

Schuylkill Community Action

Schuylkill County Bridge House Program

Client Manual

Revised January 2018

Philosophy of the Bridge House Program

Bridge House of Schuylkill County believes in every individual's right to pursue safe, stable, and suitable housing for themselves and their families. In that regard, Bridge House assists its clients with the identification and pursuit of life goals. The staff of this facility promotes and encourages the development of personal skills that will result in independence and self-sufficiency.

Clients who sincerely work with staff and other participating agencies on successful completion of their goal plans will graduate from this facility and secure competitive employment and permanent housing. The end result will be an improved standard of living for participants and their families.

Bridge House admits only those applicants who are committed to change and are open to vigorously developing their capacity to do so.

Client Rights

All clients have:

1. The right to be treated equally and not discriminated against on the basis of sex, religion, race, national origin or physical and/or mental disability.
2. The right to be treated with respect by facility staff and fellow clients.
3. The right to a safe, secure environment.
4. The right to have and express opinions, beliefs and concerns as well as to have these expressions addressed by staff if requested.
5. The right to utilize the grievance procedure if so desired.
6. The right to be actively involved in the development of his/her personal goal plan.
7. The right to expect staff to honor and protect the confidentiality of personal information.

PROGRAM DESIGN

1. Contact is made from a referring agency. The referral form must be completed by the client. Clients should also receive a copy of the Client Manual for review. Clients are expected to complete a Pottsville Housing Authority application upon referral. If a potential client should have services terminated by his/her referring agency, the client will not be eligible at that time for Bridge House services and will be removed from the Bridge House waiting list.
2. Interview with applicant is held to determine eligibility and appropriateness for the program. An orientation to the facility regarding rules, procedures, clients' rights and expectations is also presented at this time. All referred clients must have proper documentation for all household members. This includes birth certificates, social security cards, photo ID and income verification.
3. A criminal background check is conducted. Pottsville Housing Authority conducts an additional criminal background check that is separate from Schuylkill Community Action. Both background checks must be received prior to Bridge House admission.
4. The screening committee completes a review of the individual's client profile. All clients will attend a scheduled interview conducted by the screening committee to be considered for admission to Bridge House.
5. When screening is held, the individual is either accepted or not accepted into Bridge Housing. If accepted, the client must move into Bridge House within 24 - 48 hours.
6. Upon admittance, the individual is required to do the following:
 - Sign lease and pay the first month's rent to Pottsville Housing Authority.
 - Complete Program paperwork with the Director of Program Services.
 - Complete an inventory check of his/her unit apartment.
 - Develop a goal plan that will address problems preventing self-sufficiency.
 - **Pay a \$100.00 security deposit within 90 days of admission to the Director of Program Services. Payment arrangements will**

**be made between client and Director of Program Services.
Failure to pay the security deposit may result in termination.**

7. A schedule is developed for meetings with the case manager and other service providers to work on the goal plan throughout the client's stay.
8. The goal plan and progress toward it is reviewed on a monthly basis.
9. While clients are residing at Bridge House, they are expected to follow all Bridge House rules and regulations, participate in Program activities, attend meetings, etc. All clients are expected to follow through with their individual goal plans and to obtain safe, permanent housing of their own.
10. Case Manager assists each client in obtaining safe, secure, permanent housing.
11. Bridge House residents are to give Bridge House staff and the Pottsville Housing Authority at least thirty days notice prior to exiting the Bridge House Program. If the client is eligible, the case manager will refer the client to Project CARE.
12. On moving day, an inventory of the unit household items is checked, a damage assessment is completed and an apartment check is conducted. If anything is missing, broken, or dirty, the resident will forfeit all or part of his/her security deposit.

POLICY ON READMISSION FOR BRIDGE HOUSE

Former Bridge House clients may enroll into the program for a second time after a period of seven (7) years. The client cannot be readmitted under similar circumstances as before (for example, drug and alcohol issues, domestic abuse issues, lack of rent payment, etc.) The client must be willing to follow all Bridge House policies and complete case management goals as part of readmission. Clients must follow all enrollment policies for readmission into the program. The client must be eligible and admitted by the screening committee.

POLICY ON CLIENT PHYSICALS

All clients of the Schuylkill County Bridge House Program will be expected to secure a comprehensive physical examination. All Medical Assistance clients will be covered for the cost of this examination - provided Medical Assistance has not paid for another physical within the past twelve months (for adults and children two and older) or three months (for children age eighteen months or younger).

If the physician recommends any additional follow-up treatment or testing, the client will be expected to comply. Refusal to follow doctor's recommendations will result in a conference with the Director of Program Services and possibly, termination from the program.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES/PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION POLICY

Any Medical emergencies must be reported to staff immediately. No client is to leave the facility without alerting staff to the nature of the problem and his/her needs. Not reporting a medical emergency to staff could result in a termination of Bridge House services.

All prescribed medications must be reported to Bridge House staff by residents. This includes any changes to medications/prescriptions.

All Bridge House residents will be prohibited from taking prescription or over-the-counter medication that contain the following substances: Any controlled substances act schedule I, II, III, IV, V (this includes but is not limited to narcotics, opiates, benzodiazepines); any over-the-counter medications that contain alcohol; any medications that interfere with drug testing procedures; vivitrol, suboxone, buprenorphine, naltrexone or methadone (or any generic/name brand versions of these drugs).

All Bridge House residents must place their prescription and over the counter medications in an enclosed container. Medications should not be visibly seen within the apartment. Medications should be stored in a locked and secure manner.

MEDICAL CARE: ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

Clients of Bridge House (and their children) are eligible to take advantage of the following services:

1. *First Aid Kits* - A first aid kit is located in the staff area of the Community Room. There is also a first aid kit located in the Round House offices. Any client in need of these items should see the staff on duty. Items should be for emergency reasons only - not to be used on a regular basis. These kits are not permitted to leave the Community Room or Round House.
2. *Medical Supplies (emergencies only)* - Under certain circumstances, clients may be eligible to purchase medical supplies needed, but not covered by Medicaid or other medical insurance. An application for SCA's Emergency Fund must be

completed. Please note that one household may receive this service once during a one year time period. Examples of some items clients may need would be: Desitin, Pedialyte, Tylenol, Cold Remedies, etc. Anyone needing medical supplies should see staff and every effort will be made to secure the necessary products.

3. *Personal Care Pantry* - Bridge House receives a variety of personal care products (for adults & children) as donations available for distribution to clients in need. Examples of items included in this inventory include: diapers, soap, deodorant, etc. These items are given to clients based on need, family size, income, etc. New admissions are automatically screened for this service. Any other distributions must be pre-approved by staff. Note - this service may be restricted due to the limited supply.

FOOD PANTRY DISTRIBUTION POLICY

Clients are expected to use food stamps responsibly, make use of the local food pantry and prepared meal programs. Clients should consult the Case Plan Specialist if experiencing a food emergency.

CLOTHING DONATIONS

Bridge House provides clothing, when available, for clients and their children. Clothing is donated by private individuals and local businesses. Professional staff will notify Bridge House residents when clothing is available.

USE OF OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Office phones are not to be used for personal business. Facility staff must approve all telephone calls.

For professional calls to other agencies, schools, physicians, etc., the office telephones may be used. Staff must approve this type of phone usage. Office computers, copy machine, fax, and typewriters are not for client use. Clients who need these services for personal reasons should speak to program staff. The community phone is for emergency use only. All clients must have staff permission before using any telephones in professional areas.

INVENTORIES/USE OF FACILITY EQUIPMENT

I. Contents of Apartment and Community Room

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The contents of this facility are the property of Schuylkill County Department of Human Services and/or Schuylkill Community Action. These items are not to be removed or destroyed. Each item is tagged, inventoried and located in specific locations.

When a client moves into an apartment, an initial inventory is completed. The client signs the inventory to indicate that everything is in his/her apartment as noted. During the course of their stay at this facility, clients are responsible for these items. If anything should be broken, lost, etc. clients must report this immediately to Bridge House staff. The circumstances of the loss will be discussed and the inventory adjusted. Any loss or damage due to client negligence will become the financial responsibility of the client and will be deducted from the \$100.00 security deposit paid upon the admission to the Director of Program Services.

If items are moved from one apartment to another, prior to being moved, the Director of Program Services must approve it. Again, this is for inventory purposes. Clients are NOT to shift items between apartments without staff approval. Upon discharge or termination, all items must be placed in their original location.

When clients leave the program, they are responsible for cleaning their apartment and laundering their linens (sheets, blankets, etc.). If this is not done, the cost of such items will be deducted from their security deposit.

II. Facility Keys

The Director of Program Services gives the facility keys to residents after the completion of their apartment inventory. If a resident loses his/her keys, he/she is to notify both Bridge House staff and the Pottsville Housing Authority as soon as possible. He/she will be responsible for the cost of the keys. Keys are to be handed in to Bridge House staff each time a resident goes on pass. Keys are also handed in upon the completion/termination of the Bridge House Program.

Residents are **not** to give the keys for the Bridge House Facility to children or visitors. Violation of this rule will result in points being issued (see page fourteen).

TRANSPORTATION

The staff of Bridge House does its best to assist clients in accessing already existing public transportation whenever possible. The Case Manager will assist clients in registering for transportation services. Bridge House also provides Bridge House clients with Schuylkill Transportation System bus tickets for school, employment, agency meetings, counseling, etc. The tickets are to be used on the date that is specified on the ticket. Tickets that are not used must be returned to Bridge House staff. The tickets ARE NOT for individuals other than Bridge House clients and their children. Bridge House staff has the right to refuse clients bus tickets.

RESIDENTS IN CHARGE

Bridge House residents who are in good standing with the program and who have the most seniority may be asked to hold the position of Resident in Charge. The responsibilities include attending screenings, acting as a witness for the breathalyzer and drug tests, covering the community room/answering the telephone in the event of an emergency and monitoring the entrance area when residential staff are completing safety rounds and apartment checks.

When acting as a Resident in Charge, the Bridge House resident *MUST* keep all information he/she has witnessed confidential. A violation of confidentiality will result in termination.

INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Bridge House residents may receive household or personal care items as acknowledgment of positive accomplishments.

In order to be eligible for incentives, clients must be point free.

Incentives are dependent upon the availability.

Basic Program Policies

1. Bridge House is smoke-free and tobacco-free environment. Smoking is defined as inhaling, exhaling, burning or carrying any lighted cigar, cigarette,
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pipe or other lighted smoking device for burning tobacco or any other plant. Tobacco products include cigarettes, cigars, e-cigarettes and chewing tobacco. Bridge House clients may not use tobacco products anywhere in his/her individual unit or in the Bridge House facility common areas. Furthermore, Bridge House residents may not allow guests to use tobacco in Bridge house either. Smoking and use of tobacco products will only be permitted outside of the facility, no less than five feet from the entry ways. Cigarette butts and other trash must be disposed of in the proper receptacles. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in points being issued.

2. Clients may not light candles, incense or use fragrance producing items such as Glade plug-ins in their units.
3. Each client is responsible for the upkeep of his/her individual apartment. Apartment checks are completed by staff at least twice per week. Failure to pass an apartment check will result in points being issued.
3. The elevator in the building should be used with respect and common sense. Any misuse of the elevator will result in points being assigned.
4. Bridge House clients are not allowed to have pets while residing in Bridge House. Fish (freshwater) are the only pets (in small bowls or aquariums) that are acceptable as pets while living in Bridge House. If any damage occurs as a result of fish tanks/bowls, the client will be held responsible for those damages.
5. All vehicles belonging to clients must be registered in the office and with Pottsville Housing Authority. The following information must be provided:
 - Driver's License
 - Registration
 - Insurance

All clients on probation/state parole are required to report vehicle information immediately to their probation/parole officers.

6. If clients are admitted without an income, a Request for Rent Subsidy can be applied for through the Director of Program Services. Any violation of this agreement will warrant termination. Depending on budgetary restraints, rent subsidies paid by Schuylkill Community Action may be limited. Residents are expected to pay rent to the Pottsville Housing Authority by the first day of each month. Failure to do this will result in

eviction. Clients will show Bridge House staff their receipt of rent payment from the Pottsville Housing Authority each month.

7. All residents (including adults and children) will comply with a curfew. For individuals with children/visitation with a minor child, the curfew is Sunday - Friday 10:00PM and on Saturday only, 11:00PM. For individuals without children, the curfew is Sunday - Friday 11:00PM and Saturday only 12:00AM (midnight). Staff reserves the right to modify an individual resident's curfew if necessary. Clients are not permitted to leave program facility before 8AM, other than for work, any day unless permitted by staff.

All residents must comply with each other's curfew when visiting other Bridge House residents in their apartments. Clients are not to have visitors prior to 8AM.

To maintain residency, a client must stay each night from Sunday through Saturday. The Director of Program Services will make exceptions to this rule on an individual basis. Otherwise this would be in violation of the curfew and will result in points and/or termination.

8. Each client is required to provide the case manager with proof of income. Each client is responsible for notifying Bridge House staff, the County Assistance Office (if applicable) and Pottsville Housing Authority of any employment obtained and/or changes in income.

9. As per the exit/transition policy of this facility, the security deposit is held on the behalf of a client, but may be retained by this facility to cover costs of repair or replacement of articles damaged or lost due to the client's negligence.

10. Each adult client will develop a goal plan with a case manager. Individual goal plans will be monitored and updated on a regular basis. Each adult client is responsible for implementing goals and for contacting the Case Manager if problems occur in achieving individual goals.

11. Residents must notify staff of their work, educational and volunteer schedules as well as all doctor and counseling appointments for themselves and/or children. Residents must comply with all appointments and schedules. If a resident does not comply, this will be viewed as not following goal plans, and points will be assigned. This includes, but is not limited to - school, employment and work program attendance, medical/counseling appointments, etc. Bridge House staff has the right to contact anyone working with a

resident in this capacity. Client must sign consents for releases of information.

12. In the event that a client fails to return or loses facility keys, he/she will pay the total cost of replacement and/or repair of keys, locks, doorknobs, etc.

13. While residing in the Schuylkill County Bridge House Program, residents are prohibited from establishing accounts and receiving goods through rental companies such as Rent-A-Center, etc. Residents must report to staff cable services they are receiving and are responsible for payment of these services. Residents are responsible for their own telephone service. Bridge House residents are expected to manage finances carefully. Residents should not be purchasing items/services of exorbitant/excessive costs.

14. Visitors are allowed in the building from 8:00AM - 10:00PM. All visitors must sign in and sign out, and must check in with staff first. Visitors are NOT to be visiting other Bridge House residents. Visitors need to be escorted in the building at all times (this includes entering and leaving the facility). *It is up to Bridge House staff discretion to allow or refuse visitors into the Bridge House Facility.* Time restrictions for visitors and the number of visitors may be limited by staff as well. Former residents who have been terminated from the Bridge House Program are prohibited as visitors within the Bridge House Unit Facility. All visitors are required to have a valid photo ID. If a visitor does not have a valid photo ID, he or she may not be permitted inside the facility as a visitor. All visitors must inform staff when leaving the program grounds. This includes informing residential staff and/or office staff in the Roundhouse during program hours.

15. When having a visitor at Bridge House, all apartment doors must be kept open in the individual apartment and/or the community room. Residents are not to have sexual relations in the Bridge House building.

16. Residents are mandated to participate in activities held at Bridge Housing. This includes the weekly Community Meeting and other life skill workshops that are provided to the residents. The purpose of such activities is to educate and increase awareness to Bridge House residents that will assist them in achieving self-sufficiency. Residents are also expected to complete life skill packets which are distributed on the weekends. These are written exercises based on various life skill topics. The packets are to be completed by 4:00PM the following Friday. If the life skills packet is not turned in on time, points will be given.

17. Residents in drug and/or alcohol recovery are expected to attend at least three AA/NA meetings each week. The resident must turn in meeting slips by 4:00PM Friday of each week to receive credit for the meetings. Failure to attend or complete these assignments on time will result in points being assigned.

18. All residents who are not employed or attending at training/post secondary program for at least twenty hours per week must perform a minimum of five hours of community service per month. Community service sites and activities must be approved by the Case Plan Specialist and hours of service provided must be documented. Additionally, any resident who has points must perform an additional five hours of community service in that month. Failure to attend or complete these assignments on the given timeline will result in points being assigned.

19. Residents must attend weekly meetings with the case manager at the Roundhouse office. These are mandatory meetings designed to assist each client in overcoming his/her personal barriers in order to achieve self-sufficiency. Residents must check the memo each week for his/her scheduled meeting. Failure to attend this scheduled meeting will result in points being assigned.

20. Residents may receive points for a violation of any rule (see next page for further explanation). Residents are placed on probationary status the first thirty days they reside at Bridge House. Residents may be placed on probation for accumulating 20 points or more within a thirty-day period, or for any other disciplinary issue staff feels would be necessary to restrict a resident's privileges. If a resident is on probationary status, he/she is not permitted to go on weekend pass or day trips outside Schuylkill County, is not eligible to receive incentives, and will have visitors restricted to one hour per day. A resident will receive a written notice when on probationary status for disciplinary reasons.

Additionally, any resident who has points must perform an additional five hours of community service in that month.

21. Prior to Bridge House successful completion, all Bridge House clients must have an established income. Clients must be compliant and showing progress on their goal plans. Clients must be enrolled in the Bridge House Program for a minimum of three months. Clients must have security deposit paid in full and have zero balance with Pottsville Housing Authority. Clients must be compliant with other service providers.

POINT SYSTEM PROCEDURE

Each client begins with a point balance of 0. On the following pages, there are a corresponding number of points for each rule. Therefore, when that rule is broken, the client will receive that number of points.

A record of each client's point balance is maintained in the office. When a violation occurs, the resident will carry the points for a period of one month to the date he/she is given. While a resident has points, he/she is not permitted to take part in certain Bridge House programs and privileges. This includes: weekend passes, day trips outside of Schuylkill County, and incentives. Additionally, any resident who has points must perform an additional five hours of community service in that month. Once the thirty-day period has lapsed, the client's points are cleared.

EXAMPLE: 3/5/02	Client A fails apartment check	5 pts
3/9/02	Client A fails to sign in to Bridge	5 pts
	Point Total	10pts
4/5/02	Points from 3/5/02 are cleared	-5pts
	Point Total	5pts

Accumulation of 30 points will result in termination of Bridge House Services.

The following rules apply to all clients of the Bridge House Facility. When these rules are violated, the responsible client will be assigned "points" for each violation. **Accumulation of 30 points in a thirty-day period** makes it possible for the Director of Program Services to terminate services and evict the client from this facility. A written warning will be given to the client when points total 20 or more. This will give staff the opportunity to work with the client to avoid any further disciplinary action.

Points may be assigned to an individual resident if there is just cause of an infraction of a rule/wrong doing while enrolled as a resident of Bridge House, even if it is not listed specifically in this manual. Only the Director of Program Services and/or Program Case Manager will assign points if such an occurrence should take place. All other Bridge House staff may assign points based on the rules listed below.

<i>RULE</i>	<i>POINTS</i>
1. Failing to report to building by curfew/leaving before 8AM without staff permission	20

2. Leaving a child unsupervised or unattended	20
3. Allowing a visitor to violate curfew	20
4. Allowing a visitor to gain access to the facility with out staff approval	20
5. Disrespect to staff, residents, or children	20
6. Sexual harassment of staff or other residents	20
7. Failure to comply with the program's parenting policy	20
8. Causing a fire or safety hazard on program grounds (includes but not limited to obstructing exits, leaving oven/stove on while unattended, activating hallway fire alarms, etc.)	20
9. Using BH Facility for the purpose other than a dwelling (selling of services or goods, operating a business, etc.)	20
10. Not paying rent and/or security deposit in a timely manner	20
11. Conducting/Participating in illegal activity; encouraging others to participate in illegal activity; having charges pressed against as a resident of Bridge House.	20
12. Misuse of program equipment (computers, furniture, grill, etc.). Not returning program materials in a timely manner.	20
13. Using tobacco products inside Bridge House; allowing guest(s) to use tobacco products inside Bridge House	10
14. Failing to turn in facility keys to staff prior to leaving on pass	10
15. Failure to dress properly in common areas. Shoes and shirts must be worn at all times. Indecent coverage and appropriate dress may also apply to this policy. No swim attire inside building in common areas (must be covered up)	10
16. Misuse of the building's elevator - refer to policy	10
17. Allowing a visitor to cause disturbances, visiting other BH residents while unescorted, visitor not reporting to staff before/after signing in/out	15
18. Unauthorized alterations to apartments such as painting, nails, etc.	10
19. Violation of travel restrictions outside of Schuylkill County without staff permission	10
20. Non-completion of Bridge House Chore	5
21. Establishing accounts/receiving goods from rental companies; Receiving digital cable; not reporting cable services to staff	10
22. Failing to clean up outside grounds, not disposing of cigarette butts, not cleaning or putting away the grill after use.	10

23. Failure to report in and out of the main offices during the week between 8am - 4pm	5
24. Use of obscene language	5
25. Disturbing BH staff while conducting business (this includes within the office and residential workers, including but not limited to ordering out after curfew).	5
26. Failure to pass regular apartment checks or non-compliance with apartment check	5
27. Disturbing residents and staff with loud noise (especially after 10pm)	5
28. Resident (this includes both adults and children) fails to be in his/her own apartment by 10:00PM (Sun.-Fri.) and 11:00PM (Saturday only)	5
29. Burning incense, candles or using fragrance producing items such as Glade plus-ins	5
30. Failure to attend house programs, including community service	5
31. Failure to adhere to BH guidelines for trash removal	5
32. Violation of community room rules	5
33. Failure to use sign-in/sign-out sheet (for residents and visitors) and/or not using the sign in/out sheet properly, tampering of the sign in/out sheet	5
34. Giving out facility keys to children or visitors (unauthorized by staff)	5
35. Unauthorized pets in the apartments	5
36. Leaving an apartment unlocked or unattended.	15
37. Neglecting responsibilities outlined in Individual Action Plans, including case management meetings and life skills.	10
38. Failing to keep unit door ajar with guest/visitor/client	10
39. Use/possession of pornographic materials	10
40. Use of cell phones during programmed activities/meetings	5
41. Violation of the Prescription Medication Policy (may include termination)	20
42. Non-compliance with Pottsville Housing Authority maintenance, treatment requests, etc.	10

RULES FOR GAINING A PASS

To be eligible to request a weekend pass:

1. The resident must have resided in Bridge House for at least one month (30 days).
2. The resident must be free of any points. Residents must have approval for a pass with their Parole/Probation Officer when on probation/parole.
3. The resident must request a pass at least one week in advance during the Community Meeting and must also clear it with the Case Manager and Director of Program Services by Wednesday of the week of the pass request. The resident must have either the Director of Program Services or the Case Manager sign a pass request form by Wednesday of that week. The resident will then hand over the pass request form to the Residential Worker before going on pass.
4. Passes for children (who will be leaving Bridge House without their parents) must also be requested according to the procedures listed above in Number 3.
5. The resident must understand that the requested pass must be approved by the Director of Program Services. The Director of Program Services reserves the right to approve or deny the requested pass.
6. The resident must agree to hand over facility keys to staff prior to leaving on pass and furnish staff with an address and phone number where he/she can be reached.
7. The resident must pass an apartment check BEFORE leaving on pass. If the apartment fails to pass the check, the resident will NOT be allowed to go on pass.
8. The client must complete his/her chore if going on pass on a Friday. This must be checked by Bridge House staff.
9. Residents cannot leave for weekend pass before 4:00PM Friday, unless otherwise specified by staff. Residents must return to the Bridge House facility on Sunday by their designated curfew.

Day pass (outside of Schuylkill County) - is a pass requested for only one (1) day. Residents must return by curfew on the day of the pass. Clients are not allowed to

leave for pass before 6AM unless given permission to do so by full-time staff. To be eligible for a day pass:

1. The resident must have resided within the program for one month (thirty days).
2. The resident must request a day pass at the community meeting. The resident will have a pass request signed and approved by staff for the day by Wednesday of the week of the pass.
3. The resident must understand that the pass must be approved by the Director of Program Services or the Case Plan Specialist. The Director of Program Services and the Case Plan Specialist reserve the right to approve or deny the requested pass. The resident must have approval from Parole/Probation Officer if on probation/parole.
4. The resident must hand over the facility keys to staff prior to leaving on pass.
5. Residents should not leave prior to 8AM (unless otherwise specified by staff), and must return by their designated curfew.
6. Residents must complete all assignments, chores and attend house programs in the designated time frame on the day of their pass.

The pass process is a privilege that is granted by staff. Any decision regarding weekend or overnight passes is at the Director of Program Services' and Case Manager's discretion. Eligible Bridge House clients are allowed to go on pass every two weeks (every other week) or at the Director of Program Services' discretion. Bridge House Residents are NOT permitted to take passes (overnight or day) outside of Pennsylvania for personal or recreational purposes. Staff reserves the right to allow or deny all passes requested. Failure to pay security deposit/rent/other costs/fees to service providers on a timely basis may be grounds for a pass denial.

PARENTING POLICY

A primary function of Bridge Housing is to assist/support families in reunification following separation due to addiction treatment, foster care, and/or homelessness. We believe that preserving the family unit is a priority. We also believe that learning, adopting, and practicing appropriate, healthy, responsible parenting skills is necessary for a successful transition to independent living. Therefore, all clients

who are residing with, or preparing to reside with their minor children, will be expected to abide by the following guidelines:

I. CHILDREN AGES INFANT THROUGH 11 YEARS

1. Children are to be supervised at all times in the facility and on the grounds.
2. Children are to receive routine medical care and immunizations as recommended by pediatricians.
3. School age children will be registered with and attend schools regularly. Parents must notify staff immediately when a child misses school or when going to school late. Children *ARE NOT* to be out socially on days when they have missed school due to a "sick" absence.
4. Children are to be accompanied to and from the bus stop - **AT ALL TIMES** - by an adult.
5. Pre-school children will be referred to any appropriate agency for Head Start, Infant Stimulation, etc. as recommended by staff.
6. Any developmentally or physically handicapped child will receive therapeutic intervention as prescribed.
7. All children are to be in their apartments no later than 10:00PM.
8. Children are not to answer public phones, doors, or allow visitors to enter the facility.
9. Children will attend in-house programs as scheduled (i.e., Bridge Kids).
10. Parents will use a babysitting log sheet when having another client babysitting their child. Clients must still inform staff when someone else is watching their child.

II. CHILDREN AGES 12 - 17 YEARS OLD

1. Children will not be permitted to smoke in facility or on grounds.
2. When leaving the facility, unescorted, they must sign in and sign out.
3. Children will comply with 10:00PM curfew unless otherwise approved by staff **AND** parent. Staff reserves the right to alter a child's curfew for safety or disciplinary reasons.
4. Children will not be given keys to facility doors.
5. Baby-sitting for younger children will be allowed, with prior staff approval. Issues of child's age and past history will be taken into account.
6. Children will not use foul language, shout, or be disrespectful to staff and/or other clients.
7. Children must maintain confidentiality of clients, staff and facility.
8. Neither overnight guests nor opposite-sex friends are allowed in the apartments.
9. Children will attend school regularly. Parents must inform staff immediately when a child does not go to school or when going in late.

Parents may need to show staff medical excuses when requested due to frequent absences. Children *ARE NOT* to be out socially the days they have missed school due to a "sick" absence.

10. Random drug/alcohol testing will be done on a random and/or as needed basis. If a child is found to be using drugs/alcohol, parents and child **MUST** agree to recommended referrals and treatment.
11. Children will abide by any further limits/rules imposed by parents (i.e. chores, cleaning, etc.).
12. Children will attend all therapies and counseling sessions as scheduled.
13. Staff reserves the right to refuse entry to any visitor (friends/relatives of children) in the facility who behaves inappropriately. All visitors must sign in/out. All visitors must exit the facility by 10:00PM.

III. PARENTS

Parents are responsible for supervising, disciplining and maintaining the health and hygiene of their children. Although children cannot be given points, serious or chronic rule violations will be discussed with the parent. If the parent is experiencing difficulty, despite **SINCERE** efforts to comply, other agencies will be consulted for assistance. If the parent is found to be lax or uncooperative in correcting the situation and does not offer another corrective measure for the discipline of their child(ren), parenting points will be assigned.

For those families involved with Schuylkill County Children and Youth Services, Bridge Housing staff will expect full compliance with that agency's Family Service Plan. An on-going dialogue will be maintained to ensure continuity and compliance. Willful non-compliance will be considered grounds to terminate Bridge Housing Services. Parents and children will abide by the curfews given to parents. A parent may make a curfew earlier for their child(ren).

For those families with court-ordered visitation agreements, staff is to be informed of schedules, arrangements and stipulations that apply. Any parent who has been abusive or is currently using alcohol/drugs will not be permitted in the Bridge Housing Program for visitation. Alternate arrangements must be made.

APARTMENT CLEANING GUIDELINES

Apartments must be kept thoroughly clean at all times. This includes the living room, kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, closets and hallway. Apartment checks will be conducted a minimum of two (2) times per week. Checks will be conducted during and on weekends. Staff may conduct an apartment check anytime of day or night if there should be a reason for safety, security and/or health concerns. Other apartment checks may be performed on an as needed basis. Staff reserves the right to inspect a client's personal property if the client is suspected to have suspicious or illicit items (drugs, paraphernalia, alcohol, etc.). This includes searching client bags/purses upon entering Bridge House.

The following guidelines are used by staff to conduct apartment checks. A client who fails an apartment check will be assigned disciplinary points. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that clients follow these guidelines when cleaning their apartment:

- Furniture should be dusted. Upholstered furniture should be vacuumed.
- All beds should be made on a daily basis.
- Appliances must be wiped down - inside and out.
- Outdated food should be discarded.
- Dishes should be washed after use and stored away in proper places.
- Bedding should be washed once weekly.
- Carpeted floors are to be vacuumed at least twice per week. Hard surfaces should be swept twice weekly. Particular attention should be made to crumbs, etc. on floors.
- Apartment freezers need to be defrosted regularly.
- Ovens must be cleaned regularly.
- Garbage is to be bagged and disposed of on a daily basis. Trash is to be taken to the outside shed and not to be left in the hallway or apartment.
- Toys, bicycles, strollers, etc. are to be brought inside the building and placed in individual apartments. They are not to be left in the hallways since they could pose a safety hazard.
- No alterations to the apartment, such as picture hanging, painting, etc. are permitted without staff consent.
- Inventory must be monitored on a regular basis including at times of admission and discharge.

COMMUNITY CHORE LIST

Each Bridge House resident is responsible for completing the chore assigned to him/her each week, Monday through Friday. Chores must be completed between

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4:00PM and 9:00PM. Residential staff must check each chore in order to be considered approved. If staff feels that a chore is not done correctly, the resident is responsible for doing the chore again. Failure to complete a chore or do a chore correctly will result in points being assigned. Exceptions to chores are made on an individual basis and must be approved by the Director of Program Services.

West Stairwell	Sweep and mop entire surface
2nd Floor Walls, Windows and Doors	Wash and wipe entire surface
3rd Floor Hall	Vacuum entire surface
Community Room	Sweep, mop, dust and empty trash
East Stairwell	Sweep and mop entire surface
3rd Floor Walls, Windows and Doors	Wash and wipe down entire surface
2nd Floor Hall	Vacuum entire surface
Elevator	Sweep, mop and clean entire surface
1st Floor	Sweep and mop floor, wash and wipe down windows and walls, vacuum floor
Outside Chore	Assigned daily by residential worker
Laundry Room	Sweep, mop, clean laundry room

FIRE EVACUATION

In the event of a fire and/or fire drill, all residents and their visitors must exit the building. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. Bridge House staff will fire drills with the Pottsville Housing Authority. The following steps are to be followed in the event of a fire and/or fire drill:

1. The entire alarm system will sound throughout the building.
2. Staff and residents are to remain calm and exit the building using the proper exit routes. These exit routes are detailed below and marked in the building. When in other areas of the building, go to the nearest stairwell. Do not use the elevator.

East Stairwell

608

609

611

612

615

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West Stairwell

607

610

613

614

616

618

3. Prior to exiting the building, staff will secure the log book, informational binder and resident and visitor sign-in/sign-out sheets. This will aid staff in counting heads and making sure everyone is accounted for.
4. After exiting the building, everyone is to report to the Roundhouse in the designated area. Staff will enter the Roundhouse and contact 911.
5. Staff will immediately contact the Director of Program Services and the Executive Director once the fire department is notified.
6. Once the situation is resolved, the staff member will fill out the appropriate incident report. Residents may return to the building once everything is approved and secured.

GROUNDS FOR IMMEDIATE TERMINATION
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1. Possessing, concealing, or using a firearm or any other weapon on facility property.
2. Using drugs/alcohol while in residence. Taking prescription and/or over-the-counter medication containing narcotics, benzodiazepines, opiates, alcohol substances, any medication that would interfere with the drug testing procedure, vivitrol, suboxone, buprenorphine, naltrexone, or methadone (or the generic/name brand version of these drugs); accepting visits from someone who is under the influence of a controlled substance; refusing to comply with random

drug and alcohol testing as directed by staff; interfering with the drug testing procedure.

3. Dispensing of prescription medication to an unassigned person.
4. Violating facility security by unauthorized use of program doors; allowing a visitor to gain access to the facility without staff approval.
5. Vandalizing or deliberately damaging the Bridge Housing property or grounds.
6. Entering a client's apartment without the occupant's permission.
7. Initiating and/or participating in a romantic and/or sexual relationship with fellow clients and/or staff.
8. Violating the program physical violence policy.
9. Unlawfully taking personal property from a fellow client and/or staff member; theft of SCA or Schuylkill County property; theft of services from a business/agency.
10. Accepting visits from friends or relatives in apartments after 10:00PM.
11. Allowing a visitor to remain overnight in the facility.
12. Chronically non-complying with personal goal plans.
13. Chronically violating facility's rules and regulations (accumulation of 30 or more points in a thirty-day period).
14. Accepting visits from an abusive spouse or partner. Refusing to press legal charges against such a person should he/she pose a threat to the facility, its staff and/or clients.
15. Failing to pay housing fees to the Pottsville Housing Authority in the designated timeframe. This also includes failing to report changes in income to PHA.
16. Violating the Bridge House/SCA Request for Rent Subsidy Agreement.
17. Not returning to the facility at all after missing curfew. If the client fails to report to the facility at all in the course of the evening, it is viewed as avoidance with staff in order to avoid disciplinary action.

18. Engaging in illegal activity that leads to the arrest of a resident while living within the Bridge House Program.
19. Violating confidentiality regarding staff, residents and Bridge House.

If a client of this facility is responsible for violating any of the above rules, the Director of Program Services will terminate Bridge House services. In the event of violent acts, residents will be terminated immediately and asked to leave the building. This facility is not responsible for securing alternate housing for the client or his/her family. The client may file an appeal regarding the Director of Program Services' decision, but he/she cannot continue to reside in the program during the appeal process unless otherwise notified. Terminated clients must vacate the premises within twenty-four (24) hours. If the termination is due to violence, the police will be notified and the resident will be terminated effective immediately. All terminations are at the discretion of the Director of Program Services.

All residents who have been terminated from Bridge House are prohibited from visiting the Bridge House facility in the future.

POLICY ON PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

For the sake of this policy, acts of violence are defined as any attempts to deliberately and intentionally cause harm to another person.

Bridge House staff will NOT tolerate physical violence of any kind. It is totally unallowable for any staff member or client to make any violent gesture toward any staff or client. This includes disciplining children. Parents residing in this facility will not use physical violence punishment with their children - no slapping, spanking, etc.

The police will remove a client who becomes violent from Bridge House, if necessary. Otherwise, anyone guilty of hurting, or attempting to hurt another, will be served a termination notice and given twenty-four hours to vacate his/her apartment. Acts of physical violence will not be tolerated and are not covered under the grievance procedure.

In the event physical violence is suspected toward a minor child, a referral will be made to Schuylkill County Children and Youth Services for further investigation.

Any staff member who is allegedly responsible for acts of violence towards other staff or clients will be reported to the Director of Program Services for immediate disciplinary action.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A grievance is defined as an unresolved complaint or dispute, disagreement, misunderstanding, or expressed dissatisfaction on the part of a client concerning services provided or denied in the Bridge House Program.

When filing a grievance, the following procedure must be followed:

- I. The client shall present, in writing, to the Case Manager any act, condition, or circumstance causing dissatisfaction within five (5) days of its occurrence. Every effort will be made to resolve the matter at this level before a formal hearing.

The grievance form shall contain information that identifies:

- The resident's name
- The specific nature of the Grievance
- The date, time and place it occurred
- The rule, law, regulation or policy alleged to have been violated, improperly interpreted, or misapplied
- Any steps taken to secure information to resolve the problem
- The corrective action desired

The Case Manager will maintain objectivity and deliver a decision, in writing, within two (2) working days of receipt of the grievance.

- II. If the grievance is not satisfactorily settled within the time specified in Step I, the grievance should be presented to the Director of Program Services, in writing, by the tenth (10) day after the incident. The Director of Program Services will deliver a decision within three (3) working days of receipt of the grievance.
- III. If you are not satisfied with the results of Step II, you may then present the grievance, in writing to the Schuylkill County Department of Human Services, Attention: Block Grant Manager, within twenty

(20) days of the incident. A decision will be made and you will be notified, in writing, of the outcome.

ABANDONED PERSONAL BELONGINGS

A client is responsible for packing and moving all personal belongings when leaving this facility.

Every effort is to be made to remove personal articles on the day of the move. In the event that a client leaves belongings behind, the facility will hold the personal items for a **MAXIMUM** period of five (5) days. If the client does not return to claim the items within five (5) days, the items will be discarded. This applies to every client who moves out, regardless of the circumstances (completion, against program advice, termination).

STAFF WILL NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR PERSONAL BELONGINGS LEFT AT BRIDGE HOUSE ONCE THE CLIENT MOVES OUT OF THE BRIDGE HOUSE BUILDING.

If items are left at Bridge House to be disposed of, the security deposit will be retained.

AFTERCARE SERVICES

Services are offered to Bridge House residents upon graduation from the program in order to prevent the recurrence of homelessness. The Case Manager will provide the following services:

1. The Case Manager will visit the client in his/her new residence on a regular basis in order to prevent the repeat of homelessness and provide support. Office meetings may also be scheduled.
2. The client will be invited to participate in Bridge House activities.

Eligibility for this program is as follows:

1. Resident must have completed at least three months of residency at Bridge House. He/she must be a successful completion of the Bridge House Program.
2. Resident must be in agreement with program terms including on-going case management.
3. Resident must be in compliance with the exit policy of Bridge House - return of keys, approved inventory, damage assessment, etc.
4. The resident must be in compliance with all other agencies/social service providers with whom they are currently working. This may include (but is not limited to) Children and Youth Services, Domestic Relations, Adult Probation, etc.
5. The resident must have all housing fees paid to date. This includes rent, owing for property loss or damage, etc.
6. Resident must be relocating to permanent housing within Schuylkill County.