



## ***Safe Harbour House***

### ***Resident Handbook***

#### **Welcome!**

The participant handbook will be your guide while living at Safe Harbour House. It includes House rules and expectations as well as general information about the daily routines. Please feel free to ask questions.

Safe Harbour House is designed to provide safe accommodation and support youth making a commitment to participate in education, training and employment components of the program.

Safe Harbour is a VIOLENCE AND HARRASSMENT free program and a breach of this rule will result in immediate discharge and possible criminal charges. Safety of residents and staff is our top priority.

A formal plan/agreement will be created between Safe Harbour House and a resident outlining how the House and local community resources can be used to assist the resident who is making the transition to adulthood. An investment in education, training, life skills are expected by the resident in order to improve long-term life chances of never being homeless again.

Safe Harbour House is a transitional, supportive housing approach. The accommodations are not time limited. Safe Harbour House strives to provide a home-like environment and a natural approach with youth.

Respect for self and others: Safe Harbour House promotes an inclusive environment; free of oppression, prejudice, bullying and discrimination. Respecting, accepting and celebrating one another's differences while being considerate of different beliefs. All residents and staff will be expected to treat one another with mutual respect and courtesy regardless of gender, ability, ethnic origin, physical/mental abilities, sexual orientation and age.

**Case Management** includes programming based on:

Youth Engagement Services program (YES) is a Social Development program available to youth age 16 until their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday and who are participating in some type of education and/or employment programming. Each youth receiving this service will be assigned a provincial/personal social worker who will assist youth with various resources and services available through the program. Safe Harbour House will be required to report to Social Assistance when a resident leaves the House. Staff will be able to assist the past resident with transitioning to another address to ensure no disruption of income. Safe Harbour House will do everything possible to avoid an exit into homelessness.

Social Assistance – Social Development will provide a monthly income for youth participating in specific programs (education and employment training). The rate of the YES Benefit is \$537 per month.

Rent – Safe Harbour House requires each resident to contribute to the cost of food and shelter. This practice builds skills and is an absolute reality of the future. Rent is \$200 per month.



**Savings** – Safe Harbour House residents are required to contribute a monthly amount to a personal savings account. These savings will be given to the resident at the time of exit and can be used toward damage deposits, furnishings and other start-up costs. Savings will be \$137 per month.

**Personal Spending** - Safe Harbour House residents will keep \$200 per month for personal spending purposes.

**No cash is kept on site therefore savings will be issued by direct deposit into the residents bank account as soon as possible after an exit.**

**Consent Forms** – All residents must sign consent forms for all services providers to enable Safe Harbour House staff to communicate with outside agencies regarding resident services.

**Room Assignment** – New residents will be assigned a room at the time of move in. Internal moves may be permitted for a number of reasons however a request must be formally made to staff for consideration.

**Education** – Residents are encouraged and expected to participate in some form of education while staying at Safe Harbour House. This will be determined during the construction of an individualised case plan. Education is the way out of poverty which is a root cause of homelessness.

**School Relationships** – Safe Harbour House staff are willing to support residents in building healthy relationships with their school, teachers and guidance counsellors to ensure the quality of one's education. Alternative education will be explored for those who have been suspended from school. Advocacy to have the student reinstated into their school is also an option.

**Employment** – Residents are expected to be employed or in an employment training program while residing at Safe Harbour House. Full time students can be employed on a part time basis. Non-students must be enrolled in some type of employment development and/or volunteerism in some capacity as well as preparing to return to school. Safe Harbour House requests a copy of the resident's timetable for their file.

**Health** – Wellness is important for all residents therefore you will be encouraged to pursue a healthy lifestyle. Residents are expected to follow the advice of their health professionals and address physical/mental health issues. Residents will receive a Social Development Yellow Health Card which will cover most health related services. Assistance with smoking alternatives are available through community health clinics.

**Birth Control** – Safe Harbour House staff believes every resident should using some form of birth control so youth can focus on themselves and their identified goals. Supplies are free and available for all residents to access and will be located in the main bathrooms. All residents are expected to practice safe sex.

#### **Case Plans:**

Safe Harbour House will focus on individual goals as identified by each resident. This is a living document that will be re-evaluated monthly or as often as necessary. Safe Harbour House staff will utilize a



number of approaches to assist youth with developing their case plans. Youth will be asked to think about their personal goals and wishes for their future. Detailed step will be outlined for each goal.

Various approaches for case planning will include: Solutions Focused which is based on respect and hope while valuing the resident wants/needs and acknowledging their past successes. Safe Harbour House believes in moving forward while leaving the past behind...therefore fresh starts/second chances for youth who live in the House. Person Centered – goals will be developed by the youth (with the help of the staff) and should include, education, employment, and life skills. Strengths Based – assists youth with creating a personal assets inventory which focuses on building necessary skills while integrating existing skills in regards to their school/employment goals. Tapping into one's resiliency can guide you through difficulties.

Motivation for change is key to succeeding in personal goals and develop skills that will lead to overall wellbeing. Staff will review the stages of change and assist residents with identifying where on the continuum they may be with each of their prospective goals.

Safe Harbour House will provide a number of skills building programs during one's stay. The skills are intended to better prepare youth for the transition to adulthood.

**Trainings available such as:** Timelines will be established (in the resident's case plan) for the completion of each training offered.

First Aid/CPR

Mental Health First Aid

Empathy building (including temperaments)

Stages of change

Anti-oppressive

Kitchen Basics

Fire Safety

Road Map/Career Development

Making Waves/Healthy Relationships

**Life Domains/ Life Skills Workshops:**

Housing – maintaining, repairing, being a good tenant and neighbor.

Finance – building literacy skills, acquiring a bank account, paying rent, purchases. This is a key component in learning to live independently. Safe Harbour House has a savings/rent program that will provide residents with a monthly allowance, a contribution to a savings plan and monthly rent payments. The financial literacy program will assist youth with developing necessary skills for the future.

Health – the importance of physical exercise, self-care, hair and skin, healthy eating, birth control.



Occupational – employment skills such as interviewing, resume writing, dress for success, volunteerism.

Social relationships – Making Waves a healthy relationships workshop will be provided in house through staff of PFY. Safe Harbour House recognizes relationships can be difficult. The House will provide healthy relationship training for all residents which will include methods of conflict resolution and indicators of unhealthy/abusive relationships.

Self-Care including interpersonal and personal relationships which are paramount for overall well-being. Each youth will be encouraged to develop a wellness recovery action plan that will focus on self-care and relationship with one's self.

Cultural/spiritual beliefs – This exploration is personal and specific to the youth's personal goals listed in their case plan. These connections may include the history of one's culture or participating in local community events.

Journal – Safe Harbour House requests each new resident to complete a journal for the first 4 months to assist youth with the process the changes they will experience after receiving housing. House rules, staff and youth expectations will be outlined in the journal. Key points regarding stress, healthy living, sexual health, key contacts, youth rights, and satisfaction surveys will also be noted in the journal.

Monthly House Meeting – All residents are expected to attend a monthly House meeting. The meetings could be facilitated by staff and/or youth and will address 'home' issues.

Positive Space – Safe Harbour House will strive to provide a positive space. Residents are expected to contribute to the positivity of the environment. Any violence or threats of violence may result in an exit plan.

Resident's Council – Safe Harbour House will assist residents with developing a Resident's Council which will assist the staff with peer mentoring, decision making for the House, interviewing/referring new residents.

### **Daily Living Guidelines:**

Community Living – This can be complicated however Safe Harbour House would like to assist with skills that will enable residents to properly handle situations with other residents in a respectful manner. All issues can be discussed with Safe Harbour House staff with a focus on resolution as soon as possible.

Quieter Hours – Safe Harbour House requires quiet time between 10.30pm-7am so residents can sleep, study or relax. Please respect noise levels during this time. This will be a requirement when leasing an apartment in the future. Residents are expected to be in their rooms from 10.30pm on weekdays and 11.30pm on weekends.

Bedrooms - Residents are expected to keep their bedroom clean and tidy so please allow time each day to do so, this will prevent problems with old food, wet towels and dirty clothes from causing unwanted odors and/or damages. Bedrooms will be checked weekly for cleanliness.

Room Inspections – Staff reserves the right to inspect any resident room if there are safety concerns or hygiene issues.



**Common Areas** – Residents are invited to share the common area with staff and other residents. We will have dinner together each evening in the kitchen/common area. Television will be available during the evening hours. There will be restrictions on the type of television shows viewed based on the recommended age and subject/content.

**House Responsibilities/ Cleanliness** – Residents are expected to assist and support the maintenance and cleanliness of Safe Harbour House. Residents will be responsible for completing weekly tasks in the House as outlined on the chore chart. As a group we will build a chores list and it will be posted in the kitchen area.

**Signing In and Out** – Please sign in and out at the main office. This is to ensure the safety of the residents and to create a sense of accountability for youth's whereabouts. Also necessary in case of an evacuation.

**Curfew** – Safe Harbour House has a curfew of 10.30pm from Sunday to Thursday and 11.30pm on Friday and Saturday. Extension of curfew can be arranged with staff depending on individual circumstances.

**Overnight Pass** – Safe Harbour House residents can pre-arrange an overnight pass with staff. An address and telephone number will be requested in case of emergency. And check in the following day to confirm a return time will be expected. Please call if you are not returning to the House as expected. This will be addressed in your individualized case plan, as well.

**Visitors** – Safe Harbour House cannot accommodate guests therefore residents are asked to meet up with friends and family outside of the residence. Resident's bedrooms are a safe space therefore no visitors allowed.

**Keys** – Residents will be issued keys for their room and will be responsible for having their key to access their space. There will be a charge to replace any lost keys.

**Belonging Searches** – Safe Harbour House reserves the right to conduct random room and belonging searches to ensure the health and safety of all residents and staff of Safe Harbour House.

**Recordings and Photos** – Please do not record or take photos of any other residents in Safe Harbour House for privacy purposes. Posting unauthorized pictures or inappropriate comments on social media is considered offensive and please refrain from doing so.

**Cell Phones** – There are no limits for cell phone use however staff will ask residents to abide by the quiet time rule (10.30pm-7am).

**Dress Code** – Safe Harbour House residents are expected to be fully clothed in the common areas of the residence. Outdoor footwear must be left in the entry. Indoor footwear is suggested outside of one's bedroom.

**Personal Hygiene** – Youth are required to maintain an appropriate level of daily hygiene while living in the House. Hygiene includes clean clothing, regular showering, clean laundry and oral hygiene.

**Personal Belongings** – Safe Harbour House cannot be responsible for personal belongings. Residents are encouraged to keep all valuables locked in their bedroom.



**Medication** – All medications must be turned into the Safe Harbour House upon admittance. Keeping medications in resident's room is not permitted because of concerns around misuse and sales of. This could result in an exit plan.

**Laundry** – Safe Harbour House will provide residents with access to the laundry facility. Assistance with learning the proper use of the washers and dryers is available through staff.

**Bedding** – All bedding is provided by Safe Harbour House however residents will be responsible for the cleaning.

**Meals** – Safe Harbour House will provide all meals and healthy snacks for residents. Youth are expected to participate in the preparation, cooking and clean-up of the daily shared meal. 'Treats' will not be provided through regular meal plans However residents may purchase their own and keep them in their rooms.

**Kitchen Access** – Residents are encouraged to use the kitchen during the hours of 7am-11pm. There will be a "residents" fridge and cupboard to keep your food in, we suggest you label your items.

**Food-Clean up** – Residents must leave the kitchen clean (food put away and dishes cleaned up) after each use.

**Basic Needs Allowance** – As part of the YES Benefit residents will have \$200 per month for personal purchases. This money can be distributed in a manner as requested by the youth.

**Transportation** – Monthly bus passes will be provided through the YES program benefit (residents have to pay for it out of their personal money) or Department of Education through the local high schools.

**Length of Stay** – Safe Harbour House will accommodate all participating youth until they finish school and/or secure full time employment and housing. There are no specific time limits on length of stay however residents must be working on their case plan which includes an exit plan. Safe Harbour House will adhere to the age of eligibility (16-19<sup>th</sup> birthday).

**Mail** – Safe Harbour House will allow 30 days for past residents to reroute their mail. After this date mail will be returned to senders.

**Storage** – Safe Harbour House cannot provide storage to past residents. Staff is willing to assist with planning and preparing for move outs which would include the removal of all personal belongings.

**Birthdays** – Safe Harbour House staff would like to celebrate resident birthdays however if the youth is not comfortable with this practice please speak with staff about your wishes.

**Graduation** – Safe Harbour House residents will work toward graduation by participating in skills building and completion of school. Staff will provide assistance with steps leading up to graduation and ensure youth are prepared to move forward to independent living.

**Music** – Safe Harbour House encourages the use of headphones/earphones for individual use. Loud music will not be allowed during quiet hours (11pm-7am). Music is therapeutic and welcomed in Safe Harbour House however respect for other residents must be acknowledged. Discriminating lyrics can



also cause issues for other residents therefore we encourage youth to consider the implications of negative or derogatory language.

**Mentor Programs** – Safe Harbour House would highly encourage residents to seek out mentors in their own circles of friends and relatives. The staff could also assist with finding community mentors if youth are unable to find someone they are comfortable with. Natural peer mentorship by the longer term residents is recommended.

**Employment** – Safe Harbour House residents are expected to work or in an employment training program while residing at Safe Harbour House. Residents who are in school are expected to work part time. While residents who are not in school are expected to develop an employment action plan and provide daily proof of an independent job searches.

**Wake-ups** – Safe Harbour House residents are responsible for waking themselves up in time for school and work. Alarm clocks will be provided for each resident.

**Smoking** – Smoking is not allowed on Safe Harbour House property. Safe Harbour House will assist youth with acquiring alternative smoking replacements through health care providers.

**Intoxication** – Drugs and alcohol are not permitted in Safe Harbour House or on the property. Safe Harbour House will not permit the selling, dealing or distributing of illegal drugs, paraphernalia, alcohol, weapons or tobacco products. Any such behaviour may result in an exit plan and a referral to law enforcement.

**Entry under the Influence** – Residents who return to Safe Harbour House under the influence, providing the resident's behaviour remains respectful and within expected parameters, will be permitted to enter the house. Staff reserves the right to deny entry to anyone who are considered to be a safety risk to themselves, fellow residents or staff of Safe Harbour House. Staff may ask a resident to remain in their room or exit the House for the night if their behaviour escalates. Regular occurrences of intoxication will be addressed with resident and may result in discharge.

**Illegal Belongings** – Safe Harbour House will dispose of any illegal belongings during intake and thereafter.

**Sex** – residents are not permitted to have sexual contact while in the house.

**Personal Rooms** – resident's rooms are considered private and residents are not permitted in each other's rooms.

**Fire Safety** – There will be a posted protocol for building fire safety which each new resident will be introduced to during their orientation. Please be willing to participate in a fire drill practice when Safe Harbour House is required to practice. Anything deemed to be a fire hazard is not permitted in the bedrooms; this includes smoking, candles, incense.

**House Security** – Safe Harbour House has a secure entrance. Residents will be buzzed in through an intercom system. The House also has cameras in all of the common areas for the safety of residents and staff. Any violence or threats of violence will be reported to the /city Police and charges may be laid.





**Self-Harm** – Safe Harbour House staff will seek assistance from Saint John Mobile Crisis Team for any youth having suicidal thoughts and feelings. Please approach the staff and/or engage mental health professionals regarding your thoughts and feelings to prevent serious outcomes. Safe Harbour House cares about you and wants to provide a safe and comforting environment to ensure your welling being. Safe Harbour House understands youth often experience feelings of despair and sadness. The staff want to provide support and intervention (if necessary) to those youth who are considering harming themselves or others.

**Harm to others** – Safe Harbour House staff are available for any youth who is angry/upset about relationships or a specific person in the youth's life. Please approach staff and/or mental health professionals regarding your thoughts and feelings to prevent serious outcomes. Safe Harbour House cares about you and the negative feelings you are experiencing. House staff can support youth who may need to report an incident or person who is posing a threat or causing fear for residents. Talking these issues out with House staff can help with developing skills for future encounter/situations and be resolved in a non-violent manner.

**Vandalism** – Safe Harbour House will report any vandalism of the building or property to City Police and charges will be laid.

**Positive Change Programing** – if you are unable to meet the expectations of your case plan or the expectations of the program the following steps will be taken to ensure the House has provided enough support and services to each youth who enters the residence.

1. Learning Opportunities (x3)
2. Written Agreement
3. Resolution Meeting
4. Exit Plan

**Reasons for an immediate exit plan:** or the possibility of a 30 day suspension.

- Possession of a weapon
- Physical-sexual-emotional assault, violence or threats of violence on any person in Safe Harbour House
- Possession of drugs or alcohol
- Chronic failure to follow case plan
- Tampering with security

**Move-Out** – Residents will be expected to discuss a move-out plan with House staff as the date approaches. This includes packing and cleaning the bedroom, removing belongings from the fridge/freezer and kitchen cupboards, move-out support (arranging the physical move and transportation), identifying community supports and resources in the resident's new community.