

RIVER HAVEN TRANSITIONAL LIVING COMMUNITY

(TLC)

A Program of Hudson River Housing, Inc.



THE HOUSING HANDBOOK

I. THE BASICS...



The following is a description of the things that are expected of all residents of the TLC Program. All participants are expected to adhere to these guidelines throughout their stay at TLC. These guidelines have been developed by the River Haven staff *and* participants and are therefore designed for you and *with you*. TLC is a safe and supportive environment where you will have the opportunity to develop the skills you will need to eventually live on your own.

Everyone's needs are different, therefore you will be a vital partner in identifying your needs (for example: help with cooking, finding or *keeping* a job, managing money, getting health care, finding transportation, etc.) and meeting goals (for example: getting into college, getting a driver's license, making new friends, improving your relationship with your family, etc.). As a part of this Program you will have the opportunity to work on all of these things and more, depending on what you need and what is most important to you at this time in your life.

Once you are accepted into TLC, you will be assigned a Case Manager who will be "your person." Together you will develop case plans depending on your areas of interest. Other Program staff will be familiar with your case plan and will also be able to assist you in addition to your Case Manager. All staff have the authority to enforce the TLC rules and guidelines. The information you share with Program staff will not be disclosed outside of the Program without your written consent.

The goal of TLC is to provide an atmosphere where residents can grow, learn and mature with the support of adult staff and their roommates and housemates. Peer support is crucial and therefore one of the most important expectations of you will be RESPECT. Respect for your peers; respect for the staff and respect for yourself. Residents are expected to influence each other in a positive way and are encouraged to help one another in reaching their goals.

II. THE COMMUNITY...



Once you are accepted into the TLC program this will become your home- your temporary home as you gradually prepare for the next step of independent living. What does this mean? This means that although you will be a part of a program with program rules and expectations, you are living in a building that is your home and that you should take pride in. TLC is a community- a community of young people who are facing living independently before they necessarily have the skills to do so. This program is supported by government funds that come from taxpayers. These taxpayers are making the commitment to the future of young people like you who have faced difficulties and now want to take advantage of this opportunity to make a change. Therefore, you must keep in mind the seriousness of your commitment *before* you apply. The expectations of you will be clearly explained here and just as you will have responsibilities, the staff is responsible to make sure you follow through in all areas. Our Program is often monitored, so your effort is crucial! Our ability to continue to be here for other young people like you will largely depend on how you do. We have something to prove to “our community”- that is that you and other youth need this opportunity. It is important that you recognize this so that we can continue to serve the community!

You will be living in a place where you have a roommate and housemates who share a common experience with you. You are responsible for yourself and anyone who visits you. You will hopefully make a strong effort toward meeting your goals quickly- you will be responsible for seeing to this on a daily basis. In addition you should have a sense of responsibility to your house, your home- this building should be your concern. For example, if you see someone loitering around the building should you alert staff? Yes. If you see something that needs repair- that could be dangerous, should you alert staff? Yes. If you notice that a certain chore isn't being done well, should you offer your assistance to insure that *Your House* is looking the way it should. Again the answer is yes. This is your home for the time being and it is something you should take pride in!

All residents are expected to keep their apartments clean and to complete a weekly chore. ! You will work with your roommate to coordinate household chores and to maintain your apartment. This may vary from sweeping the front stairs to taking out the garbage to cleaning the steps and hallways. Again- this will be your house and you want to take pride in it's appearance. We also need to make a good impression on our neighbors and to be a welcome part of the neighborhood. It will be up to you to make this difference!



III. THE PROGRAM...

The following is a list of all of the rules, guidelines and expectations of the program. Review these carefully so that you are *fully* aware of what is expected of you and what you can expect!

Violation of the following MAJOR RULES can jeopardize the safety and well being of others and therefore may result in immediate discharge from the program, as well as, legal action. They are as follows:

- ◆ Violence of any kind or threats of violence are strictly prohibited.
- ◆ Possession of a weapon or other object intended to cause harm is not allowed.



- ◆ There are no drugs or alcohol permitted on the premises. TLC is a drug and alcohol free program and you are required to make a commitment to abstain from using any of these substances while you are in residence here. If there is suspicion of use and you are not forthcoming, we may find it necessary to administer a drug/ alcohol test and you may face discharge from the program as a result.
- ◆ Sexual relationships between residents are prohibited. No sexual activity is permitted within the residence at any time.
- ◆ Vandalism or destruction of property is strictly prohibited.
- ◆ Stealing or otherwise borrowing the property of others without prior approval is not acceptable.
- ◆ Refusal to participate in program activities or to follow an agreed upon case plan may result in discharge.

The following is a list of all other guidelines and expectations. Again these guidelines have been established to help you and the other residents succeed! A continual failure to abide by these may result in loss of privileges, restrictions or program termination. Remember- these are general guidelines and since we cannot predict every single possible circumstance, you may need to follow additional staff directives at any given time. For now- make sure you review the following carefully!:


- ❖ All residents are expected to fully participate in all TLC activities that may include workshops, support groups, recreational activities, educational activities, etc. Staff and residents organize these activities. Have any ideas? Let them be known!
- ❖ You are on a 30-day probationary period upon entry into the program. During these first thirty days you are expected to be accountable to staff throughout the day. Your curfew is one hour earlier and upon completion of probation, may be increased. In addition, you cannot have visitors until you have completed this 30-day period. Once you have successfully completed probation, additional privileges may be earned at the discretion of your Case Manager. Additionally, your probationary period is not officially over at the 30-day mark. Staff will ultimately decide on this. Your behavior will influence this. If a resident blatantly disregards the rules at any time throughout this period immediate discharge can occur.
- ❖ All residents are required to be in school and/or working. If you are not in school or working for any period of time you will be expected to be involved in community service in the interim. If you do not do this on your own, staff will assist in setting this up with you. You may also want to volunteer somewhere in addition to your work and school schedule. This will help to prepare you for future employment as well as feeling good about contributing positively to your community.
- ❖ All residents must be up and about by 9 AM unless another schedule has been agreed to. If you are ill and unable to attend work or school, you are responsible for informing your job/ school and the program staff. Of course if you are sick, we will assist you with what you may need and you would be expected to be in your apartment for the remainder of that day. If you have a night job, another daytime activity would be organized.
- ❖ Within your first sixty days in TLC, we will work with you to obtain health insurance unless you already have coverage. We will then work with you to locate doctors for physical and dental exams with the goal of minimizing your need to use the hospital emergency room.
- ❖ Residents must adhere to the agreed upon intake and revised as circumstances change. you are responsible for meeting with your Case Manager. Your Case Manager will help you divide your income to meet your expenses. Your rent will be fifty percent of your pay, and will be held in a budget to be developed at When you receive *any* income, Manager. Your paycheck, pay stub, and/or cash must be brought to this meeting. Your Case Manager will help you divide your income to meet your expenses. Your rent will be fifty percent of your pay, and will be held in a



custodial account. Upon completion of the program you will meet with your Case Manager to determine where your rental savings will be spent. This money must be used for an agreed upon purpose (for example- first months rent and/or security on your new apartment; the purchase of a car or auto insurance; tuition for a career related program; clothing for a new job; furniture for your next home, etc.). A check will be issued to the individual or institution for this purpose. You will also receive spending money and any other needs will be examined as well. If you are in need of something that is beyond your budget, the program may be able to assist you with emergency needs.

- ❖ All residents must abide by a curfew. Your curfew can be extended after your thirty-day probationary period or upon good standing in the program as determined by program staff on an individual, day-by-day basis. Curfew for residents is as follows: Youth 16 & 17: Sunday – Thursday = 11:00 PM; 18 & up = 12 midnight; Youth 16 & 17- Friday and Saturday: 12 Midnight; 18 & up- 1AM.
- ❖ There is a weekly TLC group as well as individual counseling which each resident is required to attend and participate in.
- ❖ Smoking is not permitted in the building at all. If you smoke we will work with you to help you quit. Smoking is only permitted off of the premises. You are responsible for proper disposal of your cigarettes and must not litter our parking area or sidewalks.
- ❖ The use of candles, incense or any other miscellaneous burning is also prohibited while you are in residence. This is an old building and fire codes do not permit any burning other than the use of your stove, so please appreciate the importance of this guideline.
- ❖ As with any apartment building, the noise level must be kept to a minimum so as not to disturb other residents or neighbors. No loud music or noise of any kind is permitted after curfew hours or during office hours.
- ❖ Residents are not permitted to have pets in TLC.
- ❖ Each resident is assigned a regular household chore that is to be accomplished by the resident by Thursday of each week. You must check in with staff  after completing your chore and have them initial the chore board with you to insure its completion.
- ❖ You may not enter your roommate's bedroom without their permission, and you are responsible for your guests at all times. You may not leave your guests in your apartment. You must sign in all guests upon their arrival and departure. No overnight guests are permitted unless approval form Case Manager has been obtained. Visitors are permitted only during hours posted in TLC.
- ❖ Outside doors and doors to each apartment  must be shut and secured at all times (even when you are at home). Your housemates are counting on you to be security conscious. Residents are not allowed to put locks on their bedroom doors or add locks to their apartment doors. You must secure your windows that lead to the fire escapes, as well. Door keys are loaned to you for the duration of your stay. You are not permitted to give these keys to anyone else. If you lose your keys you will be responsible for the cost of replacing the locks.
- ❖ You may decorate your apartment during your stay. Please ask the Residential Manager to assist with hanging anything on the walls. We will object to your displaying any items that are offensive in

nature. Remember – respect for all people is important in TLC and your living space should always be presentable.

- ❖ Upon completion of the program, you must turn in your keys and submit to an inspection to insure that your apartment is in the same shape as when you moved in. You are responsible for any damage beyond normal wear and tear.
- ❖ You are not permitted to tamper with the thermostat or smoke detectors. You must also remember to turn off any air conditioners, fans or other electrical appliances when leaving the residence.
- ❖ While in residence you will have the option for phone  service. If you decide this is something you want, it will be connected to your apartment. You and your roommate will be responsible for this bill. You will go over this monthly with the Case Manager. Your phone will have limited services to keep your bill low, and allow you to save more money. The phone will have local service only and any long distance calls you need to make can be made in the office with staff permission. All phones will also have “call waiting” and you and your roommate will need to be respectful of each other and try to limit the length of your phone conversations.
- ❖ Cable will also be available in your apartment for a monthly charge. This also will be limited to basic service. Remember the goal of the program is for you to transition into independent living as quickly as possible. Therefore keeping your bills to a minimum while in TLC is essential.

All residents share in the responsibility of keeping their apartment neat and clean. Staff will assist you in dividing chores with your roommate. Residents are expected to clean up after themselves when cooking, taking the garbage out, keeping the bathroom clean & hygienic and keeping your bedroom & common areas free of clutter. Staff will conduct daily apartment visits to insure the apartments are being maintained properly and meet this standard. Every attempt will be made to protect your privacy, but staff will enter apartments as needed and in the event of an emergency a search may be conducted. Again, you are responsible for insuring that your space is clean, well maintained and in adherence with all safety concerns.

IV. PROGRAM COMPLETION OR DISCHARGE...

Throughout your stay in TLC, you will be working on with the help of TLC staff and residents we are hopeful successfully achieve all that you dreamed of. Perhaps with some family members while you are here, or make new friends who may become friends for the rest of your life! Maybe you will land a great job or get that diploma you've been working so hard towards. Maybe you will have gotten your driver's license and have even saved enough money for your first car! Whatever your goals, your dreams, your passions we are hopeful that together we can make a major difference for you in your life. Many TLC residents have developed talents like writing, dance, art or music while they have been here. Just like in the “real world” life is what you make of it and we want to help you make it the best it can be. Now back to some other possibilities...



It is expected that discharge will be planned well in advance, and will occur once you have achieved case plan goals and located suitable, stable, permanent housing. The Independent Living Support Program will provide aftercare services for residents who leave in good standing, and are interested in continuing this support.

Residents who choose to leave TLC prior to their planned discharge are expected to give 30 days notice and must abide by the rules until their departure. Failure to do so will result in discharge prior to the thirty days. Residents must remove all of their belongings from the apartment **PRIOR TO DISCHARGE**. Program supplies should not be taken and an inventory list will be checked. Your Case Manager will assist you in obtaining any supplies you may need upon discharge. The apartment will be inspected prior to discharge and the resident will be held financially responsible for any damage that has occurred through any fault of the resident or through negligence.

If a program participant has violated any major rules or refuses to comply with program expectations for an extended period of time, immediate discharge may be necessary. Alternate housing possibilities would be explored in this case and if none exist, emergency-housing options would be explained. If you are discharged from the Program prior to completion, a grievance procedure is in place in the event a participant wants to appeal the discharge decision.

Of course- we hope that this will not be the way *you* need to leave the program. We look forward to being able to **CELEBRATE** your program completion and accomplishments with you!

Remember...TLC can be the opportunity you need to



jump successfully into the future!

Make it work!



This is to be signed upon acceptance into the program.

I have read and reviewed this document with the Case Manager and understand all of the Program rules, guidelines and expectations as described here. I feel that I am an appropriate choice for the TLC Program and will make every effort to successfully complete this Program. In signing this I am agreeing to abide by all of the conditions of this Program.

New Resident Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Staff Signature: _____ **Title:** _____

Date of entry: _____