



RESIDENT HANDBOOK

(Additional House Rules & Living Guidelines)

Mission & Goals

The Center for Children & Families (CFCF) uses a community living model to help families get/stay healthy, find resources, and form positive relationships. The program goal is permanency for children. We hope to help you accomplish this by giving you the chance to have more success in parenting, reducing the time children stay in foster/out-of-home care, increasing life-skills, increasing sober time, and decreasing the number and duration of relapses.

CFCF uses a team approach. The Team works together providing a safe and structured home for parents/children. The CFCF Team includes house staff, CPS (Protective Services), Drug Court team members, defense attorneys, attorneys for the children, mental health and chemical dependency treatment staff, CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), Family Support Network/parenting support staff, Department of Corrections (probation & parole) and providers from wherever you were referred.

You will be given **two handbooks and a list of house consequences** when you enter the home. The first, the HOUSE RULES outlines the most important house rules; rules that if you break them could result in your discharge from the program.

The second, the RESIDENT HANDBOOK, (the one you're reading right now ☺) gives you a list of more detailed rules (these are important but can be learned as you go), and some suggestions for how to make the home and your life safer and less full of chaos. This handbook has household, parenting, and life-skills rules/tips we will be helping you work on while you are in the home.

Please remember you are encouraged to ask questions! You are not expected to be perfect, but you are expected to work hard toward your goals and to be respectful of the home, the residents, and the staff. We are excited to have you with us! Welcome!

"I am grateful for having warm water to bathe my children in and lights to see their beautiful faces at night and a place to keep them safe" (Resident 2010)

" I am grateful for being able to learn about each other's differences and cultures and feeling like I have a second family" (Resident 2009)

HOUSE GUIDELINES & LIVING SUGGESTIONS

Caring for Your Children:

Children's Safety

The safety of your children is our top priority. All house staff and team members are mandatory reporters (meaning we are required by law to report to CPS if we believe your children are being abused/neglected or if they are at risk for abuse/neglect). If you are absent from the home without approval or return to the home under the influence, the staff will take steps to make sure you and your children are safe. This may include contacting CPS and/or having your children placed in temporary protective custody (CPS decides this, not CFCF).

Discipline of Children

You are expected to work with your children on these basic rules of discipline:

- No physical, sexual, verbal or emotional violence. No hitting, fighting, biting, or swearing.
- Children may not be in other residents' rooms without permission from moms.
- Children may not carry or watch babies/toddlers and may not hold babies/toddlers without permission from the baby/toddler's mother and supervision/support from the parent.
- Children are to be supervised at all times (within sight/reach of you).

You may not use any physical discipline while staying at the Homes. This includes spanking, slapping, kicking, biting or anything that would cause a mark on a child. We suggest using "time-outs," taking away privileges, and talking to your children about their behavior (when they are old enough to understand you). Remember, you should always model what you want your child to learn. They learn more from WATCHING than from listening. If you are not sure how to handle a situation with your children, staff is available to help. Verbal abuse, including cursing, yelling, threats of violence, and/or racial remarks are not allowed.

Babysitting/Childcare

CFCF is not a daycare center. You are the provider for your children when they are with you. You are responsible for making childcare arrangements when you are in treatment/work. (Staff can assist you with this). House staff is NOT considered childcare. Also, other residents are not considered childcare. You are not allowed to babysit anyone else's children (residents or otherwise).

Parenting Expectations

Parenting is a process and there will always be areas that can be strengthened and new things to learn. Staff is available to give suggestions and support. You are encouraged to ask for help. Staff may step in and handle a situation with your children. This is not a judgment on your parenting, it is just "modeling." Staff will also step in if they believe for any reason children are unsafe.

You must supervise your children at all times in and outside the home. The only reason a child may be in a room alone is if he/she is sleeping. Even then, you should check in every 15 minutes. Bedroom doors are to be closed when a child is sleeping in the room. You must use a baby monitor for infants.

Children should not be put on tables or desks while in a car seat or carrier. Children must be securely fastened in car seats or booster seats while in a car. Toddlers must be watched at all times and should

also not be set on tables or desks (or allowed to climb on furniture). Constant supervision can prevent serious accidents, injuries, and misunderstandings.

Please work with your children on the following:

- Toys put away after use.
- Children should not throw, jump on, or mistreat toys. Toys such as bikes and riding toys need to be in designated storage areas when kids are done playing with them, and any clothing articles must be brought in when you return to the house (don't leave things laying around in the yard when you aren't using them. They can be stolen or ruined by weather).

Infant Care

Infants should always be put to sleep in their cribs on their backs. Infants should not be placed on your bed or with you during the time they sleep. Infants should not sleep on, or with toys/pillows. For infant protection, cribs should not have bunting, pads or other pillow type ornaments, which could cause suffocation. Do not prop bottles. Babies can choke (and it takes away from bonding and nurturing).

Diaper Changing

An infant or child's diaper should only be changed on a diaper-changing pad. Diapers are to be thrown away in containers marked for that. During the day, soiled diapers must be taken to the trash cans outside. At night, diapers should be thrown away in the marked containers in the bathrooms and taken to the outside trash in the morning. Diaper changing pads should be washed after each use. Anyone changing a diaper should wash hands after each diaper change. By following these suggestions, you can prevent the spread of germs and reduce bad smells in the house.

Resident/House Member Relationships

House Conduct

Please remember CFCF is a group living home. Even under the best of circumstances, having lots of women and children in a single house is busy. You are expected to be respectful of the space and of the other residents.

- Vulgar/obscene language/swearing and gestures are not acceptable.
- If you have a disagreement with another resident or staff member, you are expected to deal with it directly & respectfully. If you can't solve a problem with another resident by yourself, you should talk with staff to discuss options for solving the problem. If you have a disagreement with staff, or you think staff is being disrespectful to you, you should report this to the house manager. If the house manager is who you have a conflict with, you are to report to the program development manager or another staff member.
- House meetings are held every week. You can bring up concerns about the house, other residents or staff at this meeting as well.

Dress/Clothing

During your stay at CFCF we want you to be comfortable, but remember you share this house with other people. For health and safety reasons, bare feet are discouraged (socks or slippers in the house is better). Pajamas/nightshirts are not to be worn outside your individual bedroom unless covered by a robe. This includes going from the bedroom to the bathroom, and includes children over age four. Don't leave the house dressed in nightclothes, even if covered by a robe. You are not allowed to wear revealing clothing (too much skin showing), clothing with sexual pictures/words, swear words, or alcohol

and/or drug references. “Inappropriate” clothing includes cleavage-baring, midriff-baring, see-through shirts, shorts that do not fully cover your butt, and clothing that shows your underwear/bra. If staff sees you wearing these items, they will require you change.

Sexual behavior

If you are having a sexual relationship, you must discuss this with staff. If you masturbate, please make sure this is done in the privacy of your room and without your children, or other residents/residents’ children present. Sexual relationships during your participation with the Center are discouraged, but dishonesty about these types of relationships is completely unacceptable. If you are in a sexual relationship of any kind and lie about this to staff or other residents, you put yourself, the staff and the children in the home (including yours) potentially at risk.

Hygiene/Cleanliness

Personal hygiene is important to self-image and health. You and your children are expected to bathe or shower daily. Everyone must be bathed and dressed appropriately for the day before leaving the home.

House/Property Issues

Property Damage:

You (and your children) are expected to respect and care for the home and surrounding property. If household items, toys, furniture, etc. are damaged, you may be responsible for paying for the damages and/or replacing the item. Staff decides, on an individual basis, if/how repayment will be made (extra household responsibilities, self repair of the items, replacement or financial payment).

Smoking

Smoking is discouraged. It is not allowed inside the homes. You may smoke outside in the designated smoking area only. All cigarette butts need to be disposed of in a container provided and not on the ground. Cigarette butt containers should be emptied daily.

Second hand smoke is harmful. Please be considerate of others when you smoke outside. If possible, smoke when your children take naps, or are away at daycare or school so they do not observe you smoking. If you must smoke when your children are there, they need to go outside with you so you can continue to supervise them. Smoking breaks should be limited to 15 minutes.

Telephone Use

Telephones are available for resident use at both the main and supportive houses. There is a 10 minute time limit on each call. Long distance and collect calls are not allowed.

Cell phones are a privilege, not a right. Cell phones should not be used during activities with your children, during meal times, etc. If the staff determines you are abusing the use of your cell phone (too many calls, calls that distract you from your parenting, calls from unknown and/or unapproved people, etc.) your phone will be taken and stored by staff until it is believed you can use it properly. Cell phones are not allowed in your first 30 days in the home, and are to be turned in to staff each evening by 10pm after that.

Television and CD Players/Radio

All clients must ask permission for television viewing. Weekday viewing may be allowed after dinner and after chores are completed. Friday and Saturday night viewing is for adults only, and only after all children are asleep and chores are completed. Saturday morning viewing is for children until 10:00 am. The television should not be turned on just to provide noise, or to be used as a “babysitter.” You are not allowed to have TVs or other viewing devices in your bedroom/sleeping area. Programs and movies watched must be appropriate for all children. Only G rated or PG rated videos are allowed in the houses while children are awake. PG-13 movies are for adults only. No R rated or unrated movies or horror, sexual or violent movies are allowed. If staff finds inappropriate videos in the home, they will be taken and stored until you move from the home.

Be considerate of others when listening to music and keep the volume low so you don’t bother other residents. Music and CDs must also be appropriate for children: no swearing/sexual/violent references.

Food

All food should be served and eaten in the dining room ONLY. During nice weather, meals may be eaten in the back yard. No food is to be stored or eaten in the living areas or bedrooms. Water ONLY is allowed in the bedrooms and the living room. In the Main House, dinner is planned, prepared and served by residents. Household food is for ALL residents unless individually purchased and labeled. In supportive living, residents are encouraged to prepare meals together as well. You should label food that is not for everyone.

You are responsible for preparing breakfast, lunch and snacks and cleaning up after you and your children. This includes wiping down high chairs and the surrounding area. Children should be strapped into high chairs. Children should not be allowed in the kitchen without supervision.

Laundry

Clothing should be cleaned regularly. You have access to the washer and dryer in the homes and there will be a schedule posted for residents to use these. Towels are provided for each room. Bedding is also provided for each room. You are responsible for your family’s laundry, including bedding and towels.

Living Areas

Keep living areas clean. Chores will be assigned on a weekly basis. Your chores must be done daily/weekly as assigned. Even if it is not your specific weekly chore, please clean up after yourself in the common areas (bathroom, kitchen, living room and outside). Beds must be made daily, dishes washed and put away after each use, and stove and counters wiped after using them.

Going “Green” (Conservation)

CFCF is trying to do our part to take care of the earth by not wasting energy or water and by recycling. You can help us if you would please turn off lights, TVs, and radios when not in use. Also, please be considerate of temperature and do not turn heat above 75 degrees. Don’t let the water run while you are washing your face or brushing your teeth. It also helps if you don’t take long showers. (Both so you don’t waste water and also so you leave hot water for the other residents).

Providers & Programming Expectations

Budgets & Program Fees

You will be required to complete a budget with your case manager within 30 days of moving in. Your budget will be updated regularly (at least every 3 months or when there is a change in your income). Your budget will help you pay your bills and also helps staff make decisions about your program fees and help you find other financial resources that might help. CFCF has some money to assist you, but you cannot access these if you have not completed a budget and are sticking to that budget.

Program fees are due on the 1st of the month and are considered late by 5:00 p.m. on the 5th (unless you have made alternate/approved arrangements with the house manager). Your program fee is based on your ability to pay (based on the budget you create with your case manager). If you have the ability to pay your fees and choose not to, there is a 10% late fee you will be charged as well as possible sanctions/house restrictions. If this continues, you can be discharged from the home (3rd offense).

Treatment Team

Your compliance and progress in the home is monitored by the entire Treatment Team. The Team receives reports each week and makes decisions about incentives, sanctions, outside passes, and services. The Team will work with you to meet your family's needs and assist you with getting outside services as needed. If you are being supervised by another agency (like CPS or Probation) your social worker or probation officer is a member of your team and will be part of those decisions as well.

Treatment & Roadmapping

You will be expected to be in compliance with your individual chemical dependency and mental health treatment plan. Failure to fully participate in treatment as recommended/required is grounds for termination from the program.

You will have "roadmapping" meetings about every three months while you are in the program. The roadmap is a treatment planning and update process that includes recommendations from your chemical dependency and mental health providers, CPS, Drug Court, and/or probation and parole if appropriate. It will also address any parenting, education and/or employment, housing, and/or financial concerns.

The Center also facilitates some in-house programs that you will be expected to participate in as recommended. These include life-skills training, Celebrating Families & Seeking Safety.

Health and Wellness

We want to work with you on being as healthy as you can be. This includes preventative health (regular check-ups, medication reviews, and dental care). You will be asked to complete a medical history and to work with staff to address your health and wellness issues. You will be expected to take medication as prescribed and to set a positive example for your children by eating nutritious foods and participating in physical activity as you are able.

Emergencies & Grievance Policies

Emergencies

A medical emergency is defined as “a life threatening situation.” If you believe you are having a medical emergency call 911. For non-emergencies contact any staff member on shift at the main house.

Illness

If you or your child has a serious or contagious illness, please notify staff right away and follow recommendations to prevent the spread of illness. Again, you are in a group living setting so please do everything you can to prevent everyone in the house from becoming ill.

Fire

Read and understand the posted information on fire safety. Know about the designated escape routes, safe gathering locations and the head count procedure. Periodic fire drills will be held. At the time of a drill, or in case of a real fire, you need to leave the house and meet at the designated location so we know everyone is out. The priority is to get out of the house safely. You are responsible for helping your children get out of the house and to the designated location safely. Leave your belongings behind as these can be replaced – human lives cannot! Practice safe habits, smoke only in designated areas, and know where the fire extinguishers are located (and how to use them). Emergency information is posted near the front door.

Resident Concerns/Complaints

As previously stated, you should do your best to deal with house issues or problems with staff or other residents internally and one-on-one. If this does not work, you may file a grievance (formal complaint) with the Clinical Supervisor. You can write this out yourself on notebook paper or the house manager can provide you a “grievance” form. You should include what you believe the solution to the problem might be. Your written complaint should be put in a sealed envelope and marked “Resident Grievance” and given to either the house manager or the Clinical Supervisor directly. The Clinical Supervisor will review this and make a recommendation as to how the situation should be handled. If after that process is complete, you disagree with the Clinical Supervisor, you can “appeal” the decision to the Executive Director. The decision of the Director is final and may not be appealed.