



**New Horizons Shelter**

**Rules and Regulations**

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## **I. General**

The New Horizons Shelter is dedicated to the support and service of needy men, women, and children in Lowndes County. The physical address is 714 Charlton Street, Valdosta, Georgia 31601.

While residing here, you will be in close proximity to the Lowndes County Human Resources Building, the Courthouse, Maximus Child Support Enforcement, Georgia Legal Services, Public Health, Valdosta Housing Authority, and many other service agencies. A complete list can be obtained from the Case Manager.

## **II. Hours of Operation**

The Shelter is a twenty-four hour facility, which is capable of receiving clients at anytime, day or night.

The direct care staff and administrative employees are available to clients Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00am and 4:00pm.

The after-hours staff will have twenty-four hour access to an acting supervisor.

### **Admissions**

Either the Case Manager or the House Supervisor may admit clients into the program as stated, anytime day or night. However, those clients entering into the Shelter outside of regular business hours are entered on a conditional basis, pending final approval from the Case Manager.

Any resident entering the Shelter during non-office hours must report to the Case Manager at the beginning of the next business day.

### **Eligibility**

Not all clients will qualify for admission into the Shelter. Thus, some clients who are admitted during non-business hours may be asked to vacate once seen by the Case Manager.

### **Entry Packets**

Each resident will be presented an Entry Packet, which will include: Rules and Regulations, copies of forms, general information, etc. Questions not answered by the literature should be immediately addressed with the Case Manager or Assistant Executive Director.

## **III. Resources and Program Availability**

The clients participating in the New Horizons Program may have access to several program components: the Day Center, the Shelter, Case Management, the Pantries, and the Health Care Program.

### **The Day Center**

The Day Center is available to the clients Monday through Friday, from 8:00am until 4:00pm. A brief and non-exhaustive list of services would include:

- Shower and laundry facilities
- Educational enrichment programs
- Point-of-Contacts services (mail, phone, email, voicemail)
- Child care
- Employment Assistance

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- Document Retrieval Assistance (birth certificate, drivers license, state ID, etc.)
- Shelter in inclement weather
- Empowerment Programs

The Case Manager must refer clients to the Day Center.

**The Shelter**

During office hours, clients residing in the Shelter have access to all LAMP services. During non-office hours, clients in the Shelter will still have access to showers, bathrooms, laundry machines, a full-service kitchen, and an authorized staff member.

The Shelter provides breakfast and dinner during the week. The lunch meal may be eaten at the Community Soup Kitchen, which is adjacent to the Shelter. On the weekend, the Shelter serves all three meals.

**Case Management**

All clients of the New Horizons Program have access to the Case Manager. The Case Manager provides comprehensive services designed to ensure the successful transition of clients from homelessness to self-sufficiency. The Case Manager is available to clients during the hours between 8:30am and 4:30pm, Monday through Friday. The on-duty Shelter Manager has 24-hour access to the Case Manager for crisis intervention.

**The Pantries**

The Pantries deliver a wide-range of tangible goods to the clients. A brief list would include: food, clothes, cookware, kitchenware, furniture, and household need items.

The Case Manager must refer clients to the pantries.

**The Health Care Program**

Clients may be eligible to receive assistance with prescriptions, dental care, and eye care. Appropriate referrals are also made.

The Health Care Program is operated Monday through Friday, from 8:00am until 4:00pm.

The Case Manager must refer clients to the Health Care Program.

**IV. Shelter Rules**

**General**

1. Borrowing and lending are not permitted. Staff will not try to determine ownership of borrowed or lent items.
2. No loud or boisterous behavior will be tolerated.
3. Clients will be expected to awaken at 7:00am, Monday through Friday, and at 9:00am, Saturday and Sunday.
4. Visitation is not a right it is a privilege. Visitors must be cleared through the Resident Manager and must agree to follow house rules. Visitation is permitted between 6:00pm and 8:00pm, Monday through Friday, and between 12:00pm and 8:00pm, Saturday and Sunday. Visitors are only allowed in the common areas of the Shelter.
5. Locks are available for personal lockers. A refundable deposit of three dollars is required and will be refunded when you leave the shelter. This is the only lock allowed in the shelter. Keys are available for the lockers in transitional housing and they also require a deposit. See the case manager for the locks and keys.

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6. The front porch is off limits for visiting, sitting and playing. The backyard is designed for the safety of the residents.

**Room Maintenance**

1. All clients and their families are responsible for cleaning.
2. The following areas are to be maintained daily, by every client: bed areas, showers, bathroom areas, tables, and play spaces.

**Chores**

1. All residents ages 10 and up will be assigned chores. All chores will be completed on a nightly basis.
2. Chores will be in addition to regular room maintenance.
3. Chores will rotate on a weekly basis.
4. Each resident is listed by first name next to his/her assigned chores.
5. All chores are to be completed promptly after dinner.
6. The resident manager that is on duty will check all chores.
7. When necessary, residents may be assigned an extra chore.

**Personal Hygiene**

1. Every resident is responsible for maintaining proper, personal hygiene.
2. Parents are also responsible for the hygiene of their children.
3. Proper hygiene maintenance includes: daily showers, daily changing of clothes, and frequent laundering of clothes, daily tooth brushing, and commonly accepted grooming practices.
4. Personal toiletry items must be kept in room lockers. The bathroom counters must be clean when not in use.
5. Toothbrushes, hairbrushes, razors, and other personal items are **NEVER** to be shared. If you do not have one, please see the Case Manager.

**Bathrooms**

1. The bathrooms are to be cleaned after each use.
2. Hair must be removed from sink and shower drains.
3. Toilet must be flushed after each use.
4. Toilet must be cleaned after each use. Parents are responsible for their children.
5. **TOILETS ARE NOT TRASHCANS.** Do not flush anything other than toilet paper.
6. Any malfunctioning sink, toilet, or shower, must be reported to the House Supervisor immediately. The faulty item should not be further used until repaired.
7. Bathrooms must be inspected twice daily (morning and night).

**Laundry**

1. Washers and dryers are available for use by the residents.
2. Residents will have access to the laundry room between the hours of 4pm to 8pm Monday thru Sunday.
3. Exceptions will be made for individuals needing uniforms, etc... laundered on a more frequent basis.
4. Working residents will be given priority for use of the machines during the weekends.
5. Residents will be assigned days to use the laundry machines. The list will be updated on a weekly basis and posted on the laundry door.
6. Towels and bed linens must be washed at least once per week.
7. Laundry detergent will be provided until residents have an established income.

**Food Stamps**

Residents who receive food stamps or, who wish to purchase specialty items with their own money, are welcomed to do so but are required to purchase enough of the item(s) for the entire shelter.

**Meals**

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1. The kitchen is off-limits to residents. The only exceptions are residents who are assigned to cook and those who must clean.
2. Food purchased from a restaurant or store must be eaten at the restaurant or store. No outside purchases are allowed in the Shelter.
3. Monday through Friday, the Shelter will provide breakfast (6:00- 7:00am) and dinner (6:30pm until 7:30pm). The lunch meal may be eaten at the community soup kitchen.
4. Saturday and Sunday, the Shelter will provide all three meals: breakfast (8:00am until 9:00am), lunch (1:00pm until 2:00pm), and dinner (5:00pm until 6:00pm).
5. Residents are required to sign up for meals to ensure that the appropriate amounts are prepared. If a resident misses a meal for which they have registered, they will be allowed to make a cold sandwich.

If a resident fails to sign up for meals, they will be allowed to make a cold sandwich. At no time is food allowed in the room area.

**Kitchen Chores:**

The kitchen is to be cleaned thoroughly on a nightly basis.

1. All surfaces (including stove, tables and counters) are to be cleaned thoroughly.
2. The kitchen floor is to be swept and mopped on a nightly basis. There will be no exceptions.
3. All dish towels are to be soaked in one part water to one part bleach once a week.
4. The stovetop surface is to be cleaned of all food on a nightly basis. The stovetop is to be cleaned thoroughly every Sunday.

**Snack Time**

1. All snacks purchased by residents must be purchased in sufficient quantity to provide for all residents in the shelter. Furthermore, the House Supervisor should be advised of this intent beforehand.

**Refrigerator Use**

1. No food wrapped in aluminum foil in refrigerator
2. Leftovers must be labeled and served the next day.
3. No personal (resident or staff) items in refrigerator i.e. containers, tupper ware, food of any kind, beverages of any kind and etc.

**Rules for use of the Grill**

1. The person who is using the grill to cook will be the person responsible for the cleaning of the grill grates and emptying of the ashes.
2. Use the cooking space according to the amount of people you will be cooking for.
3. Use small amounts of charcoal for the grill; a large amount is not necessary.
4. While the coals are burning, the grill will remain on the grass, once the coals have cooled down and the grill has been cleaned, it will be placed under the porch to protect it from the weather
5. We only have funds available for one grill. so we must all take good care of this grill.
6. Anytime these rules are violated or just not followed, the grill will be locked up.

**Rules for using the TV**

**18 years and younger**

Hours are 4:00p.m- 7:00p.m. Sunday-Friday

Saturday 7:00a.m. –noon.

Children can sign up on calendar for one hour time slot per week. This is that person's time and no arguments. If child changes his/her mind the TV is open for that slot.

**19 and older**

Hours for TV are 7:00p.m.to 10:00p.m. daily. Adults can sign up on calendar for 2 hour slots. If adults change their mind the TV is open for that slot.

If you are classified as emergency or supportive housing resident you may **only** watch TV in that Living Area. If you are classified as in transitional housing resident you may **only** watch TV in the Transitional Living area.

### **Pets**

1. Pets are not allowed in the shelter.

### **Dorm Operations**

1. Residents are assigned to a dorm room. This room may be shared by one or more individuals. Room assignments may not be changed unless authorized by the Case Manager or House Supervisor.
2. No resident is allowed to enter any dorm room other than the one to which they are assigned. The other rooms are private, as is yours.
3. A locker and locks will be provided to ensure that residents may secure personal belongings.
4. Towels and sheets will be provided.
5. Toiletries will be provided initially. Once a resident has established income, toiletries will become his/her responsibility.
6. The Shelter and dorm rooms will be locked at 9:30am, Monday through Friday, and will reopen at 3:00pm. No residents will be allowed in the Shelter during these times. Exceptions may be made for those working a third, or swing shift.
7. Residents must be in their rooms by 10:00pm, Sunday through Thursday. Lights will be turned off in the dorms by 11:30pm.
8. On Friday and Saturday, residents must be in their room by 11:30pm. Lights will be turned off in the dorms by 12:00pm.
9. Sunday through Thursday, children must be in bed by 9:00pm. Friday through Saturday, the children must be in bed by 10:00pm. Parents must stay with children until they are asleep.
10. Rooms must be kept clean. All personal items must fit neatly under the bed and/or within the locker.
11. Personal items may be inspected for contraband.
12. No eating, drinking, or smoking is allowed in the dorm rooms. No visitors are allowed in the rooms either.
13. Televisions are not allowed in the dorm rooms. Headphones must be used with all radios.
14. Medications must be locked in your locker. All medications must be cleared and documented by the Case Manager or House Supervisor during in-take.
15. Candles, electric heaters, and incense burners are not permitted because of the fire hazard they represent.
16. Rooms will be regularly inspected for compliance.
17. Last cigarette break is at 10:00pm.

### **Telephone**

1. Outgoing calls may be made from the Day Center, Monday through Friday, from 8:00am until 3:00pm. A pay phone is available for use and is located in Transitional Housing hall-way.
2. Only emergency calls will be allowed from the House Supervisor's office phone.
3. Any calls for residents received on the office phone will result in a message being taken and will be delivered by the House Supervisor.

### **House Meetings**

1. Attendance is mandatory for all residents.
2. Meetings are held monthly and times will be posted by the House Supervisor.
3. Any absence must be approved by the House Supervisor prior to the meeting.

### **Fire/Severe Weather Plan**

1. A fire plan is posted. There will be regular fire drills planned by the Assistant Executive Director.
2. In case of an emergency, notify the nearest LAMP Staff member.
3. If the emergency requires intervention and no staff member is readily available "911" should be notified.
4. All emergency exits are marked and should be used for emergency purposes only.

### **Entrance and Exit**

1. Residents are expected to enter and exit the Shelter through the Dining Room door at all times. Exceptions to this rule will only occur when a sign is posted indicating otherwise.
2. Upon entering and leaving the facility grounds residents are required to sign in/out. The Sign In/Out Sheet is located on the door between Dorms #1 & #2, so that they may sign in and out of the Shelter. This form must be filled out completely each time you depart and return to the shelter.
3. Residents are never permitted to answer the door. Staff members will receive all visitors.

### **Smoking**

1. The Shelter is a non-smoking facility. Smoking is allowed in the backyard only.
2. All cigarette butts must be disposed of in the identified containers.

### **Overnight Stays Outside of the Shelter**

1. Residents are allowed one overnight stay per month as a luxury, not a right.
2. This stay must be approved in advance by the Case Manager.
3. A request form must be completed and submitted no less than three days in advance.
4. Denied requests may be appealed through the appeal process.

### **Family Room**

1. The family room is available to residents each weekday afternoon from 5:00pm until curfew.
2. Residents are responsible for sharing and interacting appropriately.

### **Child Care**

1. Residents are responsible for caring for their children.
2. No other arrangements may be made without the expressed permission of the Case Manager or House Supervisor.
3. The Case Manager will also assist residents in locating appropriate child care.

### **Transportation**

*Anyone needing transportation must inform a House Supervisor or Day Center Staff Member. A 72 hour notice is required whether it is for use of New Horizons van or for public transportation.*

The New Horizon's van is for Supportive Housing Program Participants transportation **only**. Transportation will be provided for clients who have appointments located three or more miles from the shelter.

The van is for emergencies, Dr.'s appointments or job interviews. It is not for joy riding or going shopping.

### **Background Investigations**

Residents may be subjected to background investigations and credit reports. These will be used to assess appropriateness for the program. All information will be considered confidential.

### **Drug Testing**

Residents are subject to random drug tests as well.

### **Employment**

All residents are expected to be employed (minimum of 20 hours per week) within 90 days of program acceptance. Day labor does not satisfy this requirement.

Residents are encouraged to seek the assistance of the Day Center and the Case Manager.

## V. Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action will follow a progressive scale. Incidents not deemed to warrant immediate dismissal will amass significance.

The Shelter uses a categorical system to classify types of rules violations. These categories are: I, II, III. Each category carries different significance. Any combination of infractions totaling 6 points or more will result in program termination and dismissal. This plan does not limit the ability of the Shelter staff to make objective decisions.

### Category I Violations

Residents who commit an infraction listed under Category I will be immediately removed from the Shelter.

Category I infractions carry a weight of 6 points. A list of Category I infractions would include:

- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Refusal to submit to drug testing
- Striking or physically threatening any staff member or resident
- Committing theft from any resident, staff member, or the Shelter itself
- Smoking within the Shelter
- Possessing contraband (drugs, drug paraphernalia, weapons, unregistered medications)
- Any action requiring the intervention of law enforcement
- Any unexcused, overnight absence
- Child abuse or neglect
- Engaging in sexual behavior in the Shelter

### Category II Violations

Category II infractions count as 3 points per incident. A list of Category II infractions would include:

- Intentional destruction of Shelter property
- Missing curfew without Case Manager or Assistant Executive Director consent
- Leaving the Shelter after curfew hours
- Failure to attend a scheduled meeting or appointment
- Failure to abide by Contract agreements
- Failing to ensure children attend school regularly and appropriately
- Failing to obtain permanent employment (minimum of 20 hours per week) within 90 days
- Failing to complete room maintenance requirements
- Flagrant disregard for cleanliness policies (to include bathrooms)

### Category III Violations

Category III infractions are assessed 1 point per infraction. A brief list of Category III infractions would include:

- Being late to scheduled meetings or appointments
- Refusal to cooperate with Staff and or volunteers
- Entering a dorm room other than your own
- Utilizing another's property without expressed permission
- Using vile, or profane language
- Failing to timely submit paperwork requested by the Case Manager
- 
- Failing to complete chores
- Failing to disclose and verify household income.
- Failing to pay dorm fees by the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month.

**THIS LIST IS NOT ALL-INCLUSIVE:** Incidents that occur which do not fall under any category will be assessed by the Assistant Executive Director and Case Manager and assigned significance.

All incidents will be documented on the LAMP Incident Form. The original will be retained by the Staff member and a copy will be presented to the resident.

### **Removal of Violation Points**

The only way violation points may be removed is by the resident receiving no violation points for three (3) consecutive calendar months. At the end of three consecutive calendar months during which no violation points have been assessed, the number of violation points for that resident will be reduced by one (1).

## **VI. Appeals Procedures**

When residents are charged with the commitment of an infraction from Categories I or II, they have the right to appeal the decision. This must be done within 72 hours of the incident report and must be done to the Assistant Executive Director. Appeals must be made in writing.

*Exception: If the infraction warrants the eviction of the resident, the resident may request an immediate, preliminary decision from the Assistant Executive Director, or in his or her absence, the next in command. This decision will not be final until determined just by the appeal process but must be adhered to in the interim.*

If the resident is not satisfied with the decision of the Assistant Executive Director, the resident has the right to appeal to the Shelter Committee. This must be done in writing and must be within 72 hours of the Director's decision. Once appealed, the Committee must convene, with a minimum of three members in attendance. **The decision of the Shelter Committee is final.**

### **Delivery of an Initial Appeal**

The appeal form must be completed, signed, and dated by the resident. It must then be sealed and delivered to the Assistant Executive Director personally.

### **Delivery of the Secondary Appeal**

The secondary appeal must be on the same appeal form, in the same fashion, however this must be personally delivered to the Assistant Executive Director.

### **Dismissals**

Any resident dismissed from the Shelter due to disciplinary action must vacate immediately. Subsequently, all belongings must be retrieved within 3 days. This process must have the consent of the Assistant Executive Director.

## **VII. Documentation of Exceptions**

When a resident requests an exemption from a certain rule or regulation, the House Supervisor may consent after consulting the Case Manager. However, when this is done, the House Supervisor will provide the resident with written documentation describing the exception that is being made. This documentation will detail the duration of the exemption, the type of exemption, and the reasoning behind the exemption. This document will serve as validation for the resident.

## **VIII. Costs to Residents and Clients**

The Health Care Program may impose a \$5.00 fee for dental clinic services.

**AT NO OTHER TIME SHOULD ANY RESIDENT PRESENT CASH FOR SERVICES. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE.**

**IX. Release of Liability**

Each resident is required to sign a Release of Liability. The completed form will be filed in the Client File.

I have received a copy of LAMP's Shelter Rule Book. I accept responsibility for familiarizing myself with the information in this rulebook and will seek clarification of its terms or guidance when necessary. I fully understand the rules and I agree that I will conform to these rules.

I understand that LAMP can at its sole discretion, modify, eliminate, revise, or deviate from the guidelines and information in this rule book. Notification of changes will be made through the usual channels.

The effective date of this Shelter Rule Book is July 1, 2008.

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Resident)