

**Community ReStart**

**Housing Program Handbook**

**for**

**11 Faulkner Place House**

**Affordable Housing**

**Housing dedicated to affordability, community and sobriety**

**Revised: March 2015**

**CRSH PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

**INTRODUCTION:**

This handbook is intended to set out the common rules and requirements of participation in Community ReStart's Housing (CRSH) affordable housing. (drug and alcohol free) program.

This handbook is approved by the Community ReStart Housing (CRSH) Board of Directors and is subject to the Board’s revision at any time. Admission to the program and continued participation are governed by this handbook and the specific participant’s plan both as amended from time to time. **\***All participant plans will be read in the manner most consisted with the handbook. Violations of CRSH Policies which involve grounds for dismissal depending on the severity, repetition, or dangers of the violation shall be determined solely by the judgment of the Program/Case Managers and in some cases the Board of Directors.

**All participants are urged to make careful consideration of the details of this plan and to ask questions of the staff. However, please understand that your review and signature of the handbook acceptance form constitutes your agreement to the terms of this handbook which include summary dismissal and removal from the premises among the possible consequences for non-compliance with the terms of this handbook.**

**1. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

A. Requirements for acceptance into Community ReStart Housing Program.

1. Applicants must have a minimum of 3 months of sobriety from alcohol and drugs--prior to admission.
2. Applicants coming from other facility's facilities or other care facilities shall \* have reasonable and detailed discharge plans provided to CRSH in advance of admission.
3. Applicants must have completed a mental health evaluation before acceptance.
4. Applicants must demonstrate commitment to a substance free lifestyle and be willing to take steps essential for transitioning to independent living. This commitment shall include at least written agreement to \*Community ReStart which includes specific levels of performance and a time line of performance with respect to: volunteering, job seeking, work in the program and facility, participation in support groups, counseling, therapy, medical treatments and medical compliance, vocational rehabilitation and training, compliance with house and program rules, and agreement to pay rent.
5. Applicants will be screened and investigated for history of medial issues, ­­violent felonies, sex offenses, abuse, arson and other offenses. **Applicants who have violent felony convictions, sex offenders, child abusers or any arson convictions are ineligible for acceptance into the program. We do not accept applicants who will be on house arrest or furlough status.**
6. Applicants must review and sign an acknowledgment of receipt of a copy of this handbook AND an agreement to be bound by this handbook as it may be amended from time to time.

B. Cooperation and Assistance in obtaining information

1. Applicants must give necessary permissions, execute necessary papers and comply with all aspects of the Intake Process in a timely and cooperative manner.
2. Applicants agree and authorize the Board of Directors of CRSH to have access to all information relative to the applicant’s acceptance and continuation in the program, and acknowledge that this information will be used by the Board in evaluating acceptance and continuation in the program in circumstances brought to its attention by the Program Manager. The Board shall keep this information confidential, except in communications with the applicant/resident, the staff and personnel authorized to receive such information.

**2. INTAKE PROCESS**

**A. Prior to Acceptance**

1. Completion of a CRSH application transitional housing program.
2. Applicants shall have a completed current 50 state and federal background check which meets CRSH standards. Applicants will pay for this screening either at the time of the screening or when they pay the first month’s rent. This fee is in addition to rent and is non-refundable.
3. Applicants are required to interview with all household members.
4. Applicants shall meet all eligibility requirements to the satisfaction of the Housing Manager/Property Manager.
5. Acceptance into the program will be determined based on the written application and interviews. All applicants will be notified of acceptance/rejection within a few days of interview.
6. If an applicant is accepted and space is not available within the program, the applicant's name will be placed on a waiting list and will be contacted on a first come, first serve basis as space becomes available.
7. Physical and Mental health Evaluations.

**B. Process upon Acceptance**

1.) Applicants accepted into the program (“Residents”) will sign releases of information for program staff to obtain information about the applicant's income sources, legal status (if any).

1. Residents shall agree to any revisions to their case management as determined during the review and acceptance process.
2. Residents shall agree to any revisions of the terms of rent.
3. Residents shall be admitted into the house and program participation as specified by the Program Manager and the Facilities Manager. All arrangements relative to Resident's personal property on site, including storage, parking, and care and security issues will be agreed by the Resident and the Facilities Manager in writing.
4. All Resident personal property brought onto the site shall be inspected by the Facilities Manager and the Program Manager to determine compliance with program rules, policies and this handbook. The discovery of undisclosed presence of medicines, drugs, alcohol, guns, knives (larger than pocket knives), explosive devices or any illegal substances **may** result in immediate removal from the program and premises.

**3. PROGRAM GOALS**

A. Substantive Goals

1. Residents will have the opportunity to become independent, self-sufficient and stable in their lives. This is a temporary transitional program and Residents will have up to 3 months to meet their personal and program goals**,** andto develop or regain the skills needed for independent living.
2. This will include, at a minimum, completion of accountable progress in the areas of employment, volunteering/community service, self-care, addiction control, social behavior, financial management, and active engagement in properly managing psychological and medical conditions.

B. Procedural Method

1. Each Resident will work cooperatively to develop and follow a curriculum to achieve the goals and objectives of the program curriculum will address details of how the Resident will spend time to make accountable progress toward the program and individual goals, which will include, at a minimum, accountable and measurable progress in the areas of employment, volunteering/community service, self-care, addiction control, social behavior, financial management, and active engagement in properly managing psychological and medical conditions. Each Resident shall be given a copy of his curriculum, and written updates as they are made, along with written recognition of milestone achievements.
2. Curriculums may be amended by the CRSH in consultation with the Resident.
3. The Resident's curriculum file shall contain a record of all failures to comply with its terms, violations of this handbook, or CRSH policy. It will also specify an agreed upon plan for correction and a timetable for action. A copy of such entries shall be provided the Resident in a timely fashion.
4. Nothing in this handbook shall require the disclosure to a Resident of the notes and assessments of the Resident made by the case manager or other staff, in so far as these do not represent a failure to comply.
5. The mentor may communicate the terms of the curriculum to other staff members and the Board and the Resident hereby gives consent to this disclosure.

**4. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

1. Residents are required to participate in a mental health screening within 30 days prior to entrance into the program as well as receive a full medical physical provided by a local VA medical facility. CRSH staff will assist in accessing these and other appointments and all Residents are expected to follow up with all medical and mental health appointments.
2. All Residents of CRSH are required to remain drug and alcohol-free during the duration of their stay in the program. Individuals identified as having a history of substance abuse are expected to attend a minimum of 2 group meetings per week and show documentation of adherence to this requirement. Strike 1: Warning and must show proof of attendance at 2 meetings per week.

Strike 2: Must commit to a program and have an active sponsor.

Strike 3: You must leave the program and the house immediately.

1. All Residents, within the first week of their admission to the program will work cooperatively with the case manager to develop and thereafter to follow a curriculum to achieve the goals of the program. The curriculum will address details of how the Resident will spend time to make accountable progress toward the program and individual goals, which will include, at a minimum, accountable and measurable progress in the areas of employment, volunteering/community service, self-care, addiction control, social behavior, financial management, and active engagement in properly managing psychological and medical conditions. Except unusual circumstance, these accountable and measurable progress points shall meet or exceed the requirements of the \* “Program Objectives.” Each Resident shall be given a copy of his curriculum, and written updates as they are made. The treatment plan will be revised as needed. Veterans are expected to meet with a case manager on a weekly or as needed basis.
2. All Residents are required to become employed full time (unless totally disabled or over 67 years of age), or the equivalent thereof in work, school and/or volunteer service. The curriculum shall specify specific dates by which the Resident shall accomplish specific measurable tasks necessary to achieving full time employment. Employment shall be found as soon as possible for those who are capable of working.
3. A goals sheet shall be completed by each resident and incorporated in the Resident’s curriculum, with specific accountable and measurable goals.

1. All Residents shall participate in volunteering or vocational activities with Community Restart Gardens and Pearl St while in the program. Each Resident shall volunteer in community service for at least 10 hours per month. If unemployed, each Resident shall volunteer for at least 10 hours of community service per week. The Resident shall provide documentation of service to be placed in his/her record. Medical conditions may be grounds for waiver of this requirement by the Program/case manager. This shall be done by completion of the meeting, volunteer forms turned in monthly.
2. Residents shall have specific accountable and measurable goals for developing social skills, work habits, and personal skills necessary for independent living beyond the program. This component of the program shall be coordinated with VA services, and other providers of mental health and behavioral services. At a minimum, the curriculum shall require each Resident to maintain civility, anger control, honesty, avoidance of violent or threatening behavior, respectful behavior and speech with respect to CRSH staff and other providers, to maintain his/her room, clothes and body in a neat, hygienic and orderly fashion, and to participate fully in assigned programs, chores and activities. **Anti-social behavior and disrespectful behavior to the staff may be grounds for termination of a Resident’s participation in the program**.
3. Residents shall participate in group and individual therapy, support, and accountability consistent with pre-admission and periodic mental health assessments, and shall be medically compliant with prescribed medicine and therapy.
4. Residents shall grow in responsible participation in the program by meeting attendance and exercise of leadership. Each Resident shall attend all house meetings with all other residents. These will be held at least weekly. Residents are expected to arrange appointments to facilitate attendance at regularly scheduled meetings, when possible.

10.) Residents shall apply for financial and housing benefits which they may qualify

for in a timely fashion, specified in their curriculums, and shall keep CRSH staff promptly notified of benefits received, denied or changed. Each Resident curriculum shall provide for financial management training and/or supervision, such that each Resident leaves with such skills.

11.) Residents will build a nest egg of financial resources for their successful completion and transition from the program through compliance with the following section of this handbook.

**5. Program Participation Fees:**

1. Each Resident with an income and the ability to participate will pay program participation fees. It shall be payable as agreed upon with the Office Manager and resident.
2. Notwithstanding the forgoing, Transitional Housing Residents’ fees shall not exceed $200 per month. Affordable Housing is $350/single room.
3. Income does not include court or administrative lump sum awards for past disability, injury or loss, inheritances, or division of property from a former marriage or civil union.
4. If and only if a Resident achieves a successful completion of the program and is ready to transition to independent housing 30% of the total participation fees paid by such Resident will be refunded to the Resident. This is intended to assist in moving costs, rental deposits and the like.
5. Provided however, the first $500 of refundable program fees paid shall be held as a damage deposit by CRSH, which may withhold up to this amount from refund to cover damages caused by the Resident; and CRSH may charge this fund with the costs of repairs for damages caused during residence as they occur, with such amount added back into the damage deposit from otherwise refundable moneys.
6. Unsuccessful terminations are any dismissal, termination, or departure from the program for any reason other than a “successful completion.” **No refunds shall be made to any terminating Resident for any unsuccessful termination, dismissal or departure, and all funds paid shall belong to CRSH without any claim whatsoever by a Resident, former Resident, his/her heirs, assigns, creditors or agents.**

**6. ADDITIONAL PROGRAM POLICY**

A. Introduction

The policies listed below are part of the terms of admission to the program and may be amended from time by CRSH. Such amendments shall be posted in an accessible space in the facility. A Resident may be subject to specific exemption, modification or increase in responsibilities under these policies by staff, such changes will be delivered in writing as well as orally and noted in the Resident’s file, and shall be time specific.

B. Facility and Program Policies

1. **Decorum:** All Residents shall treat each other, staff, guests and CRSH board members with respect, civility and courtesy at all times. Any Resident who violates this policy may be **subject to immediate termination and removal** from the program and facility, or other disciplinary action up to and including legal liability for damages and/or prosecution.
2. **60-Day Probation Period:**

All incoming residents are on a 60-day probation. If the household, at the end of this period accepts a resident, that resident can then participate fully in the program. If not accepted the individual must leave the house.

**3. Room Maintenance:**

Each Resident shall maintain his own living space. All rooms and bedrooms are expected to be maintained in neat, organized and sanitary condition. At a minimum, personal items are not to be left around the facility but kept in bedrooms when not in use; bedrooms shall be kept so as to have all clothing in drawers, on hangers or in storage boxes in the closet or in a tidy hamper; floor space must be kept clear for cleaning and mobility to and from doors, windows, beds, closets and other furnishings. Violations shall be remedied within 24 hours, unless they are safety related, in which case they must be immediately attended to upon notification of Residents.

Any hanging or display of pictures, posters, shelves, planters or other room decorative accessories must be approved by staff. ANY display of pornographic images on CRSH property is PROHIBITED. Should a maintenance concern arise, it is the Resident's responsibility to report it to staff immediately. CRSH will address the concern as timely as possible.

4. **Food in rooms:**

All meals are to be eaten in the designated dining area with the exception of special events and house snacks available in TV areas, so long as those areas are kept clean. A reasonable amount of snack food may be kept in rooms provided it is stored in sealed hygienic containers. No open snack bags or packages will be allowed. “REASONABLE” will be defined by the facilities manager.

5. **Building Maintenance and Chores:**

All Residents shall do daily maintenance and chores. Regular chore assignments will be posted by the facilities manager and special assignments made by the facilities manager as needed. The facilities manager may specify the times of day that each chore is to be done and completed.

6. **Damages:**

Upon entering CRSH, new Residents and a staff member will walk through the assigned room/living space and complete a thorough inspection. All concerns will be documented at this time. Residents will be held financially responsible for payment of any damage caused by themselves, family members or guests. Such liability shall cover damages anywhere on CRSH property, vehicles and personal property, whether caused directly or indirectly by the Resident, intentionally or otherwise.

**7. Keys:**

Residents will be issued a key for his/her assigned living space. Keys to the front entrance door will be issued as needed for Residents working second and third shift jobs. Residents who lose their keys will be responsible for the cost of a duplicate key ($15.00). No Resident shall permit the use of his/her key by another person.

**8. Laundry:** A laundry facility is provided for all Residents. The hours are not restricted as long as other residents are not bothered by any noise from the room. All Residents are responsible for washing their own linen. The resident will insure the cleanliness of the towels he has in his possession also.

**9**. **Hygiene:**

All Residents are required to practice good personal hygiene, including regular bathing and clean, presentable clothing. There are no exceptions.

**10. Meals:**

All Residents are required to attend and participate in mandatory House dinner meetings once a week.

**11. Pets:** Noanimals, with the exception of house or service animals. Any visitor with an animal is responsible for its behavior while on the premises and may be asked to remove it if a staff member has any reason to belief it is a disturbance to any resident or the house animals.

**12. Storage:**

Personal items are to be stored in Resident’s assigned living space or in the designated storage area in the basement. Personal items are not to be left in any common areas or closets in the building. Personal items that cannot be stored in Resident rooms will be allowed only as a privilege per the facilities manager. Upon the departure from the program, all of a Resident’s property is to be removed within 48 hours. **Failure to remove this property transfer’s ownership of that property to CRSH, which may dispose of the property as it deems fit.**

**13.** **Alcohol, Medicine and Illegal Drugs**

CRSH is an alcohol and drug-free environment. ANY use or possession of alcohol or non-prescribed medications, or illegal drugs may result in immediate termination of the Resident. All prescribed medicines shall be turned over to the staff and dispensed by staff in regular intervals. No prescription medicines shall remain in the Resident’s possession beyond the interval of dispensing (no hoarding meds.). No transfer of prescription medicines among Residents is permitted. Violation of this policy may result in immediate termination of both the transferor and transferee.

CRSH staff may require any Resident to submit to an alcohol or drug test at any time, and the Resident shall comply promptly. **Any Resident refusing such test may be immediately terminated from the program. Any Resident who tests positive for alcohol or illegal drugs may be immediately terminated** from the program; except if the Resident is required to take prescription medication that causes such positive test. **[See also drug/alcohol testing policy.]**

**14. Smoking:**

All rooms/living spaces in CRSH are non-smoking. A designated smoking area is located to the rear of the building in an exterior space designated by staff. No smoking so that smoke filters back into the facility via windows, doors or air conditioners shall be allowed. Disposal of cigarettes and other trash shall be done in the receptacles provided. Violations of smoking policy will result in disciplinary action including prohibition of smoking on premises. No smoking is allowed in CRSH vehicles at any time.

**15. Open Flames**

No candles incense or other open fire of any kind is permitted in Resident rooms. Candles may be used for special occasions in common areas only with the express consent of the Facilities Manager.

**16. Trash:**

All Residents are responsible for removing trash from their assigned rooms as needed, but not less than weekly. Trash shall be disposed of in the dumpster outside. Recyclables such as cardboard, cans, plastics, bottles, etc. should be disposed of in the designated receptacles in the kitchen or in the container in the hallway outside of the telephone room.

**17. Quiet Hours:**

Residents are required to respect other's space at all times. Quiet hours in the house will be from 10:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. During athletic events, church, AA/NA and the like please take extra care in making sure you are quiet and not disturbing others. TVs, music players and computers must be turned down at this time.

**18. Visitors:**

Guests are restricted to the common areas of the facility and are permitted in the rooms with doors fully opened. CRSH staff reserve the right to limit the frequency of visitors and time spent by visitors on an individual basis. Residents are responsible for their visitors at all times, and must be present with their visitors when they are on the premises. While on the premises, visitors shall abide by all policies of CRSH or be subject to immediate removal from the premises.

**19. Non-discrimination and harassment policy:**

CRSH has adopted policies to prevent illegal discrimination and harassment. CRSH takes violations of these policies very seriously and violations will result in disciplinary action which may include termination from the program. These policies are attached and must be read by each Resident.

**20. Weekly Meetings:**

Residents are required to attend weekly community meetings. During this time topics pertinent to community living are discussed.

**21.Violations of Rules:**

Any Resident who violates rules and regulations related to the and affect his/her eligibility or that of CRSH will be responsible for promptly correcting such violations and holding CRSH harmless there from. If correction cannot be made or such violation is also a violation of another CRSH policy, the Resident may be terminated immediately.

**22. Departure procedures:** Residents’ shall abide by the following rules and procedures with respect to their permanent or long-term departure from the facility and program:

**a. Voluntary Departure/Successful Transition**: Residents who are making a successful transition from the CRSH Program and residence shall advise the Program Manager of plans for departure at least 30 days prior to departure, unless waived by the Program/Case manager for good cause. The Resident will conduct candid exit interviews and exit surveys with the Program/Case manager and personnel as requested by them. A Resident may apply for return of reserved rents for the purpose of the transition (rent, deposits, and moving expenses) up to 30 days prior to departure.

**b. Involuntary Departure and Unsuccessful Transitions:** When the Program Director determines that a Resident will be involuntarily separated from the CRSH Program and Residency, or a Resident elects to make an unsuccessful transition out of the CRSH Program and Residency, the Resident shall strictly adhere to the following:

i.) Promptly depart within the time frame specified by the Program/Case

manager or Facilities manager;

ii.) Execute a departure agreement, which will include at least the

following: agreement to meet with a VA representative as requested by the

VA, provide a list of missing property if any, an agreement to remove

personal property in a timely manner, and consequences for failure to do

so, conduct an exit interview with CRSH staff if CRSH requests this, and

other provisions as the Program Director may reasonably require. If the Resident fails to execute such an agreement, the Resident shall be held to compliance with all rules under this CRSH Program Handbook within the shortest time frame provided herein or stated by the Program Director under authority of this Handbook.

iii.) Refrain from any and all threatening, abusive, slanderous or derogatory speech and all threatening behavior.

**c. Provisions relating to all departures:**

i. Residents departing will pack their belongings in the presence of a staff person, and all containers, bags, and the like will be subject to search and inspection prior to removal from the facility.

ii. If a Resident leaves under an order of immediate departure, police escort or due to medical reasons, a minimum of one staff member along with assistance if needed will pack and inventory the belongings of the Resident, and provide the Resident notice, if the Resident’s whereabouts are known and can be reached by phone or US Mail, the date by which such belongings must be removed from the facility, (not to exceed 48 hours, without express written permission of the Program/Case manager or Facilities manager). Property left after that date shall become the property of CRSH without recourse.

**7. TERMINATION OF RESIDENT STATUS**

Residents can and may be discharged from CRSH housing programfor a variety of reasons including but not limited to:

* 1. **Substance Abuse:** CRSH is a ZERO TOLERANCE facility. The use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs is strictly prohibited. Staff has the right to and will conduct drug and alcohol testing at random and when there is suspicion of violation. Violation may result in immediate termination from the program. Residents terminated for substance abuse will be referred to a substance treatment facility and may be eligible to reapply to the program after receiving treatment. **Residents who have knowledge of, or participate in, any violation of the zero tolerance policy in regards to substance abuse and do not notify staff may also have their participation in this program terminated.**
  2. **Program Agreement and Violations:** Residents are required and expected to adhere to the Program Agreement and their curriculum. Residents in violation may be discharged from the program. Specific grounds for termination are outlined in this handbook only in part. Failure to make progress in accordance with the timelines, benchmarks and other expectations of the curriculum may result in termination. However, staff will work with Residents to encourage them in meeting timelines, benchmarks and expectations. Residents, at a minimum, are expected to show diligence, reasonable effort and commitment to expected growth
  3. **Violence or Threat of Violence**: CRSH has a ZERO TOLERANCE policy for violence or the threat of violence. Violence or threat of violence violates the respect of safety of all fellow Residents and staff members. Any Resident who behaves in a violent and/or threatening manner may be terminated from the program.
  4. **Unlawful Activity**: Unlawful activity endangers the safety and wellbeing of all Residents and staff and will not be tolerated. Unlawful activity may result in immediate termination. This includes but is not limited to:

**\***Threatening, violent or disruptive behavior.

\*Using, distributing or possessing illegal drugs.

\*Misuse of prescription drugs.

\*Theft.

\*Prostitution.

\*Illegal gambling.

\*Assault.

\*Or ANYTHING that violates town, city or state criminal law.

**6. Disrespectful and** **Other Detrimental Treatment of Staff or Other Residents**: Any Resident who engages in disrespectful speech, conduct or behavior towards CRSH staff, other Residents, VA personnel, Board members or CRSH guests and visitors may be subject to termination from the program. Disrespectful includes but is not limited to a failure to acknowledge the role of staff, the Resident’s obligations under the Program Agreement and curriculum, and rude words or behavior reasonably calculated to offend, irritate, harass, belittle, embarrass or unduly challenge another. Gestures and body movement that communicates the same disrespect are of equal concern.

**7. Possession** of firearms, knives larger than small pocket knives, explosives, or other implements of lethal character.

**8. Termination and Appeal Process:**

a. Staff may affect an immediate termination of a Resident’s participation in the CRSH program in any case in which there is a danger to the program, the Resident, staff or other Residents, unlawful activity, violence or threat of violence or violation of the substance free rule. The Resident will be provided a written notice of termination, if delivery of this is safe for the staff, stating in brief terms the cause for termination, the date of termination, and the signature of the staff person. This notice will also provide information about the appeal process specified below. If the staff person believes that the Resident can be safely approached to sign acknowledging receipt of this notice, it shall be obtained.

b. Copies of the notice of immediate termination will be delivered to theExecutive Director and secretary within 24 hours and all other staff will be notified promptly. The Resident shall have 10 days to obtain a copy of this notice and to file in writing with the Board president or secretary a notice of appeal. The Board Review Committee shall be convened to hear the appeal within 30 days of notice. The decision of the committee will be delivered to the Resident and is final and cannot be appealed.

c. In the event of non-emergency violations of CRSH policy, non-performance or compliance with the Program Agreement and curriculum, the Case Manager will arrange a meeting with a three person Review Committee of the Board to review the case. That committee will give the Resident an opportunity to learn that he/she is up for termination and to present information to the committee. The Resident may be afforded the opportunity to gather information and have a reconvened meeting with the committee up to 10 days subsequent. The committee may require the Resident to vacate the CRSH facility immediately, pending information gathering and a re-convened meeting. The decision of the committee will be delivered to the Resident and is final and cannot be appealed.

d. No Resident suspected of violating the substance use policy, who refuses to allow drug and/or alcohol testing when requested may appeal immediate termination, and shall be deemed to admit the violation of the substance policy of CRSH. A Resident who is tested positive for substance abuse, may at his own expense obtain a retest at any medical facility and present the results to CRSH for reconsideration, provided the test is done within sufficient time to accurately test for violation at the time of the first test. A positive test will be definitive evidence of a violation of the CRSH substance abuse policy.

e. All instances of Resident non-compliance with CRSH policy, Program Agreement or curriculum shall be documented in the Resident’s file in writing, stating at a minimum the date, time and nature of the violation, the witnesses, and the disciplinary action taken at that time or subsequently. A copy of this report will be provided the Resident within 24 hours, the receipt of which shall be evidenced by the signature of the Resident.