

# Drop In and Respite (DARE) Center

## A project of the Coalition for Homeless Concerns, Inc. (CHC)

### Management and Operations Plan

**Mission Statement:** The mission of the Drop In and Respite (DARE) Center, operating as a volunteer program of the Coalition for Homeless Concerns, Inc., is to offer a daily refuge with basic services to provide physical and emotional comfort for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

#### 1. Narrative description of the nature and characteristics of the use and descriptions of all services provided.

The DARE Center will offer a place of refuge initially as a part time program operating from 2:30 to 6:30 pm each day at 944 Kentucky, every day of the year depending on a sufficient number of volunteers. There will be coffee, showers, sofas and chairs, a TV, and a telephone to give the participants a minimum of comfort and resources. The DARE Center will not provide case management or more structured programs. All of the staff will be volunteers. There will be two staff present at all times. The Drop In will provide, however, referrals and guidance to resources within the Lawrence and Douglas County community that serve homeless and low-income individuals and families.

The DARE Center is a part time day shelter for individuals and families seeking a temporary refuge from extreme weather and from the challenges of living homeless. Guests will provide basic information and identification upon first arrival at the Center and statistics will be kept on the number, frequency, demographics, and issues and concerns of the guests. Case management will not be part of the program. Guests will be referred to other agencies and resources within the community for case management and in-depth services. It is intended, however, that the Center will be an information source about local programs for homelessness. The conduct of guests of DARE is governed by the Rights and Responsibilities and Homeless Bill of Rights, copies of which are attached.

Specific programs envisioned at the beginning and later of the Center's operations are:

Freedom House -- a volunteer Christian ministry to homeless people who desire growth and transformation from personal destructive paths to freedom and newness of life. A short worship service will be offered each week plus opportunities for Bible study and spiritual support

Referrals for services to other area resources and agencies

Arts activities led by local artists

Other activities/workshops at the Center as offered by local volunteers

Coffee, donated snacks

Restrooms

Showers

TV but no computers

Telephone

Laundry washer and dryer

**Management and Operations Plan  
Drop In and Respite (DARE) Center**

**page 2**

Volunteers will be recruited from the wide community of Lawrence, Douglas County, KU, and Haskell. Volunteers will be trained in DARE Center workshops and will always be accompanied by a second volunteer staff person.

**2. Interior floor plan showing sleeping areas, common areas, emergency exits, and bathrooms**

Attached -- site plan. The DARE Center is not an overnight shelter and does not have sleeping areas.

**3. Rules of conduct for guests**

All family and individual guests will provide basic information and identification for intake upon first arrival and will sign the Rights and Responsibilities (attached) as a contract for their use of the Center.

**4. Maintenance plan that establishes standards for regular building and site maintenance, including regular removal of litter**

Daily maintenance of the building and grounds will be completed by volunteer staff and by individual guests.

Building maintenance and repairs often will be accomplished by the network of plumbers, carpenters, HVAC, and other specialists who have worked for the property owner or other local social service agencies.

**5. Communications plan that establishes how the shelter will regularly communicate with neighbors and police**

The DARE Center will hold an annual public meeting to inform the community of events and developments at the Center, to receive suggestions and comments from neighbors, to conduct neighborhood projects, and to cooperate on security issues.

The Center director will always meet with neighbors, at their request. Contact information including the Center's telephone number will be printed and distributed. Volunteer opportunities at the Shelter will be made available specifically for anyone in the neighborhood with a desire to help.

The DARE Center will call the police as required for incidents at the Center requiring their intervention. Volunteer staff training will be designed to ensure that all parties are cooperating as fully as possible to educate the staff and to maintain a constructive relationship. The DARE Center defers to the Lawrence Police Department for keeping statistics of the number and types of calls to the property to track categories over time. The Center will work closely with

**Management and Operations Plan  
Drop In and Respite (DARE) Center**

**page 3**

the Lawrence Police Department and Douglas County Sheriff's office to exchange information and work closely with these agencies. Guest information will be shared with the Lawrence Police Department, as appropriate.

Camping on public or private property is illegal, and all neighbors are encouraged to call the police if they encounter such behavior. Loitering on Center, neighbor's, or other private property is and will be a violation of DARE policy, and guests will be denied shelter services for a period of time for such actions. Neighbors are asked to call the Center directly when a possible violation is in progress so the staff may take prompt action.

**6. Response plan for emergencies that occur at the site**

DARE Center staff will be trained to call the Lawrence Police Department or the Lawrence/Douglas County ambulance service, when an emergency occurs. Staff will be trained also by the local American Red Cross chapter for CPR, by Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center on First Aid for Mental Health, and by the various university degrees in psychology or social welfare that individual staff members may have. The DARE Center will use the Safety Plan developed by case managers with the Kansas University School of Social Welfare for the guidance of interns, volunteers, and staff dealing with an incident. [see attached Safety Plan]

**7. Adequate staffing levels given the number of guests served and the nature of the facility and population served**

There will be two or more volunteer staff, plus potential interns, during the operating hours of 2:30 pm to 6:30 0 pm, every day.

Attachments: Rights and Responsibilities, Homeless Bill of Rights, Safety Plan

11/19/18

## Drop In and Respite (DARE) Center

### RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### **House Rules**

Respect yourself and others

No alcohol or drugs

No weapons

No sexually suggestive comments or actions

No violence or threats of violence

No smoking inside the shelter

No littering, inside or outside

No trespassing on private property

#### **Welcome to the Drop In and Respite Center (DARE)**

The DARE Center strives to maintain a comfortable, safe, and peaceful environment, and requires all persons – both working at and visiting the Center – treat others with respect and dignity.

#### **Hours and Schedules**

In addition to the below times and information, guests will be informed about the schedule of activities and services during the staff orientation for new guests.

The DARE Center is a part time refuge for families and individuals experiencing homelessness.

All guests are signed in at the time of arrival each day.

After entering the Center, guests are asked to remain on the property unless leaving for appointments for work, school, etc. Relaxation and smoking outside areas are provided for guests.

The Drop-In is a part time project staffed by volunteers that will be open from 2:30 pm to 6:30 pm every day, until further notice.

#### **All Guests – Conditions of Stay**

All guests will complete an intake form on arriving at the DARE Center and a copy made of your photo ID. If you do not have a photo ID, we will take a picture for the file.

The DARE Center is a dry shelter in that guests may never drink, possess, or distribute alcohol or controlled substances on the premises.

The shelter may admit guests who may have been drinking as long as they follow common rules of behavior.

Guests' hours will be filled with use of the Center facilities for showers, laundry, etc. and activities developed by the volunteer staff. In addition, all guests will complete tasks of shelter cleaning, maintenance, and other duties to keep our space clean and livable.

No illegal substances (street drugs, etc.) or alcoholic beverages are permitted on DARE property, indoors or outside, at any time.

No firearms or knives are permitted on DARE property, indoors or outside, at any time. This includes concealed weapons.

All guests and volunteers shall enter and leave the shelter only through designated entrances.

Do not open doors for persons outside wanting to come into the Center through fire exits or other unauthorized entrances.

When walking to any destination in the city, stay on sidewalks and main streets in neighborhoods.

Be respectful of private property everywhere and common areas downtown.

Smoking is permitted in the designated smoking area.

The Center reserves the right to recycle unattended belongings left at DARE.

**Drop-In and Respite (DARE) Center  
Rights and Responsibilities**

**page 2**

Shower if asked by a staff person to control odor in the common areas.  
Casual gathering and resting on the ground is not allowed on the Kentucky Street side of the building.

**Behavior at the DARE Center**

Individuals coming to the DARE Center must respect the people in the building and in the neighborhood. No food, medicine, or other items that may decay or draw infestations will be stored in the building. Personal possessions are the responsibility of each individual owner not the staff.

Staff/volunteers and guests will treat each other with courtesy and will show respect for other people's feelings, physical space, and property.

No fighting or threatening.

Refrain from physical contact during conflict situations.

No offensive language (racist, sexist, homophobic, etc.)

Abstain from sexually explicit behavior in, near, or on DARE property.

Any behavior or action that is dangerous, disruptive, or disrespectful of others will be handled individually by the staff on duty. A guest who causes difficulties for others may be asked to visit with a staff counselor in order to continue staying at the Drop-In, or may be asked to leave.

**Dog Contract**

Guests who have an established relationship with a service or pet dog is responsible for behavior and care of the animal.

**Off Site Behavior**

The shelter does not support guests who panhandle.

DARE guests are guests also of the surrounding neighborhoods and businesses. It is important to remember that there are City ordinances against aggressive panhandling and trespassing and that loitering is poor behavior.

Be respectful of Drop-In neighbors and their property on your way to and from the elsewhere, and while you are around the Drop-In.

Do not drink, smoke, hang out on, or walk across private property without permission.

Walking on or across private property is trespassing and is unacceptable

11/15/18

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Drop In and Respite (DARE) Center**

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### **Homeless Bill of Rights**

Laws that segregate, make criminals of people based on their status rather than their behavior, or prohibit certain people's right to be in public spaces are not just sad relics from the past:

Today, numerous laws infringe on the ability of poor people to exist in public space or obtain basic needs such as housing, employment, and equal protection under the law. The Homeless Bill of Rights campaign is to create bills that protect the following rights and prohibit the enforcement of any local laws that violate these rights:

1. Right to move freely, rest, sleep, and pray and be protected in public spaces without discrimination
2. Right to occupy a legally parked vehicle
3. Right to share food and eat in public
4. Right to legal counsel if being prosecuted
5. Right to 24-hour access to "hygiene facilities"

11/19/18

## **Drop In and Respite (DARE) Center Safety Plan**

### **For Crises Involving Potential Threat to Staff in Public Areas**

1. Staff should not hesitate to call 911 if there is eminent danger to themselves or others.
2. In the event of an escalating situation involving two or more guests, staff should immediately attempt to verbally separate the individuals involved. If guests refuse to obey, staff members are encouraged to give a verbal warning that failure to obey will result in bans. If guests refuse to respond, staff members should tell the individuals that they will contact the police. Continued failure to obey, staff members should ask others in the area to contact the police, while not leaving the scene themselves. Staff members should never put themselves in harms way by positioning themselves between two or more feuding individuals. An alternative is to direct the lesser aggressive guest into their office in order to dissolve the situation. After the situation has deescalated, staff are encouraged to discuss the situation with the involved guests individually and support them in reaching acceptable solutions to the situation. When appropriate and safe to do so, staff may ask individuals involved to have a group meeting to discuss the matter peacefully.
3. In the event of an escalating situation involving one guest, staff members should instruct the guest to calm down and be respectful of other guests. DO NOT attempt to talk through the difficulties of the person if you are uncomfortable or feel the situation is escalating out of control too quickly. In this situation, staff should: ask the guest to leave and/or contact the police. If staff feels they can work with the guest calmly and safely, continue speaking with the person to see if the difficulty can be resolved.
4. If this is the case, staff should remove the person from the public setting and use an office to speak with them in private as soon as it is safe to do so. If necessary, staff should inform other staff members of the situation so they can be close at hand for further help.

### **For Crises Occurring Within a Staff Office**

5. If staff feel that a guest may be a danger, or is in an emotional state where they do not have a normal level of self-control, it is ALWAYS okay to leave the door open.
6. Remember to use supportive words and try to help the client find acceptable choices for how to work through the crisis. Talk calmly with a person in crisis only while it is profitable. If the situation deteriorates and the threat of harm or injury increases, determine whether it is safer to call for assistance or try to leave the room. As far as it is successful, try to contain the crisis within the office so it is less likely to impact other guests. If you have to ask a guest to leave your office or the shelter, please follow them out so you can be on hand if the crisis continues and other people are put at risk.
7. If necessary, possible exit strategies include: breaking the office windows or using designated exits, as appropriate.

## **Safety Plan – Drop In and Respite Center (DARE)**

**page 2**

### **Physical Restraint**

8. Physical restraint or seclusion shall be used as a method of intervention only when all other methods of de-escalation have failed and only when necessary for the protection of the staff and others.
9. No practice utilized shall be intended to humiliate, frighten, or physically harm a guest.
10. No practice that becomes necessary to implement shall continue longer than necessary to resolve the behavior at issue.

### **Post-crisis Procedures**

11. After the crisis, witnessing staff members are to complete an incident report if the situation warranted action. If necessary, log any police calls made.
12. Witnessing staff should collaborate and set ban for individual(s) involved.
13. Decision for ban duration should be reported to the guests only after the individual(s) involved have deescalated. The ban should be communicated to the guest as a decision made by the agency as a whole and not one individual. Further, staff members may wish to have other staff present when guests are informed of ban.
14. Bans are to be posted and staff should inform other staff of incident at the staff meeting.

11/19/18