioning, staffing
- 8. Batterer's intervention programs
- 9. Program's policy on contact with batterer
 - a. Separation of services to victims and batterers, with emphasis on safety and confidentiality
 - b. Handling calls and contacts from batterer
- 10. State Commission on Family Violence and circuit task forces

Appendix C Board Training

A minimum 4 hour orientation for new members of the board may include but is not limited to the following:

- 1. Roles and responsibilities of board members
 - a. Role of governance/Legal responsibilities
 - b. Boundary issues (i.e. members serving as direct service volunteers).
 - c. Role in development/fundraising
 - e. Role in strategic planning
 - d. Program-related topics
 - i. History, philosophy of the agency
 - ii. Organizational structure, functioning, staffing
- 2. The following training topics listed in Appendix B-1: Sections 1, 3, 4
- 3. The following training topics listed in Appendix B-2: Sections 1, 8, 9 and 10

Appendix D Recommended Services

Recommended services should be available for all family violence victims, or the availability should be an actively pursued goal of the agency.

- 1. Coordination with Law Enforcement
 - a. Written procedures should be in place describing how services will be coordinated
- 2. Hospital Emergency Room Protocol and Assistance
 - a. The agency should consult with local emergency medical treatment facilities within the service area, to establish and/or maintain a plan for the treatment and assistance of family violence victims.
- 3. Children's Program
 - a. Activities should be planned for children emphasizing the following goals:
 - i. Exploring feelings and adjusting to shelter environment
 - ii. Conflict resolution skills development
 - iii. Building positive socialization skills
 - iv. Education regarding health and safety issues
 - v. Building self esteem
- 4. Linkages with Community Agencies
 - a. Translation services
 - b. Law enforcement
 - c. Legal services
 - d. Victim services
 - e. Services for persons with disabilities
 - f. Batterers intervention programs

g. Family planning services

Appendix E Health and Safety Standards

A. Bedding, Linen and Miscellaneous

Each agency shall provide an individual bed for each resident at least 36 inches wide and 72 inches long with comfortable springs, a protected mattress and a pillow.

2. Cribs shall be provided for infants.

B. Physical Plant

1. An agency shall be so constructed, arranged and maintained as to provide adequately for the health, safety and well being of its occupants.

2. Rooms used by residents during periods requiring artificial heat shall be provided with a safe and adequate source of heat and shall be maintained at a temperature of not less than 68F degrees during occupancy.

3. A shelter shall be equipped to provide an adequate amount of hot water for resident use, not to exceed 120 degrees.

4. At least one functional toilet, lavatory and bathing or showering facility shall be provided for each six residents residing in the shelter.

5. Bathrooms and toilet facilities without windows shall have forced ventilation to the outside. Bathroom windows used for ventilation shall open easily.

6. A shelter shall provide separate and distinct living and sleeping areas. All areas shall be well-lighted, heated and ventilated.

7. A room shall not be used as a bedroom where more than one-half of the room height is below grade, except when the ceiling of such room is located five feet or more above grade for more than 25% of the perimeter measurement of the room. Such below grade bedrooms shall have adequate natural light and ventilation and shall be provided with two useful means of egress. Control of dampness shall be assured.

8. Bedrooms for residents shall be separated from halls, corridors and other rooms by floor to ceiling walls which contain no openings except doorways.

9. Doorways of bedrooms occupied by residents shall be equipped with side-hinged, permanently mounted doors equipped with positively latching hardware which will insure opening of the door by a single motion such as turning a knob or by pressing with normal force.

10. Bedrooms shall have at least one window opening to the outside. Bedrooms shall be well ventilated.

11. Each bedroom shall be of sufficient size to provide ample space for necessary furniture and movement.

12. Areas shall be available for private interviews.

C. Safety

1. Interior stairways shall have sturdy and securely fastened handrails on at least one side. Exterior stairways and porches shall have handrails on the open sides.

2. Scatter or throw rugs on hard finished floors shall have a nonskid backing. If used, floor wax shall not present a hazard to residents.

3. Grab bars and non-skid strips of surfacing shall be installed in tub and shower areas.

4. Cooking appliances shall be suitably installed in accordance with approved safety practices. Where metal hoods or canopies are provided, these shall be equipped with filters.

5. Fire screens shall be provided for open flames. Protection devices shall be used for space heaters, floor furnaces, stoves and fireplaces. All combustible heaters shall be vented to the outside.

2. Electrical service shall be maintained in a safe condition and shall be inspected by a local fire marshal or qualified electrician. This inspection shall indicate approval of the electrical services by the fire marshal or electrician.

7. Smoke detectors shall be installed and maintained as required by local fire safety enforcement.

8. There shall be no lead paint or peeling paint in agency on walls, windows, stairs, furniture, cabinets, doors or porches.

9. Agencies shall provide that all external entrances or exits including windows, doors, skylights and cellars are securable.

10. Carbon monoxide detectors should be installed and inspected regularly in any facility using natural gas.

D. Water and Sanitation

1. Private water systems shall meet applicable State and local standards and/or regulations.

2. Sewage disposal systems shall meet the requirements of the Georgia Department of Human Resources

and/or the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and applicable local regulations.
3. Hand washing facilities provided in both kitchen and bathroom areas shall include hot and cold running water.

Appendix F Requirements of Programs

Programs will not be required to meet all standards pertaining to residential or facility health and safety matters.

Appendix G Recommended Written Policies and Procedures

Each agency shall have established policies and procedures regarding the creation/maintenance of a policy/procedures manual and an operations manual (which will include a copy of all agency forms). It is recommended that the manual(s) include the following:

Board

1. Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation and policies which define the powers and duties board, committees, administration, and any advisory groups.
2. Procedures and policies for selection of members, orientation procedures, criteria used for determining continued membership, rotation of members and election of officers.
3. Procedures and policies used for scheduling and conducting meetings including:
 - a. Schedule of meetings for the current year
 - b. Provisions for the calling and conducting of special meetings
 - c. Taking and transcribing of minutes
 - d. Quorum requirements
4. Procedures for evaluating board activities, services, staff, and volunteers, including service evaluations completed by clients.
5. An organizational chart which demonstrates the lines of responsibility and accountability including the board and its committees, staff and volunteer positions. Board committees may include executive, finance, nominating, personnel, services, building and grounds, outreach, development, and other committees as needed.
6. Policies encouraging the involvement of formerly battered women in all aspects of the program.
7. Policies/procedures regarding the hiring, dismissal and evaluation of the agency director and staff members. Policy should include a statement that the director must be at least 21 years of age.
8. Policy defining the director's authority in writing. This definition should include that the director shall attend and be permitted to participate in the meetings of the board and report information to the staff as deemed necessary by the board.
9. Policies and procedures outlining the responsibilities of the management and the shelter residents.
10. Program goals and objectives, including time frames and resources, based upon the nature of family violence in the community, funding and available resources, and federal, state and local developments affecting family violence issues.
11. Annual report.
12. Policy outlining services provided, criteria for receiving services and procedures outlining the creation/maintenance/distribution of prevention and education materials.
13. Designation of a person who will carry out the duties in the director's absence.
14. Procedures for gathering statistics and reporting such to DHR as required.
15. A board list which includes a minimum of seven members. The list should also include address demographic characteristics of each member. Membership, to the extent possible, should reflect the demographic characteristics of the community served and should include representative victims of family violence. A majority of members should reside in the community served.

Financial

1. Policy/procedures for the development and revision of the agency budget.
2. Procedure for handling accounts receivable, accounts payable, payroll, tax preparation, and donation acknowledgment.
3. Procedure for conducting an independent annual audit.
4. Procedures of internal control to insure adequate financial checks and balances.
5. Procedures for maintenance of cash receipts and cash disbursements journals on a monthly basis and reconciliation with bank statements.
6. Procedures for preparation and review of monthly and annual financial statements.

7. Policy requiring bonding or insuring of all staff or volunteers who have access to agency funds.
8. Policies/procedures for creating/implementing a yearly fundraising plan.

Personnel

1. Procedures for staff recruitment, selection, transfer, promotion, staff development, lay off and termination.
2. Policy outlining orientation for new staff which will serve as an introduction to the agency's philosophy, goals, policies and procedures.
3. Standards of performance and conduct (sexual harassment, work rules, tardiness and absenteeism, discipline and grievance/problem solving procedures and work performance appraisals shall be addressed).
4. Written job descriptions for all positions shall include but not be limited to:
 - a. Job title, hours of work, tasks and responsibilities of the job
 - b. Required skills, knowledge and experience
5. Personnel forms which shall include but not be limited to:
 - a. The application for employment or resume, W-4's, verification of citizenship.
 - b. Verification of previous training/experience such as copies of degrees/certificates, record of verbal confirmation from former employer(s) or reference(s) and record of all current staff training.
 - c. Salary information which should include the date of employment, starting salary, anniversary month, all salary increases/decreases (and reasons for change in salary), source of funds and authorization for a deduction or withholding of pay for benefits.
 - d. Work performance evaluations which are written, fair, accurate, discussed with the employee and a part of the employee's permanent record. The employee and supervisor shall sign and date the evaluation.
 - e. Documentation of disciplinary actions including written notification of the nature of misconduct or poor performance, the action being taken, the effective date of action, future consequences for recurrence etc.
 - f. Verification of criminal record checks for direct service staff and fingerprint checks for directors.
 - g. Verification of current First Aid and CPR certification.
 - h. Proof of physical examination within 6 months prior to or up to one month following employment and an annual TB screening thereafter.
6. Policy outlining definitions of employment classifications which shall include regular, full time employee, regular part-time employee, part-time employee, temporary employee, exempt and non-exempt employees.
7. Policy outlining payroll, scheduling and overtime practices which include hours of operation, meal periods, time sheets, flextime, overtime, pay periods and reimbursement procedures.
8. Policy outlining employee benefits: Required benefits as well as discretionary insurance benefits, eligibility, cost to employee and continuity after separation shall be addressed.
9. Policy outlining vacation, sick leave and compensatory time: rates of earning, yearly carryover and accumulation, approval procedure, and payment upon termination of employment shall be included.
10. Policy outlining leaves of absence such as medical leave, bereavement leave, jury duty, emergency leave, family or maternity/paternity leave etc.
11. Procedures for informing employees of information pertaining to staff benefits and changes, employment opportunities within the program and changes in personnel policies which affect the staff. What information is released, how, and by whom shall be addressed.
12. Procedures insuring the confidential maintenance of personnel records. Security, release of records, person(s) responsible for maintenance, as well as who has access to the records shall be addressed.
13. Policies regarding employee rights to include but not be limited to:
 - a. The employee right to inspect his/her records
 - b. The employee right to request the correction or removal of inaccurate, irrelevant, outdated, or incomplete information from his/her records
 - c. The employee right to submit rebuttal data or memoranda to his/her own records
14. Procedures for the implementation of federal, state and local laws concerning labor practices, including nondiscriminatory practices.

Volunteers

1. Policies and procedures outlining volunteer recruitment, selection, confidentiality, minimum training requirements, provisions for ongoing training, work rules, evaluations, dismissal and grievance procedures.
2. Policies designating one person to be responsible for agency volunteers. This person should interview each volunteer before scheduling to work.

3. Procedures for documenting both the number of volunteers and the number of volunteer hours worked.
4. Written job descriptions for each volunteer position. Volunteer job descriptions should utilize the same format staff job descriptions with a copy provided to each volunteer.
5. Policy requiring a file maintained for each direct service, unsupervised volunteer which includes at minimum a completed application, a signed confidentiality statement, documentation of training completed, criminal records check, first aid training certification, and proof of physical within 6 months prior to or 2 months after beginning work and a TB test annually thereafter.

Clients Rights/Confidentiality

1. Procedures for providing the following information to each adult service recipient as part of the intake process:
 - a. An explanation of services provided by the agency, shelter rules/confidentiality policy.
 - b. Policies/procedures for reporting child abuse.
 - c. Reasons for involuntary termination from the agency and grievance procedures relating to the provision of services.
 - d. Time limits regarding agency services.
2. Procedure for maintaining client records which shall include but not be limited to the following:
 - a. Intake form with identifying information including name, marital status, age, sex and address of previous residence
 - b. Admissions agreement
 - c. Dates of admission/exit
 - d. Service plan/documentation of services provided
 - e. Emergency health releases and name/phone/address of emergency contact person
 - f. Any pertinent medical information, including name of preferred physician, pharmacist and hospital
 - g. If dependent children accompany a resident into the shelter, the following information shall be obtained on each child: name, birth date, sex and any other pertinent medical information including name of physician
 - h. Child care releases (if applicable)
 - i. Record of monies and all other valuables entrusted to the agency for safekeeping
 - j. If offered as information, the forwarding address of the resident
 - k. Exit interview/service evaluation
3. Policies prohibiting the deprivation of any civil right solely by reason of their involvement with the agency.
4. Procedures outlining client access to telephone communication and usage.
5. Policy outlining client rights to inspect their own records. Policy will state that clients may request correction or removal of inaccurate, irrelevant, outdated or incomplete information from their records or submission of information to be added to their own records.
6. Policy that clients be made aware in writing of their right to appeal a reduction, denial or termination of services.
7. Nondiscrimination policy regarding the provision of services on the basis of political affiliation, religion, race, color, sex, handicap, age or national origin.
8. Policies and procedures regarding client termination from the program which state clearly defined reasons for involuntary termination and this information will be made available to clients.
9. Policy requiring that clients, visitors, staff and volunteers should sign a confidentiality statement regarding non-disclosure of the agency location or any client/staff/volunteer information.
10. Policy outlining who has access to records.
11. Policy requiring maintenance of client files in a secure location for a minimum of five years following termination of services.
12. Policy not to publish the agency location.
13. Policy/procedures which insure the confidentiality of client, staff and volunteers associated with health care issues.
14. Policy outlining instances in which information may be released without client consent (i.e. if a copy of a subpoena is present in the file).
15. Policy regarding personal information which shall be treated as confidential and shall not be disclosed

except to the resident, the staff, the Department and others for whom written authorization is given by the resident.

16. Policy requiring the agency to obtain an informed and voluntary written consent from the client for the disclosure of information contained in the client record. The consent shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Name of the person and agency to whom disclosure is made
 - b. Specific information disclosed/Purpose of disclosure
 - c. Dated signature of client or guardian and witness
 - d. Expiration date of the consent
2. Indication that the consent is revocable at the written request of the person giving consent and that the client has been informed of this right

Core Services

1. Procedures for listing the crisis line number in the local phone book (without an agency address listing) and widely distributing the number or making it available from local telephone information services in the area where the agency is located.
2. Procedures for use by staff and volunteers regarding the availability of shelter. Referrals to other approved shelters (if possible) shall be made when a shelter is at capacity or services cannot be provided.
3. Procedures shall be developed to enable staff and volunteers to meet needs of non-English speaking and hearing-impaired clients.
4. Procedures for providing or arranging emergency transportation, food and clothing for residents.
5. Procedure for documenting community linkages through a resource list to include but not be limited to the following:
 - a. Medical, nutrition, health services
 - b. Financial assistance
 - c. Alcohol/drug-related services
 - d. Counseling services
 - e. Continuing education and job training services
 - f. Child care services/parenting information
 - g. Housing services
 - h. Resources for religious support
 - i. Judicial circuit task forces
 - j. Local public school system
 - k. Child/Adult Protective Services
6. Policies/procedures for serving children which will include the following:
 - a. Structured activities for children.
 - b. Written procedures for referring children to counseling/support when it has been requested or deemed advisable by staff.
 - c. An orientation to the program in a manner appropriate to each child's level of understanding.
 - d. Staff assistance to help the parent or guardian to make arrangements for the child's continued education. This would also include making provisions for school monies, clothing and supplies.
 - e. The prohibition of corporal punishment, physical or verbal abuse of children. Staff shall provide residents with alternatives in regards to disciplining children.
 - f. A secure play space for children. All playground equipment should be located, installed and maintained in such a manner as to insure the safety of children.
 - g. Policies and procedures regarding child care.
 - h. Staff training to recognize indicators and understand reporting requirements, and treatment options for child physical abuse, neglect and psychological maltreatment.
7. Policies and Procedures should be in place for providing emotional support to victims.
8. Legal /Social Service Advocacy policy/procedure requirements may be met by developing and implementing a written agreement with a referral agency or private attorneys. The following legal advocacy should be provided:
 - a. Assistance to family violence victims in understanding and using judicial and social services established in the community

- b. Advocacy and/or accompaniment to court
- c. Information about civil and criminal options for adults and children shall be available
- d. With the permission of the client, staff shall assist in gathering evidence of family violence for future use in court such as documenting evidence of abuse at intake, assisting the client in documenting the history of abuse, and taking pictures/follow up pictures of the client's injuries, as requested by the client
- 9. Policies/procedures for assisting clients in obtaining permanent housing which shall include:
 - a. A list describing income-based and privately-owned housing resources
- 10. Policies/procedures for follow up client assistance shall include:
 - a. Policy concerning continuing advocacy for clients to meet employment, child care, and legal needs
 - b. Policy concerning the development of a safety plan for clients and their dependent children
- 11. Procedures outlining parenting support/education which shall be provided for mothers at the agency or through a written agreement with a referral agency. Topics should include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Acceptable discipline measures
 - b. Negative effects of experiencing or witnessing abuse as a child
 - c. Child abuse law
 - d. Children's emotional and physical health
 - e. Setting rules and limits
 - f. Building your child's self esteem
 - g. First aid
 - h. Helping your child succeed in school

Health and Safety

- 1. Medical policies should be in place to address:
 - a. Meeting the medical needs of clients, including emergency prescriptions and non-prescription medicine
 - b. Indication of who is authorized to remove medications from a secured storage area and the means of accountability for all stored medications. A system should be developed to record medications withdrawn indicating the name of the medication, the name of the staff person, amount, time and date. This policy should include inspection procedures, who inspects, how often and in what manner it is recorded.
 - c. Rules regarding the abuse of alcohol and of prescribed/non-prescribed medications
 - d. Rules regarding physical or verbal abuse between individuals
 - e. Control and prevention of contagious diseases
 - f. Mandated reporting of child abuse and written procedures regarding the reporting of child abuse
 - g. A first aid kit shall be kept in the agency. It shall be inspected and restocked on a regular basis
- 2. Procedures to address providing bedding, towels, wash cloths, soap, light bulbs, toilet tissue and access to other supplies for the personal hygiene of residents.
- 3. Procedures describing access to/use of laundering facilities.
- 4. Policy regarding residents with impaired mobility that they may not sleep in or be assigned to bedrooms on floors which do not have a grade level exit to the outside; provided, however, that above-grade exits with easily negotiable ramps may be used.
- 5. Policy allowing no more than four adults in each bedroom.
- 6. Procedures for keeping furnishings clean and in good repair.
- 7. Procedures for access to some form of public or private transportation for emergencies.
- 8. Procedure for keeping sidewalks, fire escape routes and entrances free of any hazards such as ice, snow and debris.
- 9. Procedure for maintaining cooking appliances in efficient condition and kept clean at all times.
- 10. Procedure for keeping yard area free from all hazards, nuisances, refuse and litter.
- 11. Procedures for removing hazards which cause tripping.
- 12. Procedure for the maintenance of fire extinguishers for use in the agency in the size and quantity required by the local fire safety enforcement.
- 13. Policy prohibiting smoking in all facilities.
- 14. Procedures for securing and storing hazardous materials out of the reach of children.
- 15. Procedure for cleaning and maintaining kitchen and bathroom areas to insure cleanliness and sanitation.
- 16. Procedure for cleaning the bedroom and its contents when a resident leaves the shelter.
- 17. Procedure for storing garbage in non-combustible covered containers and removing it from the agency

premises at

least weekly.

18. Procedure for providing pest control in the facility.

19. Food policies and procedures will include:

a. A plan that assures that all agency residents and their dependent children receive sufficient food and nourishment

which meets U.S.D.A. standards during their stay, including provisions for school lunches.

b. All perishable foods shall be stored at such temperatures as will protect against spoilage.

c. All foods while being stored, prepared, or served shall be protected against contamination and be safe for human

consumption. All food items should be stored in tightly sealed containers once opened.

d. An agency shall be equipped to prepare and serve adequate meals.

e. Emergency food shall be available on a 24-hour basis.

f. There shall be written policies regarding the use of food stamps.

20. All facilities shall be maintained in conformity with the regulations adopted by state and local fire marshals for the prevention of fire and protection of property against fire. The agency shall have written procedures that outline what should be done in case of fire, natural disaster, inclement weather or bomb threat. These procedures shall address the following.

a. Accounting for occupants

b. Evacuation plans should be posted in each bedroom and on each floor.

c. Reporting the event to proper authorities

d. Emergency housing arrangements for residents

e. Relating of emergency procedures to staff and residents

f. Investigation, evaluation, and documentation of event and follow up procedure

g. Fire drills shall be performed quarterly or more often as required by the local fire marshal. Disaster drills should

be conducted semi-annually. Each type of drill should address: who conducted the drill, the date, the time of day, number and whereabouts of occupants at time of drill, time needed to evacuate the facility, problems or concerns

h. All fire exits shall be clearly marked.

21. The agency shall have written procedures which outline what should be done in the case of an intruder.

These procedures shall address the following:

a. Accounting for occupants

b. Safety plan

c. Reporting the incident to proper authorities

d. Relating of emergency procedures to staff and residents

e. Investigation, evaluation, and documentation of the event and follow up procedures

f. Intruder drills shall be conducted semiannually and should document who conducted the drill, the date, the time of day, number and whereabouts of occupants at time of drill, time needed to complete drill, problems or concerns

22. All agencies shall have written procedures which outline what should be done in case weapons, illegal drugs or alcohol are found on the property or in the possession of a resident. These procedures shall address the following:

a. Law enforcement intervention

b. Search and seizure policy of the agency

c. Disciplinary measures, including termination of services

d. Investigation, evaluation, and documentation of the event and follow up procedures

23. All agencies shall have written procedures which outline what should be done in case of an assault on a person or destruction of property or theft. These procedures shall address the following:

a. Law enforcement intervention

b. Disciplinary measures, including termination of services

c. Investigation, evaluation, and documentation of the event and follow up procedures

24. All agencies shall have written procedures addressing what to do in the case of an accident with injuries.

These procedures shall address the following:

a. Emergency medical care

b. Investigation, evaluation documentation of event and follow up