

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

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Policy 169 – Consumer/Staff Conduct for Residential Facilities

I. POLICY

In residential facilities, staff acts as a primary role model for residents. Therefore, any activity which reinforces or encourages socially abnormal behavior on the part of residents will not be acceptable. Staff shall be sensitive to the impact of their behavior on residents and shall seek ways of promoting acceptable behaviors on the part of the residents. The policy which follows is meant to outline principles that are to be used in establishing staff response to specific situations.

II. DISCUSSION

The Center shall assure the rights and welfare of all individuals receiving services in residential facilities. To insure that these rights are protected and that the exercise of these rights is not obtrusive to the rights of all other residents, the following house rules have been established.

III. HOUSE RULES

- A. Under no circumstances are staff to abuse, neglect or exploit residents or permit them to be abused, neglected or exploited by others. Abuse, neglect and exploitation are defined in Policy 178.
- B. The consumption of alcohol is not allowed on the premises by either resident or staff. Staff found to consume alcohol on the premises or report to work under the influence will be terminated.
- C. The use of controlled substances on the premises violates standard operating policies and will result in employee termination.
- D. Smoking is not allowed in any residential facility or vehicle (personal or center owned) by either residents or staff.
- E. Where swearing or cursing occurs, residents are to be informed that type of language is not acceptable and staff should find ways of promoting acceptable behaviors on the part of the person.
- F. Residents will be permitted to attend a church of their choice when such activity does not disrupt operation of the facility. The treatment plan should address behavior which is inappropriate and would prevent a resident from attending church.

- G. Residents have the right to communication and visitation. Staff are to insure that reasonable accommodations are made for this purpose to insure privacy when possible.
- H. Residents must be granted privacy during toileting, bathing, and other activities of personal hygiene. If an individual requires assistance, authorized staff should assist giving the utmost attention to the individual's need for privacy.
- I. Persons with developmental disabilities and serious mental illnesses present no greater risk to society than any other segment of the population. However, because many persons with disabilities are trusting, they are vulnerable at the hand of certain members of the local community. Staff should use reasonable care in helping residents understand the need to avoid certain situations.
- J. Sexual activity (i.e., heterosexual, homosexual or masturbation) of the residents will be addressed with education and counseling. When staff become aware that an individual is sexually active, treatment teams will be informed to insure appropriate treatment -planning is provided.
- K. Under no circumstances are staff to participate in sexual or romantic relations with any resident.
- L. Under no circumstances are staff to engage in sexual relations with other staff persons while on duty or on the premises of any program.
- M. Under no circumstances are residents to be punished for sexual activity or made to feel guilty.
- N. Residents who take initiative to obtain magazines or other printed material which may contain material of a provocative or explicit nature shall be permitted to do so. However, such material shall be kept in a private and discrete location within their room in order to avoid offending others. Staff will not encourage residents to buy such material and will not take initiative in providing these materials to residents.
- O. At no time may a staff person in any Center setting sleep on the job. Sleeping on the job will result in termination and supervisory staff will inform offenders caught sleeping to leave the facility and report to the Chief Executive Officer's office immediately or the next business day if the incident occurs after regular business hours.

In order to define sleep and not confuse it with "resting one's eyes," it is a state of behavior where the staff person is inactive (not moving), has eyes closed and is not attending to assigned job duties and/or resident supervision. The individual observing another staff person sleeping must verify these criteria and attest it took place at a stated time. This verification will result in grounds for termination."

- P. For the protection of consumers and staff, staff cannot have any weapons (including concealed weapons) on them at any time at any site. If staff transport consumers in their personal vehicles, no weapons are permitted in the staff vehicle.
- Q. Staff may not conduct personal business/appointments/errands of any nature while on the clock or when driving a SHCMHC or personal vehicle, either with or without consumers present, unless approved in writing by your immediate supervisor.
- R. Staff must arrive for their shift at the scheduled time and be prepared to work. Staff cannot leave their shift early unless approved by a supervisor. Patterns of staff coming in late or leaving their shifts early will result in disciplinary action. Any staff that switch shifts must have approval by the supervisor. Staff are required to speak with a supervisor when calling in for a shift. Staff must provide at **least a two hour notice** when calling in for a shift unless it's an emergency.
- S. Staff **cannot leave a consumer** in a vehicle unattended at any time, for any reason. There must be a staff person in the vehicle anytime consumers are present.
- T. Consumers are not to be taken to staff's personal residences or anyone other than the consumer's family when part of an approved/planned family visit. Consumers are not to be signed out of the home by anyone other than those who have been approved by the guardian and/or treatment team.
- U. Staff will abide by approved menus or meal plans following dietary restrictions the consumer may have. Staff will notify on-call RN and follow directives from RN for any issues with a consumer choking or having difficulty eating that are non-behavioral. If a consumer gets choked and becomes unconscious staff will contact 911 immediately.
- V. Staff will refrain from gossip or conflict with co-workers or staff that can cause issues with providing quality services.
- W. Staff will be professional in appearance at all times to include cleanliness and appropriate dress. Staff will abide by the dress code policy outlined in the Employee Code of Conduct & Ethics Policy (Policy 242).