

**Family Services
 Statement of Client Rights and DHS Code of Conduct**

Shelter Name: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Case Composition: # Adults _____ # Children _____

Last Name:	First Name:	Middle Initial:
Preferred Name:		
Date of Birth:	CARES ID Number:	

The **Statement of Client Rights and Department of Homeless Services (DHS) Code of Conduct** explains your rights and what you are required to do if you stay in short-term emergency housing (“shelter” or “the facility”). These requirements ensure that each facility is a safe and respectful place for you and other DHS clients to reside temporarily and that you work with staff to exit your facility for housing in the community as quickly as possible. If it is hard for you to understand this form, you can ask for help.

While in shelter, your rights include:

1. The right to exercise your civil rights and religion.
2. The right to a safe, clean shelter environment.
3. The right to be treated fairly and not be discriminated against because of your race/ethnicity, color, age, citizenship status, religious beliefs, disability, family status, partnership status, marital status, status as a survivor of domestic violence, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, veteran status, source of income, or lawful occupation.
4. The right to receive courteous, fair, dignified, and respectful treatment.
5. The right to be referred to and addressed by your preferred name, pronouns, and title regardless of what your documentation says or where you are placed in shelter.
6. The right to communicate, and access information, in your preferred language and the right to interpretation services.
7. The right to present grievances on behalf of yourself and others to your shelter director or DHS without fear of retaliation and receive a timely response. This also includes the right to join with others to work for improvements in care.
8. The right to ask for a reasonable accommodation if you have a disability, medical or mental health condition and need help accessing or participating in DHS shelter programs and services.

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While in shelter, your rights include (continued):

9. The right to request that a shelter operator or social services district make reasonable accommodations for any physical or mental disability that substantially limits any major life activities.
10. The right to privacy and to have your information (personal, medical, financial, social, sexual orientation, transgender status, etc.) kept confidential by DHS and shelter staff.
11. The right to privacy in caring for your personal needs.
12. The right to communicate privately – verbally and in writing (for example, with your attorney or other legal representative).
13. The right to manage your own finances.
14. The right to stay at the shelter without being transferred or discharged except in keeping with New York State regulations and the DHS procedures applying those regulations.
15. The right to shelter at no cost to you.
16. The right to bring two bags of personal belongings to the shelter.
17. The right to come and go from the shelter in keeping with curfew.
18. The right to send and receive mail or any other correspondence without interception or interference, except that incoming mail may be scanned and x-rayed to ensure that it does not contain items that could threaten the security of the facility or the health and safety of residents or staff.
19. The right to move about freely in authorized areas in and around the shelter.
20. The right to be free from physical restraint or confinement.
21. The right to report complaints to your shelter or to DHS (using your name or anonymously) and to receive a timely response without having to worry about retaliation.
22. The right to have your version of the events leading to an accident or incident in which you are involved included on all accident or incident reports.
23. The right to not be obliged to perform work by coercion or threat.
24. The right to not give any operator or agent of the operator any gratuity in any form for services provided or arranged for in accord with law or regulation.
25. The right to receive visitors in designated areas of the shelter, where feasible, during reasonable hours as specified in the shelter rules.
26. The right to have your image and likeness kept private/confidential while receiving shelter services.
27. The right to end your shelter stay at any time.

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Single acts of the following misconduct may lead to the loss of shelter:

1. You are forbidden to bring weapons and any illegal substances into the shelter.
2. Violence, threatened violence, or other illegal conduct is not permitted and will be reported to law enforcement authorities.
3. Acts that endanger the health and safety of yourself or others or which substantially interfere with the orderly operation of the facility will not be tolerated.

Single violations of the following may lead to the loss of shelter:

1. Since shelter is temporary housing, you must look for permanent housing and accept any suitable housing that is found.
2. You must cooperate with and complete an assessment by DHS or shelter staff
3. You must work with staff to develop an independent living plan (ILP).
4. You must apply for and, if eligible, keep open a Public Assistance (PA) case with the Human Resources Administration (HRA).

Multiple violations of the following conduct standards may lead to the loss of shelter.

However, in some cases, a single violation of a serious nature may also lead to the loss of shelter:

1. You must cooperate with staff to complete your ILP tasks in order to get permanent housing. You must agree to and meet with shelter staff at least once every other week to discuss your progress in following your ILP.
2. You are required to keep your unit and the common areas of your temporary shelter clean and orderly. Shelter staff may do unannounced health and safety inspections of your unit weekly or more frequently. You must provide access to shelter staff for these inspections.
3. Because space is limited, you may only bring two bags of personal belongings into the shelter.
4. You may not bring in and use: hot plates, space heaters; air conditioners, furniture; televisions larger than 32 inches; cable TV service; or animals (unless you have a disability and require the use of a service animal and/or approved emotional support animal).
5. You are not allowed to smoke, vape, possess or drink alcohol, recreational marijuana, or illegal substances anywhere in the shelter.
6. You may not cause excessive noise or act disrespectfully towards shelter staff or fellow clients.
7. You must be properly dressed and fully clothed on shelter grounds and premises, including outside your unit or area.
8. When directed, you must leave your unit/area and/or building during fire drills, evacuations, cleaning, maintenance, and other safety exercises.

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Multiple violations of the following conduct standards may lead to the loss of shelter.

However, in some cases, a single violation of a serious nature may also lead to the loss of shelter (continued):

9. You are responsible for supervising your children at all times, including in all common areas. You may not leave the shelter without your children unless arrangements have been made for another adult to supervise the children and these arrangements have been approved by shelter staff.
10. Children under two years of age must sleep in cribs, in accordance with the "Safe Sleeping" guidelines that have been provided to you either in written or video form.
11. School-aged children are required to attend school.
12. With the help of your caseworker, you are expected to take part in activities that will help get you to a permanent home, such as working (or looking for work), looking for housing, or working with the Human Resources Administration (HRA).
13. Shelter staff has the right to check your room every day.
14. You may not stay overnight outside of the shelter unless pre-approved by shelter staff
15. You must sign in and out with your children when entering and exiting the shelter and you may be required to leave your unit keys with shelter security staff when leaving the facility.
16. All shelters have a curfew of 10 pm and children must be in their units with a responsible adult by 9 pm, except in the case of a documented emergency or if you have an approved late pass. From June 1 to Labor Day, curfew for parents and children is 11 pm.
17. You may not change the locks on your unit or add additional locks without permission.
18. If you have been placed in a shelter with on-site recreation, day care, or a cafeteria, you must abide by the rules established by the facility for using these services.
19. You must notify shelter staff whenever you or anyone in your family becomes sick.
20. You must comply with your shelter's "Good Neighbor Policy."
21. You will not take pictures, video, or record others unless allowed by DHS. Everyone at DHS locations, including clients, staff, and visitors **must follow this policy.**

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