



## Summary of Uniform Shelter Program Rules for Families in EA Emergency Assistance Family Shelter

### What is EA Emergency Assistance Family Shelter?



Welcome to the EA Emergency Assistance Family Shelter program. We're here to help you with the next part of your journey. Our program is for families who need help right away. It's a stepping stone to get your life stable again.

While you stay in shelter, you'll have some tasks and assignments to do. These will help you get back on your feet quickly. The shelter isn't a permanent home, but it's a place to keep you and your family safe as you search for your next place to live.

### What are these rules for?

When staying in a shelter, you must follow these rules. They apply to Bridge shelter track, including group shelters, scattered site shelters, and hotels. Rules that are different for hotels will be noted.

These rules keep you and others safe while in the shelter. They will help guide your family and explain how staff can help you during your stay.

You must follow these rules. If you do not, we may give your family a noncompliance. We may tell your family to leave shelter if you repeatedly break the rules. We may also tell your family to leave if you break the rules in a serious way. If we ask you to leave shelter, you will not be allowed back for twelve months. The period of twelve months begins on the last day you are in shelter or last day you received a shelter benefit.

### How do I read this document?

This is a document that you need to sign. It shows that you agree to follow the rules while in the shelter. Each section has a short summary of the rules to help you.

Each part also has key points to focus on. They help you know what to do or how staff can help. If you have questions about the rules while applying for shelter, talk to your homeless coordinator. If you're already in a shelter and need help, ask the shelter staff.



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## Introduction

### Summary

- There are two types of shelter- Bridge shelter and Rapid shelter. Bridge shelter is for families that have more complex needs and need more support to find permanent housing, and Rapid shelter is for families that can find permanent housing more quickly.
- The Uniform Shelter Program Rules apply to Bridge shelter sites.
- Some hotel sites and Rapid shelter sites may have rules that are different from the Uniform Shelter Program Rules. These rules are discussed in this document.
- One incident will count as one rule violation even if you broke more than one rule.
- If staff says you broke a rule, you will have the chance to respond.
- We will consider if you have good cause to break the rule or if your action was minor.

## 1. Access to Units/Searches

### Summary

- Staff can come into your unit to do inspections.
- Staff must give you 24 hours' notice before the visit, but may enter without notice for emergencies or if they have reason to think you:
  - Are committing a crime in your room
  - Are cooking in your room
  - Are smoking in your room; or
  - Have unapproved guests in your room; and
  - Other emergencies that may affect the health and safety of you or others.
- Staff must knock before coming into your unit for an inspection. Staff must give you the chance to open the door and speak to them before they can enter. If there is no



response, shelter and hotel staff may still enter the unit for an inspection if 24-hour notice had been given.

- In a hotel:
  - You must allow housekeeping into your room to clean every day during the daytime
  - We will give you a three-hour window for when cleaning will happen
  - But you can refuse housekeeping for up to three days in a row if you are sick.

## 2. Babysitting/Child Care

### Summary

- These babysitting rules apply only when at your shelter. They do not apply to care your child receives elsewhere. You must get approval to have someone else watch your children at shelter. You must fill out a form to get this approval.
- You can ask staff for the form. Or the front desk if you are placed at a hotel.
- Approval must be requested at least two weekdays ahead of time.
- You must still make a request even if you cannot do so two days ahead of time.
- If you do not hear back from us within 2 days, your request is approved.
- You need approval even to have another shelter guest watch your child. You also need approval to have your older child watch your younger child.
- A child age 14 or over can babysit for him/herself and for his/her younger household members but only with advance approval or for good cause, such as an emergency. Your child must be watched in your unit or in the babysitter's unit. A babysitter can also take your child to appointments outside of shelter. Babysitting can be for a single day, multiple days, or on an on-going basis.
- The babysitter must follow all shelter rules. This includes curfew.



### 3. Care of Children

#### Summary

- You must take good care of your children while in shelter.
- You must make sure your children are well fed, get enough sleep, and attend school.
- You can ask your caseworker for help to find food and school resources if needed.

### 4. Child Left Unattended

#### Summary



**Warning: You may not leave your children alone at any time. This means your children must be within your sight or hearing at all times.**

Please read Section 2: Babysitting/Childcare to learn who can watch your children, if not you.

- A child aged 16 or older may be alone in the common areas of the shelter. They must have prior approval under the babysitting rules to do so.
- A child 16 or older may also be alone if their parent is quickly reachable by phone or in person.

### 5. Curfew

#### Summary

- You must return to your shelter or hotel by the set curfew time. You can be excused for missing curfew only for good reasons defined by the rules or law. Examples of good reasons are if you have a health emergency, you are working, or you do not have transportation to return to shelter.



- Shelters may require you to stay in your room after a certain time. Shelters may require you to stay in your room until 6:00 am the following morning.
- You can get the curfew times changed if you need it because of your work or school schedule. There may be other good reasons we can change your curfew times.
- If you need to change your curfew times, you must talk to shelter or hotel staff. You must follow the rules for “quiet time” that begins one hour before curfew.

## 6. Damage to Property and Expenses

### Summary

- You must not damage shelter or hotel property.
- If you damage or remove shelter or hotel property, you may have to pay for the damage.
- You must also pay for costs not covered by the EA shelter program. This may include use of a hotel telephone or movie rentals. The shelter or hotel will give you a list of these costs when you move into the shelter.
  - You can make a reasonable plan with us to pay for any damage or costs. If you make all your payments on time, you will be treated as if you did not break this rule.
- We expect shelters will have reasonable wear and tear from you living there. We will not make you pay for reasonable wear caused by you living in the shelter.

## 7. EOHLC Requirements Including Required Appointments

### Summary

- We will tell you what time to arrive at your shelter placement. You must arrive by the time we tell you. We can give you transportation to your shelter if you need it.



- You must attend all meetings you are asked to attend. Staff must give you their contact information. If you need to change an appointment, you must talk to staff about a new time to meet.
- You must comply with your rehousing plan.

## 8. Disturbance of Quiet Enjoyment

### Summary

- You must not seriously disturb other people living in the building where you are staying.

## 9. Drug Testing

### Summary

- The shelter must have a specific reason why they think you are using drugs.
- You must take a drug test if the shelter pays for the test and has done the above.

## 10. Fire Safety & Smoking

### Summary

- You must not smoke inside.
- You must only smoke in the designated smoking area outside the shelter or hotel.
- You must not use candles, incense, or cooking equipment inside your shelter room.
- You can ask for permission to use these things in your shelter room. Shelter staff must approve your request before you can use these things.
- Your shelter may provide a space and equipment for you to cook.



## 11. Harassing or Threatening Language

### Summary

- You must not verbally harass or threaten anyone in shelter.

## 12. Illegal Activity

### Summary

- You must not commit any crimes in or near the hotel or shelter.

## 13. Legal Issues

### Summary

- You must give us information about any court case you are involved in.
  - This includes restraining orders and arrest warrants. Your rehousing plan must include a way to address all legal issues when needed.
  - If EOHLC gives you notice that you have a default or arrest warrant, you must take care of it within 5 business days
  - If you don't, you will not be eligible to enter or stay in shelter

## 14. Overnights

### Summary

- Every member of your family must sleep at your shelter every night.
- To sleep away from the shelter, you must ask for permission from shelter or hotel staff.





- There is a form you must complete to make these requests. These forms are available at the shelter or hotel front desk.
- Your family can be out of the EA placement for up to four nights a month. You must get permission for each night away. You should ask for approval at least two weekdays in advance. If you do not hear back from us within 2 weekdays, your request is approved.
  - You must still ask for approval even if you cannot do so two weekdays in advance. You must explain why you could not ask sooner.
  - Late requests may not be approved before you want to take your overnight. If you take the overnight without getting approval first, you may get a noncompliance.
- If you break a rule, or do not follow your rehousing plan, we may deny you overnights.
- If you are gone for two or more nights in a row without approval, you must call or email the shelter. You must explain why you are gone.
- If you are gone for two or more nights in a row without contacting the shelter, you will be locked out.
- If your family needs to leave shelter for more than 5 or more nights, you must ask for a TESI. There is a form you must complete and staff can help you submit it.



## 15. Personal Belongings and Cleanliness of Room

### Summary

- You can only bring clothes, toiletries, medication, and other small items with you to shelter.
- **Each person** in your family can bring only two large (30-gallon) bags. If you come to a shelter with more belongings, you have 7 days to move out the extra items, if you have a good reason for the extra belongings. We can give you advice about where to store the extra belongings.



- You must keep your room clean and neat.
- We will inspect your room to make sure it is clean. You will get 24 hours notice of this type of inspection.
- We may not give you a noncompliance if you have a good reason why your room is unclean. For example, if you are sick, or doing laundry, or packing and unpacking when we inspect your room. You must tell shelter staff if you have a good reason why your room is unclean.
- If you move out of shelter, or leave for more than 48 hours without approval, you must take your belongings. If after 48 hours, your items remain in the room, we will throw them out.

## 16. Pets

### Summary

- You must not bring any pets or animals to shelter at any time, except for animals approved by EOHLC to assist with a disability.

## 17. Prescription Medication

### Summary

- You must make sure that prescription medications are stored safely.
- Medications must be out of reach of your children and other people. You must not share medication with other people in shelter.
- In a shelter:
  - Shelter staff can help you find a safe place to keep your medications.
- In a hotel:
  - You can ask the hotel in writing for a lockable safe. If you cannot be given a safe, do your best to find a secure place to keep medication.



## 18. Sexual Harassment

### Summary

- You must not sexually harass anyone in or on the property where you are staying.

## 19. Substance Abuse

### Summary

- You must not have or use alcohol or any drug on or in the property where you are staying.
  - Even a sealed bottle of alcohol is against the rules.
- You must not abuse drugs or alcohol when not at the shelter.

## 20. Violent Behavior & Child Abuse and Neglect

### Summary

- You must not be violent to other people while in shelter.
- If you are violent to others, you will be asked to leave shelter.
- You must not be violent to people in your family. This includes children.
- Even if children misbehave, you must not hit them.
- If we learn about or see you be violent with anyone, we may report you to child protective services (DCF).



## 21. Visitors/Guests

### Summary

- **In shelter:**
  - Your shelter will have their own visiting hours and rules. You must follow those rules.
- **In hotel:**
  - You must never have an outside visitor in a hotel room. Hotel staff and social services staff are allowed in your room.
  - People from another hotel family can visit your room. Other children must visit your room with their parents. If you have visitors over there cannot be more than 6 people in your room at a time.
- **In shelter and hotel:**
  - Common areas will have their own rules about visitors. You must follow those rules about when and where visitors can be.
  - Your visitors must follow all shelter rules. If your visitor breaks a rule, you can be held responsible.



## 22. Weapons

### Summary

- You must not have any weapons on or in the property where you are staying. Guns are never allowed even if lawfully registered. Your family may be terminated from shelter if you are found to have a weapon in shelter.



## 23. Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Acknowledgement Form

### Summary

- Family members 18 years old or older must sign a CORI Acknowledgement Form. The family may be terminated from shelter if they don't sign a CORI Acknowledgement Form.

## 24. Important

### Summary

- You should try to comply with all of these rules.
- Your shelter or hotel may give you more rules. You must follow those rules too along with the ones in this document. If you or a family member break a rule, you will get noncompliance. If you break the rules three or more times in six months, you may be asked to leave shelter.
- If you break the rules in a serious way, like by being violent, we may ask you to leave shelter. This means your shelter will be terminated. This is true even if you have never been in trouble before.
- All written noncompliances or terminations can be appealed.
- If you break a rule, we may transfer you to a different shelter.
- If you break a rule, we may deny you certain privileges like overnights.
- You may have a disability or other good cause reasons for why you break a rule. You can ask us to consider good causes as to why we should not discipline you.



## ☑ Conclusion

- If you have questions about what these rules mean, you can ask your EOHLC Homeless Coordinator. In a shelter, you can also ask shelter staff. In a hotel, you can also ask the transitional homeless coordinator, the FOR Families visitor, EA hotel support staff, or your HomeBASE liaison.
- We hope these summaries make it easier to understand what the rules are about. To keep them short and simple, they do not tell you everything about the rules. If the wording of a summary and the full version of the Rules are different, the language of the full version will apply.