

# **SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER**

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL**

**Date of Issue: 1/21/11**

**Section Number 159**

**Date Revised:**

### **Policy 159 – Consumer Funds In Residential Settings**

#### **I. POLICY**

It is the policy of Southern Highlands CMHC to maintain appropriate internal control over any funds that the Center maintains. This includes funds held in the group home for consumers' day-to-day use.

#### **II. DISCUSSION**

All consumers are provided with funds to use for personal items, shopping, and going out to eat. These funds are provided in a weekly check that is cashed and maintained at the consumer's residence. While the consumer decides how these funds will be spent, they are still maintained by staff to help prevent theft and misplacement. This procedure has been developed not only to insure the safety of the consumer's funds but also to assist staff and insure that they are not wrongly accused of taking funds.

#### **III. PROCEDURES**

- A. Each week the Accounting Department will issue a check to the consumer for spending money. The amount of this check will be based on the consumer's individual budget.
- B. The residential staff will come to the accounting office with the prior week's consumer funds accounting sheets to pick up the checks for the consumers at that residence. The Accounting Department will release only those checks where the consumer has a balance of less than \$30. The check will be held until the next week and a new check will not be written until the check is released to the consumer.
- C. The residential staff will take the consumers to the bank to cash all checks. The staff will then collect the money and place it in the consumer's individual money lock box.
- D. Each consumer will have an individual accounting form for the funds maintained at the home. Each entry will be descriptive and show where the funds came from or where they were spent. All receipts must be attached to the sheet. This sheet will be reviewed for accuracy by the Accounting Department before the issuance of the next check.

- E. At each shift change, the ongoing staff person and the outgoing staff person will count the consumer's funds to insure that no errors have been made on any shift. This will be done even though the consumers did not spend any funds on the previous shift. This will protect the outgoing staff that the money was accounted for when they left their shift. Failure to do this could result in the employee being suspended while the missing funds are investigated. This could result in termination depending on the result of the investigation.
  
- F. At no time, should staff attempt to save money for the consumer's birthday, Christmas, or other special occasions from these funds. The Service Coordinator is responsible for this and those funds must be maintained in the consumer's checking account.
  
- G. From time to time, small amounts of money may appear as a discrepancy. This could be due to dripping a coin on the floor during counting or a math error or other simple explanation. An incident report must be completed for any error no matter how small. The consumer's account will be made whole by the Center and a decision made about the need for an investigation.