**Safe Harbor Policies**

**Updated: 1/31/2023**

**Our Mission and vision**

Safe Harbor is a place for women to live and grow with their children while seeking recovery from substance use disorder.

Our mission is to provide a safe, supportive, affordable living environment for women in recovery.

Our vision is of a recovery-ready community in which all people seeking recovery and in recovery, along with their families and loved ones, are able to access the support and resources they need in order to thrive.

**Our Residents**

Safe Harbor is appropriate for women who fit the following description:

* 18 years or older without children
* 18 years or older with children age 10 and younger (exceptions may be reviewed)
* Self-identify as in recovery from substance use disorder
* Negative screen for alcohol, THC, and medications or drugs not prescribed by a doctor
* Ability to pay rent (scholarships may be available)
* Commitment to recovery and personal growth processes
* Willing to actively engage in recovery goal settings
* Willing to live in close quarters with others, and to respectfully work through conflicts

We reserve the right to refuse admission to anyone at the discretion of the Safe Harbor staff and Steering Committee. The following may serve as factors that prevent admission to the program:

* A history of criminal sexual offenses, murder, or arson
* A need for a higher level of care than Safe Harbor can provide
* Demonstrated lack of commitment to recovery
* Behavior that may endanger the recovery of other residents

Once an individual has applied and admission has been denied, we will not consider reapplication for a minimum of ninety days, and in most cases we recommend waiting at least six months before reapplying.

**Introductory Period**

Upon acceptance into the residence, all residents first complete a fourteen-day introductory period during which it is determined if they are a good fit for the house and vice versa. At any time during this period it may be determined that a new resident needs a different environment, and they may be asked to leave.

This period includes a curfew of 9:30 pm to 6 am.

**Dismissal**

Grounds for immediate dismissal are listed below. There are no exceptions.

1. Acts of violence in the community or in the house
2. Possession of firearms, knives, or other weapons

Behaviors that may result in dismissal, at the discretion of staff, are listed below. Please note that consistently engaging in these behaviors all but assures dismissal.

1. Use of and/or positive screen for any drug not prescribed, including alcohol and cannabis
2. Intimidation or aggression toward other residents, staff, or volunteers
3. Endangering the safety of a child(ren) in the residence
4. Discrimination or harassment toward other residents, staff, or volunteers
5. Any sharing, stealing, selling or other misuses of prescription medications
6. Possession of illegal drugs or paraphernalia
7. Destruction or theft of any property belonging to another resident, staff member, volunteer, or the program itself
8. Smoking inside the house-(Please refer to the Safe Harbor Smoking Policy for all policy guidelines)
9. Being combative or disruptive of the house dynamic
10. Failure to participate in house meetings or to meet other requirements
11. Putting the recovery of other residents at risk
12. Non- or late payment of rent
13. Not keeping medication locked in their designated lock box at all times.
14. Not reporting medications/medication changes to the House Manager.

Dismissal procedures will be determined by the severity of the infraction.

**Wait List**

Safe Harbor accepts applications on a rolling basis. If there are no rooms available, we continue to accept and review applications. We do not conduct interviews until there is space available. Once space becomes available, we review applications in the order in which they were received. Every applicant, whether we are full or not, will receive a response within two business days letting them know the status of their application.

If you are on the waiting list, we will make two attempts to contact you before moving on to the next application on the list.

**Emergency Situations**

In the case of a medical emergency, residents are to call 911, then the house manager.

In the case of fire, residents are to leave the house immediately by following posted evacuation plans. Once outside, residents can call 911, then the house manager.

In the case of an accidental opioid poisoning, residents are expected to administer Naloxone, which everyone will be trained to do upon move-in. Immediately following that, residents are to call 911 and alert the house manager.

If another resident appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, residents are to call the house manager immediately and await further instructions.

**Precautions/Fire Safety**

Residents of Safe Harbor are not permitted to have open flames in any areas of the home (examples include but not limited to candles, lighters, incense, propane heaters). Use of space heaters may be permitted in emergency situations with approval by Safe Harbor staff.

Regularly scheduled fire drills are conducted by Safe Harbor staff per licensing requirements. Escape routes are posted throughout the home and at every exit.

**Rent and Other Finances**

Unless otherwise arranged, weekly rent will be collected at house meetings by the house manager.

Paper receipts will be issued for all financial transactions, and you can request a statement of charges and payment history at any time.

Staff and volunteers may not engage in any residents’ personal financial affairs, including lending or borrowing money, or other transactions involving property or services.

The lending and borrowing of money or property between residents is strongly discouraged.

In the event of dismissal or a move-out, refunds will be made available at the discretion of the director. There is no guarantee of a refund.

Residents are responsible for purchasing their own food, personal hygiene items, and laundry detergent. Cleaning products and toilet paper will be supplied.

**Confidentiality**

Residents’ personal information and all information pertaining to recovery plans and progress will be kept confidential between the resident and the housing manager. Records will be stored in a locked cabinet in a locked room. Only the housing manager and housing director will have access to those records.

**Drug Screening**

Random toxicology and alcohol screening is part of the recovery residence program and will be conducted by program staff, program partners, or their designee.

We ask that you stay in common areas after being asked for a urine sample. It will be considered a positive screen if you do not produce a urine sample within two hours of being asked. During that time, you will not consume anything that can change the result of the screen. You also cannot use the sink or flush the toilet during observed screenings. Results of the screening will be read and documented by the resident and tester.

Use of illicit substances, unprescribed medication, alcohol, and other mood and mind altering substances (included but not limited to CBD, designer drugs, Kratom) are prohibited while a resident of Safe Harbor. A toxicology screen positive for these substances may result in immediate dismissal from the program or other formal action. This depends entirely on your level of honesty, willingness to address the substance use, type of substance, safety factors, and frequency of positive screens. If you are allowed to remain in the program, you will work with the house manager and/or recovery coach to write a plan for maintaining recovery from that point forward.

We recognize that relapses can be part of the recovery process, but we have to prioritize the safety of all residents at all times. As such, substance use may lead to immediate discharge or formal action.

**Medication**

All medications and medicines being brought into the house will be reported to the house manager and then will be stored in a personal lockbox provided to each resident; each resident will have their own key. Any new medications should be reported to the house manager and added to your medication sheet. We ask that residents not share their medication information with one another. There will be a $30 replacement fee charged for lost keys.

We require residents to sign a release for any and all related services to your recovery (i.e. IOP, Primary Care, Counselors, probation officers…) so program staff can review medications and provide residents with wrap around supports. If there is a new provider you are required to notify staff and sign a release.

**Curfew**

Introductory period: 9:30 pm - 6 am

Upon successful completion of the introductory period: 11 pm - 6 am

**Overnight absence from the house**

If you plan to leave the house overnight, you must inform the manager in writing no less than 24 hours in advance. You can request overnight stays 45 days after move in date. You must provide information about the reason for the overnight and leave contact information. Overnights will be granted once per week. Weeks run Monday through Sunday. Requests are at the discretion of the staff and will be approved on a case by case basis.

Under some circumstances, you may request a longer leave. This request is to be made in writing to the manager.

**Good Neighbor Policy**

Because the house is in a residential neighborhood, we ask that all residents be good neighbors. This means refraining from being loud, leaving cigarette butts or other trash on the ground, parking in neighbors’ driveways, or using offensive language outside. Neighbors should be treated with respect.

If a neighbor approaches any resident with a complaint, residents are to provide the neighbor with the manager’s contact information. The manager will respond and take any further actions required.

**Visitors**

Visitors are not allowed in the residence. This does not apply to:

* Professionals, recovery coaches, or other support personnel actively working with a resident or children
* Children of residents who are in the house as part of a visitation schedule

**Smoking**

Safe Harbor is a smoke free building. Smoking is only allowed in the designated areas. Please refer to the Safe Harbor Smoking Policy for all policy guidelines.

**Chores**

Residents are expected to participate in household chores. To ensure fairness, chores are assigned at house meetings. All residents are expected to keep areas tidy and free from clutter and messes.

**Personal belongings**

Any valuables (money, jewelry, electronics) are the responsibility of the owner, and should be secured in the provided lock box. We cannot be responsible for anyone’s personal belongings.

**Responsibility for Personal Belongings**

Residents are responsible for packing all personal items brought into the home. Residents are responsible for leaving their living space clean upon moving out.

In the instance of immediate discharge/unavailability for packing/moving

* Residents should make the best attempt to make arrangements with a family/support person to pack and pick up residents personal belongings within 7 days of moveout.
* Should the resident not be available for any reason, personal belongings will be packed by a Safe Harbor staff or volunteer.

All personal belongings need to be picked up and removed from the home 7 days following move out. Arrangements for pickup shall be made between the resident and Safe Harbor Staff at a time that is agreed upon. In the instance that personal belongings are not picked up or go unclaimed after 7 days and prior arrangements are not made, these items will be forfeited.

Safe Harbor is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Residents may not wear, display on Safe Harbor property inside or outside including vehicles, or carry items which contain the following:

* Advertisements for alcohol or marijuana products;
* Depicts or suggestions of violence;
* Messages that denigrate specific racial or ethnic groups;
* Messages that promote illicit drugs or drug use
* Sexually suggestive messages
* Inappropriate or derogatory messages that support and/or oppose specific political candidates, officials, and/or parties.

Body art which contains any of the above must be covered while interacting with other residents or staff. Interpretation of this code will be at the discretion of the Safe Harbor staff.

**Room searches**

Residents consent to random, unannounced room searches, including lock boxes, conducted by program staff.

**Kitchen**

Residents are responsible for purchasing their own groceries and preparing food for themselves and their children. You will have your own cabinet space for dry goods, and the refrigerator and freezer are shared. You are welcome to label your groceries with the provided supplies. Please be considerate of other residents by keeping the kitchen area clean and by washing dishes as soon as you’re finished with them. Do not use others’ groceries without permission, even if you plan to replace them later.

You are certainly allowed to share your groceries with each other and combine meals as you like. In general, residents are asked to navigate shared food and meals without intervention from the manager. If there is a consistent problem with food being taken or used without permission, please alert the manager.

**Pests**

Residents are required to do their part to reduce the risk of pests such as bed bugs, fleas, ants, rodents, or other species prone to infestation. The following steps are required of residents:

* During move-in, all belongings that can safely be heated to 120 degrees (shoes, books, papers, clothes, luggage, bedding, electronics, or small furniture pieces) will be treated in Safe Harbor's bug oven. We will not heat food, and other exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis.
* When a resident leaves Safe Harbor overnight, the belongings they took with them will be treated in the bug oven before they are brought back into the house.
* If a resident has any reason to suspect that any location they have just visited (even if not overnight), the belongings that were exposed to that location will be treated in the bug oven before they are brought back into the house.
* If a resident has any reason to suspect that there may be pests in Safe Harbor, they are to notify the house manager immediately. The Safe Harbor manager will take the following steps:
  + notify other residents, staff, and anyone planning to visit the house (case workers, home visitors, etc.) so they can plan accordingly
  + notify Healthy Acadia leadership
  + call Modern Pest.
* Residents must do their part to avoid attracting pests by maintaining cleanliness. This involves cleaning up after using the kitchen, including wiping counters, stovetop, etc. as well as not leaving food accessible elsewhere in the house. If you have food in your room (or other rooms), store it in a way such that it is not accessible to pests and clean up crumbs or other traces.

**Community/Recovery Participation**

To ensure progress in recovery, residents are expected to participate in at least 4 pro-social activities each week. Pro-social activities focus on strengthening recovery capital, which builds resilience, coping skills, and self-esteem. Examples include:

* Twelve-step group meetings, such as AA or NA
* Recovery Dharma, SMART recovery, FADE, or other local meetings
* Church/ Bible study
* Meeting with sponsor/recovery coach/priest/pastor/spiritual guide
* Mindfulness/tai chi
* Pre-approved community and family events

**Leaving Safe Harbor**

If you wish to return to Safe Harbor after exiting the program you are required to reapply regardless of the cause for your exit. The reapplication process cannot begin until 15 days after the move out date and will involve the same steps as the original application process. We cannot guarantee a room will still be available.

**Paid work for Partner Agencies**

The priority for all residents is on recovery and working toward success in multiple facets of their life. From time to time, there may be an opportunity for residents to accept paid work from the residence or one of the partner agencies, including Healthy Acadia, Downeast Community Partners, Community Caring Collaborative, or Aroostook Mental Health Center. In that situation, the following will always be true:

* Paid work arrangements are completely voluntary. Residents do not suffer negative consequences for declining work.
* Residents who accept paid work are not treated more favorably than residents who do not.
* Paid work must not impair the resident’s progress toward recovery goals.
* Paid work is treated the same as any other employment situation.
* Unsatisfactory work relationships can be terminated without recriminations that can impair recovery or the resident’s status in the recovery house.

**Code of Ethics**

Staff of Maine Association of Recovery Residences (MARR)-certified houses shall value and respect each participant and put each individual’s recovery strengths and needs at the forefront of all decision making processes. To meet this requirement, we adhere to the following code of ethics. We will:

1. Assess each candidate’s strengths and needs, and to determine whether the level of support available within the recovery house is appropriate. Also if asked, to provide referral options to the appropriate level of care.
2. Value diversity and non-discrimination.
3. Provide a safe, supportive, and homelike environment that meets MARR qualifications.
4. Provide and maintain a safe environment for recovery to occur.
5. Honor and respect each individual participant’s right to choose their own recovery pathway

within the parameters of the house rules and standards.

1. Protect the privacy and personal rights of each participant.
2. Provide consistent and uniformly-enforced rules.
3. Provide access to necessary resources for the health and wellness of each participant.
4. Address any and all uncomfortable situations occurring within the house, and with each

participant, fairly on all accounts.

1. Encourage participants to seek relationships with substance use disorder and co-occurring treatment recovery professionals, recovery support providers, and recovery allies.
2. Take appropriate action immediately to stop bullying, intimidation, sexual harassment, and

otherwise threatening behavior of any individual in the house.

1. Encourage the participant to follow the process laid out for any grievance or complaint. Provide

consistent and fair grievance and complaint practices.

1. Provide consistent and fair drug testing and breathalyzer practices that promote the participant’s

recovery, health and well-being, and that of the recovery house as well.

1. Provide an environment in which the recovery needs of the participants are the primary factor in

all decision making.

1. Only use marketing and advertising that promotes open and honest claims.
2. Decline to take a role in the recovery plans of relatives, friends, or acquaintances.
3. Maintain transparency in operations and finances.

**Grievance and Appeal Policy**

Safe Harbor takes the rights and needs of applicants and residents seriously. This grievance and appeal policy is to be followed in either of the following circumstances:

1. Your application to Safe Harbor was denied, you believe it was denied wrongfully, and you would like to appeal the decision.
2. You are a resident of Safe Harbor, you believe your rights and/or the MARR code of ethics have been violated, and you want to file a grievance.

*In the event that your application to Safe Harbor was denied and you would like to appeal,* please complete the Grievance and Appeal Form, which is available on the Healthy Acadia website or by request. You can submit the form to Penny Guisinger, Recovery Programs Director, at the email address below. The appeal will be considered by the Safe Harbor Steering Committee, which is made up of staff from multiple agencies, including Healthy Acadia, Downeast Committee Partners, Community Caring Collaborative, and Aroostook Mental Health Centers. The committee tries to respond to appeals within seven days, but depending on holidays and other factors, it may take longer. Once a decision has been made, you will receive a response in writing.

*If you are a current resident and believe your rights were violated,* please complete the Grievance and Appeal Form which is available at Safe Harbor, on the Healthy Acadia website, or by request. You can submit the form to either Katie Sell, Housing Manager, or Penny Guisinger, Recovery Programs Director. If Katie and/or Penny are not able to address the situation to your satisfaction, you can submit your complaint to the Ombudsperson at the Maine Association of Recovery Residences (MARR). MARR is the organization that certifies recovery residences in Maine and ensures compliance with national standards in the areas of safety, policy, and ethics. The Ombudsperson's contact information is also below. You can request that they keep your grievance confidential.

**Safe Harbor Housing Manager** **Healthy Acadia Recovery Programs Director**

Katie Sell Penny Guisinger

Tel: 207-263-5096 Tel: 207-255-3741, ext. 116

[katie.sell@healthyacadia.org](mailto:katie@healthyacadia.org) [penny@healthyacadia.org](mailto:penny@healthyacadia.org)

**MARR Grievance Facilitator**

Kara Shamsi

(978)-333-6459