



**A GOOD START**

## **HOUSE RULES**

**JUNE 2023**

**Our Mission: To create a community of support and belonging for individuals who are in recovery, justice involved, trafficked, or those aging out of the foster care system, by providing safe, sober, and affordable shared housing that fosters healing, growth, and self-sufficiency.**

**Welcome to A Good Start. We have these rules because they are consistent with community placement and recovery practices. Please review carefully, as all residents will be expected to meet these expectations.**

### **POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS**

#### **LIVING IN A GOOD START HOUSE**

- 1. Honesty and integrity are expected at all times. Our highest values are tranquility, cooperation and feeling personal safety.**
- 2. You must abide by all rules of the house and all laws.**
- 3. Everyone is expected to interview with their Housing Specialist when you are first housed. The Housing Specialist will review each one of these rules with you. The Housing Specialist is highly skilled and will provide information about recovery**

**support and assist you with other resources. The Housing Specialist is your first call if you have a conflict or problem.**

- 4. You are expected to develop and implement a recovery program (if applicable) and work together with the residents in the houses on your recovery.**
5. We are partnered with many external agencies that can help support you in achieving your goals. In partnership with drug court staff, we may make recommendations for outside services including medical care, support, schooling and employment. We believe that living in A Good Start House is an opportunity to expand and heal. We will do everything we can to facilitate your goals.

## **FINANCIAL POLICIES**

### **1. ROOM CHARGES:**

The monthly room charge is due by the 1st of each month and is considered late by 5pm on the 8th of each month (for monthly payment arrangements). Residents must communicate if not paying on the 1st of the month. If arrangements are not made in advance, a \$35 late fee will be added. It is your responsibility to make sure that your charges are paid, even if there are arrangements for it to be paid by another organization. You will have to contact the organization and ensure the payment is received on time.

If you fail to communicate with us regarding paying your charges, and you are consistently late on paying, you will have a 72-hour notice to pay or vacate. If you need help with paying your program fee, there are resources available to assist you. Notify us if you do. Residents may attempt to work with several non-profit organizations who may be able to assist you with partial or full room charges. Be sure to contact the organizations at least one month in advance in order to get assistance.

In the event that you must set up a payment plan, you will be required to show your pay stubs/direct deposit or other documentation as proof of your ability to pay.

Our main form of payment is through the Zelle application. We also accept debit credit cards, cashier's checks, and money orders. We do not accept personal checks or cash. We can also give you a summary of any payments you have made within 48 hours of request. We encourage you not to keep cash in the house.

**POLICY ON REFUNDS:** No refunds. If you do not follow the rules and are asked to leave, you will not be reimbursed for any fees or charges paid. You will also still be responsible for any pending balances. You do not get room credit while you are incarcerated.

You will not be penalized for paying in advance. Any prepayments that you or your family make will be returned to you. If you are placed in jail, we may not hold your room. A discussion may be held with your correctional officer and counselors to determine the best housing option for you.

## **2. SUPPLY FEE:**

You will have a \$200 Supplies and Cleaning Fee due prior to entry. This fee is a non-refundable.

## **3. FINANCIAL INVOLVEMENT OF STAFF:**

Anyone associated with the houses or nonprofit is prohibited from handling your finances. We will provide referrals to banks and financial education that is external to the housing.

**POLICY: NO DRUG USE OR ALCOHOL USE – INCLUDING MARIJUANA** This is a recovery supportive housing program. Re-occurring Drug and Alcohol use may lead to a housing exit.

## **GENERAL RULES FOR HOUSE MEMBERS UPON MOVE-IN:**

**Absolutely no alcohol and drug use** by any resident, staff, or approved visitor on or off the premises. This is a clean and sober house and you must remain clean and sober at all times; otherwise, immediate termination will be required. You are not allowed to use or possess alcohol, drugs, medications not prescribed to you, or drug paraphernalia. You will also be removed from the home if you give drugs, alcohol, or marijuana to another resident.

**You will have a baseline urine analysis (UA) when first entering the home.** A drug or alcohol test may be required when any resident is suspected of being under the influence of any substance. The House Lead has the right to request residents to provide a urine sample or other drug test; this includes random alcohol and/or drug tests. Random housing UA's will be required. The house Lead or any resident may request a random UA. Failure to take a UA when asked may lead to a housing exit. We frequently drug test an entire house.

Failure to comply is considered a positive drug test and is cause for termination. Once the test has been initiated, you must sit where the House Lead can see you until you are able to provide the sample.

Any attempt to cheat/circumvent a test (like use someone else's urine sample or synthetic (store bought) urine) for your UA, will result in a dismissal. You will be charged \$10 per UA test for

follow up if you are found positive. If we need to send your UA to a lab, you will be responsible for those costs.

No alcohol, illegal drugs, marijuana, or use of prescription drugs that do not belong to you. Any prescribed or over the counter medication must be kept in a locker with a copy of the prescription given to the House Lead and the owners.

If you supply or give drugs to any resident or are caught dealing drugs on or off of the property, you will be asked to leave within 15 minutes and may gather your belongings within three days.

If you are high on drugs, you will be immediately removed to either a hospital, treatment facility, or the Department of Corrections (DOC). The House Lead may inspect in and around bedroom property or belongings at any time and within reason, for the safety and protection of all residents. Rooms may be searched for drugs at any time.

If you have a recurrence of use of drugs or alcohol, you must self-report immediately to A Good Start Housing team and report to the DOC (when applicable). Not disclosing quickly and completely places your housing at risk. You will be asked to sign a release form upon admission so that we and/or our designee may discuss drug testing results with the Community Correction Officers (CCO) and drug counselors.

## **CURFEW & OVERNIGHTS**

1. **CURFEW:** Curfew is midnight on Friday and Saturday night. Curfew is 10 PM Sunday through Thursday night. No exceptions unless approved by the House Manager.
2. You will be asked to provide a work schedule to the house manager. We enforce the curfew unless you have a check out slip from work.
3. Overnight/weekend passes are to be submitted to the House Manager a minimum of one week in advance. Authorization will be granted at the discretion of the House Manager.
4. NO CALL – NO SHOW at housing for 48 hours may result in exit. Please contact your house manager if you plan on being gone longer than 48 hours with approval.

## **MEDICATION**

1. **Only prescription drugs prescribed by your healthcare provider and approved by your drug court team are allowed.** No cough syrup, unless it is prescribed.
2. Any prescribed medication must be kept in a locked box with a copy of the prescription given to Karen Glover and drug court.

3. You will be expected to follow drug court policies regarding prescription medication. If you receive a new prescription, make sure to report it to your Drug Court case manager and your treatment provider.
4. Possession of medication not prescribed to you is cause for an exit.

## **SMOKING**

Do not smoke in your room or anywhere in the house. Smoking is only allowed outside. Please clean up your smoking materials.

## **ROOMS**

**There will be both scheduled and random room searches for all residents. Rooms may be searched for drugs or contraband at any time.**

### **ROOM CARE:**

1. Rooms must be kept orderly and clean. Beds should be made daily when not occupied. Dirty dishes should be removed daily and washed. Trash should be emptied daily.
2. Food may not be stored in rooms.
3. Rooms are shared rooms, unless arrangements are made. If there is an open bed in your room, you are responsible for maintaining the bed. You may not use the spare bed, dresser or closet.

## **HOUSE CARE**

1. Immediately clean up any area you use (Kitchen, Bathroom, and Common area). **It is expected that you will thoroughly clean the bathroom after your use.** We provide cleaning supplies in the house for sanitizing surfaces.
2. **TOILET:** Do not put anything into the toilet except toilet paper. Putting any other objects into the toilet may cause damage and will lead to an immediate exit.
3. **HOUSE CHORES:** You are expected to participate in house chores and they will be assigned weekly. The chore list is in the kitchen. The House Manager is responsible for chore assignment and completion. If you cannot do your chore, you need to make arrangements with another resident to cover it for you. The house will be deep cleaned by residents every week. Chores will include thorough cleanup of common areas

(kitchens, bathrooms, living room). Each resident is responsible for cleaning up after themselves and for participating in communal chores as assigned.

4. **UTILITIES and GARBAGE:** Energy conservation is everyone's responsibility. Garbage must go out. It is up to everyone to make sure the cans outside are taken to the curb on the designated pick-up day.
5. In-house temperature to be maintained at 68 degrees in Winter and 72 degrees in Summer. Residents can have a personal heater or fan with automatic shut off. Thermostat is to be adjusted by the House Manager only.
6. House quiet time is **10:00pm to 5:00am**. Any activity (i.e., Lights, TV, Telephone conversations, etc.) that disturb another resident's ability to sleep/rest is prohibited.
7. House Meetings are held weekly at date/time determined by the House Manager and are mandatory for every resident.
8. **A Good Start House staff will inspect each home each week and provide a report card.**
9. **PROPERTY DAMAGE:** If you intentionally damage the house, you will pay for the damage.
10. **CARS:** If you own a vehicle it must be functioning and not in disrepair (leaking oil, smoking) and you must also have proof of license and insurance. Parking is first come first served. There is no assigned parking. If you damage someone's car or someone else damage's your car, it is your responsibility. We do not get involved.
11. The computer and printer are available to all residents for business purposes only. They are to remain in the common area.

## **ANIMALS**

1. We are not able to accommodate pets due to our communal nature and shared spaces.

## **PERSONAL POSSESSIONS**

1. You are not allowed to possess guns, knives, or other weapons. Possession of these items will be cause for an exit.
2. A Good Start House is not responsible for your personal property.
3. You must identify any personal property with value of greater than \$50 to the intake team.

4. If you borrow and loan personal property, it is at your own risk. **Residents are responsible for their own security and the security of their possessions.** Residents storing personal belongings in common areas store them at their own risk.
5. Stealing is cause for an exit. **Bringing stolen goods into the house is stealing.** Taking someone's medication is stealing. We will ask you to move out if you steal.
6. **FOOD: Taking someone else's food is stealing. You must ask about taking items in the refrigerator or food located elsewhere. We frequently have food donations for the entire house. Please be sure you understand if something is community food or personal food.**
7. **Leaving the Home:** You must be current with your room charge upon the exit of the House. Any personal property left behind more than (3) days after moving out , NO-SHOW status, or arrest, will be considered abandoned and will be donated to charity or disposed of if you do not make arrangements for it. If you are not current on your room charge, do not expect us to store your belongings. If you make advance arrangements, storage may be available for up to 25 days. We do not have the ability to store property for more than 25 days. Please make arrangements to have someone collect your items if you cannot do so.

## **VISITORS / SECURITY**

1. If you breach the safety of the house, or exit your residency, it will lead to a change in door codes.
2. If you give your entry code to someone else, or let someone in on your code, that is considered a breach of house safety and will be grounds for an exit.
3. **VISITORS are NOT allowed inside the residence. NO overnight guests are allowed under any conditions.** Do not ask to have your family, friends, or anyone that is not on an agreement in the house. NO persons under the age of 18 allowed anywhere on the property at any time, unless discussed with the managers and CPS has approved. However, we allow family members to tour your house on move in or at a pre-arranged time in specialized, common areas if the request is submitted and approved by the House Lead with 48-hour prior notice. Approved visitors are not permitted at the house beyond curfew.
4. **Individuals who do not reside in the house are not allowed on the property.** Visitors can pull into the driveway to pick you up, but hanging out in the front of the house is not allowed. You are not permitted to hang out of your window or talk to your visitors through open windows. If you bring an unapproved visitor in the house or on the

property, you will be removed from the home. If your roommate does not report the visitor to us, they will also be removed.

5. Physical violence or threats of any kind will not be tolerated. Violence or threats by you or your approved residents will be cause for an immediate exit.

## **OTHER RESIDENTS**

1. **Do not ask other residents for money.**
2. **You are not allowed to ask other residents to sign paperwork for the courts or any other group.**
3. If you have a conflict with anyone in the house, please ask the house leader, the peer mentor and the owners for support in helping to come to a resolution.
4. Residents are not permitted in any bedroom other than their own without permission from the resident(s) residing in that room; they must also be accompanied by the permitting resident.
5. **NEW RESIDENTS:** We will not knowingly move someone into the house that has harmed you or provides stress to you. Please let us know if you have concerns about your safety or ability to live in a shared space with any of the residents based on prior history.

## **PRIVACY**

1. Since some Residents are on Community Placement, the Department of Corrections will have full access to the premises. You must be polite to questions from DOC, whether you are on community placement or not. Telephone, in person or written DOC requests will be answered by any resident, honestly and with integrity.
2. Due to the fact that residents are in transition for various reasons, if we do not have a Release of Information, we will neither confirm nor deny that you live here.

## **CAUSES FOR EXIT**

### **REASONS FOR TERMINATION OF RESIDENCY**

Please acknowledge your understanding with your initials.

Immediate termination of residency may result from any of the following behaviors:

1. Possession of guns, knives, other weapons. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Physical violence or threats of any kind. This includes threats made by your approved residents. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Breaching the safety of the house, including giving your entry code to someone else or letting them in on your code. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Use or possession of alcohol, drugs, medications not prescribed to you, or drug paraphernalia. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Failure to report use of drugs or alcohol to A Good Start House team.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Dealing drugs on or off the property. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Abuse of over the counter or prescription medications. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Possession of stolen goods or any theft. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Non-residents on the property. Family may be allowed to visit with 48-hours notice.  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Violation of curfew. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Violation of house rules. \_\_\_\_\_
12. Having a messy room or food in your room 2 times. \_\_\_\_\_
13. Stuffing anything down the toilet except toilet paper. \_\_\_\_\_
14. Damaging the house intentionally. \_\_\_\_\_
15. Soliciting money from other residents. \_\_\_\_\_

## CLIENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

**Please acknowledge your consent with your initials.**

I agree to always comply with the house rules and expectations. \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that I must follow through with Department of Corrections requirements and expectations communicated by A Good Start House and DOC staff. \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that cooperation and kindness are key values and will do my best to support the residents in the house. \_\_\_\_\_

**I will immediately report mine or any resident's use of alcohol or drugs to the Peer Mentor and Karen Glover. Failure to report will be cause for termination of residency.** \_\_\_\_\_

I have identified any personal property with value of greater than \$50 to the intake team. I understand that A Good Start House is not responsible for my personal property. \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that behavior considered to be a "conflict of interest" (i.e. sponsorship, employment, dating, etc.) between residents is strictly prohibited. \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that smoking inside the home is strictly prohibited. Smoking is allowed in outside designated areas. This is a smoke free residence.

I understand that if I have a conflict with anyone, the house leader, the peer mentor, and the owners will help come to a resolution. We will work together as a team to resolve any conflict.

\_\_\_\_\_

I will pay back room charges and late fees if I am a NO-SHOW for more than 48 hours. \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this agreement, you understand that when you breach the safety of the house, or exit your residency, it will lead to a change in door codes. If you give your entry code to someone else, or let someone in on your code, that is considered a breach of house safety and will be grounds for an exit.

Signed and understood \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**California Code, Health and Safety Code - HSC § 11833.05**

(f) For the purposes of this section, “**recovery residence**” means a residential dwelling that provides primary housing for individuals who seek a cooperative living arrangement that supports personal recovery from a substance use disorder and that does not require licensure by the department or does not provide licensable services, pursuant to Chapter 7.5 (commencing with [Section 11834.01](#)). A recovery residence may include, but is not limited to, residential dwellings commonly referred to as “sober living homes,” “sober living environments,” or “unlicensed alcohol and drug free residences.”

RCW 59.18.550 Drug and alcohol-free housing—Program of recovery—Terms—Application of chapter governs the terms of this agreement.