

connections

FOR THE HOMELESS

SHELTER PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

Revised 01.15.2022

WELCOME

Welcome to Connections' Shelter program! At Connections, we recognize that safe and stable housing is the foundation from which we grow and reach our full potential. As we work to get you connected to a housing opportunity suited to your needs, we are happy to have you here at our Shelter.

By accepting you into our Shelter, Connections makes a commitment to shelter you until we are able to secure safe, stable housing for you. This is dependent on you actively working with our Staff to identify, plan, and execute your housing plan.

To help provide a safe and supportive environment for all Participants, we have put together this Shelter Resident Handbook to explain the services, expectations, and policies of our shelter program. Please read through this handbook thoroughly. You are responsible for being familiar with all our policies and procedures. If you have questions beyond the information provided to you in this Handbook, please speak with our Staff.

On behalf of everyone at Connections, welcome home!

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A. OUR PHILOSOPHY OF CARE

We work to end homelessness using a philosophy and approach that includes two evidenced-based practices:

- **Harm reduction** embraces respect, trust, and a nonjudgmental stance as essential components of an effective relationship. A harm reduction approach includes the following beliefs and practices:
 - Each individual is the expert in his/her own life
 - Individuals have the right to make their own choices
 - Any positive change is acknowledged and celebrated
 - Based in relationship building, honesty, and treating all people with dignity and respect
 - Emphasis on personal responsibility for behavior and separating behavior from the value of a person
 - Individuals have a voice in their care and treatment
 - Focus on reducing harm, not total abstinence from risky behavior, such as drug use

- **Trauma-Informed Care** is a strengths-based approach that is grounded in an understanding of, and responsiveness to, the impact of trauma and includes and emphasizes physical, emotional, and psychological safety and creates opportunities for individuals to rebuild a sense of control and heal from past traumas. A trauma-informed approach includes the following:
 - Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths towards recovery
 - Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in individuals and families
 - Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices
 - Seeks to actively resist re-traumatization

B. OUR CORE VALUES

In support of our mission, we operate using the following Core Values to guide our interactions between participants, colleagues, and our community.

Equity and Inclusion

- We acknowledge that privilege exists and intentionally promote equitable access to resources and representation in leadership and decision making.
- We design solutions with humility and intentionally include voices that have been historically and structurally excluded.

Community

- We are more effective in community than in isolation.
- We build partnerships through authentic relationships.
- We value the expertise of all and use empathy and collaboration to fulfill our mission.

Transparency

- We operate with integrity by being forthright, honest, and open with participants, staff, volunteers, supporters, and our community.
- We invite feedback in all relationships, commit to self-reflection and strive for continuous improvement.

Generosity of Spirit

- We create spaces that are kind, non-judgmental and affirming of the entirety of every individual's experience.
- We believe that hope, growth, and healing take place in a safe, welcoming and respectful environment.

Resilience

- We honor the courage, perseverance, and grit of those who deliver, receive and support our services.
- We believe individuals are defined by their strengths and they are experts in their own lives.
- We persevere through challenges and view setbacks as opportunities to redefine and refocus our work.

C. VIOLATIONS OF THE SHELTER RULES

This Handbook outlines rules and policies that have been put in place for the safety and well-being of all individuals living and working in the Shelter. Unless otherwise stated in the Handbook, Connections uses an incremental process to address behaviors that negatively impact the community and/or violate the Shelter rules*. This process provides Participants an opportunity to change their behavior and includes:

- **1st Incident:** Connections Staff will give a verbal warning to reiterate the rule or guideline that was not followed and let the Participant know what is expected moving forward.
- **2nd Incident:** Connections Staff will complete a written Learning Agreement that outlines what the issue is, what is expected of the Participant moving forward, how Staff will support the Participant, and the potential consequences of continuing the behavior. Staff will provide the Participant with a copy of the Agreement.
- **3rd Incident:** Participant will be suspended from the Shelter for 24 hours. Refusal to leave the Shelter will result in immediate dismissal.
- **4th Incident:** Participant will be dismissed from the Shelter.

* **This includes a failure or refusal to engage and participate in a meaningful way in case management services in order to identify a permanent housing solution.** {Also see CASE MANAGEMENT}

D. ZERO TOLERANCE BEHAVIORS

Connections has a “zero tolerance” policy for the following behaviors when they occur on-site, either inside the Shelter or on the exterior property, and can be substantiated. Any incident involving these offenses will result in the Participant’s immediate dismissal from the Shelter.

- 1) Possession of a weapon, regardless of whether it is used.
- 2) Physical violence toward Connections Staff, Participants, and/or other individuals involved with its programs (ie. hotel staff, volunteers).
- 3) Illegal and/or illicit activity including, but not limited to, drug dealing and sex work.

E. ATTENDANCE

Attendance is tracked daily as you pick up your meals. While meals are not required, even if you don’t want meals, you should check in with Connections Staff at least once a day so that you can be marked as being present.

With a waitlist of more than 100 individuals in need of shelter, we expect that you are taking advantage of and utilizing the bed in the Shelter that has been made available to you. If you need to be absent for more than 48 hours (ie. visit family, work), you must notify Staff before leaving the Shelter. Unexcused absences of more than 72 hours may result in your dismissal from the Shelter.

F. ON-SITE STAFF

Connections Staff are present in the Shelter at all times. Participants should address all concerns, issues, etc. with Connections Staff. If the issue needs to be escalated to the hotel staff (ie. Housekeeping, Maintenance), Connections Staff will handle doing so. {Also see TOILET PAPER + TOILETRIES.}

G. 911 CALLS

Calling 911 should be limited strictly to life-threatening emergencies. For non-life-threatening medical needs, please contact Connections Staff to determine appropriate course of action. If the staff member determines an ambulance is necessary, one will be called. If it is determined that a non-emergency transport is more appropriate, Staff will help arrange for you to get to the hospital.

H. ALCOHOL + OTHER SUBSTANCES

Alcohol is allowed in the Shelter, but may only be consumed in your room. At no time is open alcohol permitted in any common area, including the hallways, Courtyard, or anywhere outside on the shelter property. Non-prescription substances that are illicit/illegal are not allowed anywhere in the Shelter, including in individual rooms, or on the property.

I. BICYCLES

Bicycles are not permitted inside the Shelter. All bicycles must be stored outside. Connections has provided a bike rack at the back of the Shelter and installed a security camera monitoring this area. Connections will provide each Participant with one (1) bike lock, if needed. *Neither Connections nor the Margarita Inn assume responsibility for lost or stolen bicycles.*

All bikes kept on the shelter property must be registered with Staff. Any unregistered bikes are subject to removal. Please see a Connections Staff member to register your bike.

J. BUILDING ACCESS

All Participants must enter and exit the building through the Shelter's main front entrance. Use of the rear entrance, located on the 1st Floor, is strictly restricted to Participants with handicap accessibility needs who have received prior approval from Connections Management to use that entrance. Use of any of the marked emergency exit doors is strictly prohibited, except in the event of a fire alarm.

Participants are strictly prohibited from entering the Kitchen or rear balconies at any time. Participants are also not permitted to enter the Parlor, Library, or Rooftop without being accompanied by Connections Staff.

Because unauthorized entry and exit from the building creates a serious security risk for everyone, repeated unauthorized entry and/or exit from any entrance other than the main entrance may result in dismissal from the Shelter.

K. CASE MANAGEMENT

The Case Management office is located on the 1st Floor in Room 107. All Participants residing in the Shelter will be assigned a Shelter Case Manager and will be transitioned from the Case Manager(s) who they were previously working with. All Participants of the Shelter program are required to engage in regular sessions with their assigned Case Manager to identify, and work towards, a permanent housing solution.

Shelter Case Managers are available to assist Participants from Monday through Friday during normal business hours. Accommodations can be made for Participants who are not able to meet with their Case Manager during regular business hours. If this is the case for you, let your Case Manager know so they can make arrangements to meet at a time that works for you.

L. CHILD SUPERVISION

All Staff members at Connections are mandated reporters and are required by law to make a report of the following concerns:

- Suspected abuse or neglect of a child
- Suspected abuse or neglect of a senior, elderly person or an individual with a disability
- If we believe you or someone in your household could become a harm to yourself or others, we will help you get to the hospital for a psychiatric assessment and support you through this process

The Illinois state laws, which Connections abides by, around children being left unattended are:

- Children under the age of 12 cannot be left unattended.
- If a child under the age of 12 is left by their parent/guardian, they must be left with someone over the age of 15. Any caretaker over the age of 15 must be awake while caretaking.

Additionally, it is Connections' policy that **NO children (ages 17 and younger) may be left alone OVERNIGHT (11:00pm - 7:00am).**

If a child on the premises is put in a situation that jeopardizes his/her safety, Connections Staff are required by law to file a report with child protective services.

Because of the nature of staying in a hotel setting, where children can easily leave the room on their own and face threats to their safety, these guidelines must be followed at all times. **Leaving your child(ren) includes coming down to microwave food or going outside for a cigarette. Your child(ren) should be with you at all times or following the age guidelines above.**

It is also Connections' policy that children under age 12 are not permitted to wander around the Shelter unsupervised, this includes running "errands" within the hotel to get food, etc. Children of any age are not permitted in the Courtyard at any time without their parent/guardian present.

If you are having childcare issues or other challenges, please speak with your Case Manager.

M. CLOTHING CLOSET + HAIR CUTS

Participants in the Shelter may sign up to visit Hilda's Place on Thursdays to access the Clothing Closet and/or get a haircut. Participants must sign up for an appointment in advance. Walk ups will not be accepted. Please see Connections Staff at the Shelter to schedule an appointment.

N. COMPUTERS + WIFI

A computer for Participant use is located in the Lobby. Rules regarding its use are posted at the desk and will be enforced. The Shelter is equipped with WIFI. Connectivity to the network may vary throughout the building and is beyond the control of Connections.

Network: Margarita Guest Passcode: Inn1566

O. COURTYARD

Use of the Courtyard is a privilege. The Courtyard is intended to be used for short-term use, no longer than 15 minutes. Capacity limits for the space are posted on the door and are enforced at all times. Playing music, etc on phones/speakers is not allowed at any time. Food and beverages are not allowed in the Courtyard. All garbage is to be properly disposed of. Repeated violation of the Courtyard rules may result in suspension of access to this space and/or further disciplinary action.

P. CURFEW + QUIET HOURS

For everyone's safety, a curfew will be in effect daily from 11:00pm – 5:00am. During this time, Participants may exit the Shelter at any time, however entry into the building is at the discretion of Connections Staff.

Quiet hours are in effect throughout the Shelter from 10:00pm – 8:00am daily. This applies inside the building, as well as in the Courtyard.

Q. ELEVATORS + STAIRS

The Shelter is equipped with an elevator servicing all floors. Due to its limited size, no more than 2 individuals or 1 family may occupy the elevator at any time. Please use great care when using the elevator and do not force the doors and/or gate open. If you need instruction on how to operate the elevator, please contact a Connections Staff member.

Participants may only use the main stairwell for accessing their assigned floor. The North Stairs are only to be used in the event of an emergency. {Also see BUILDING ACCESS.}

R. FIRE ALARM

In the event of a fire alarm, please proceed to the nearest stairs and exit the building. Do not use the elevator. Once outside, all Participants should gather across the street in front of The King Home (1555 Oak Ave). Connections Staff will let you know when it is safe to come back inside the Shelter.

S. HOUSEKEEPING

Maintaining a clean living environment is essential for not only your own health and well-being, but that of everyone living and working in the Shelter. Each Participant is responsible for ensuring that his/her/their room is kept in a clean and sanitary condition.

Once a week, the Housekeeping staff will visit your room – please see the Housekeeping Schedule (Appendix 1). To ensure the care of the rooms and Shelter property, housekeeping is not an optional service.

At your assigned time, Connections Staff will come to your door and ask you to step out of the room while the Housekeeping staff complete the weekly cleaning. If you are not in your room at the assigned time, Housekeeping will still enter the room. Each week, Housekeeping will exchange bed linens and remake the bed(s), exchange bath towels, disinfect the bathroom, and vacuum the carpet.

In preparation for Housekeeping each week, Participants should not remove bed linens from the bed, but should remove all personal items from on and/or around the bed.

Participants should not remove bed linens from the bed. At no time are any Shelter linens, both bedding or bath, to be placed in the hallway or removed from the room. Shelter linens are not to be put in your laundry bag with clothes and sent out for cleaning. {Also see LAUNDRY.}

Please note that bed linens and towels will only be replaced once a week at your assigned time. If you have an urgent need for your linen to be replaced at any other time, please contact a Connections Staff member to make arrangements.

Connections staff also reserve the right to conduct room checks as needed to ensure that the room is in good condition and sanitary.

T. ITEMS NOT ALLOWED IN THE SHELTER

For the health and safety of everyone living and working in the Shelter, the following items are expressly prohibited from being in the building. Having any of these items in your possession or in your room may result in dismissal from the Shelter. Connections Management reserves the right to determine that items, beyond the list below, are not permitted in the Shelter.

- Candles, Incense, and/or Sterno
- Gasoline, Lighter Fluid, and/or Other Accelerants
- Glitter
- Grills
- Hot Plates + Pressure Cookers
- Motor Oil
- Paint
- Propane
- Space Heater
- Weapons (including but not limited to: Guns* and Knives with a blade longer than 3")

*** The possession of a weapon will result in the immediate dismissal from the Shelter. Connections Management reserves the right to search a room at any time if there is cause to believe a weapon is present.**

U. LAUNDRY

Laundry service is provided once a week. Your dirty laundry should be placed in the grey, numbered laundry bag you were assigned upon moving into the Shelter. Bags should be drawn tight and placed outside your door between 8:00p – 11:00p on the assigned night. Late laundry will not be accepted and must wait until the following week.

4th + 5th Floors

Pick Up: Sunday night | **Returned:** Tuesday afternoon

1st, 2nd + 3rd Floors

Pick Up: Tuesday night | **Returned:** Thursday afternoon

If you are not in your room when laundry is returned, Connections Staff will key into your room and leave the bag just inside your door.

At no time are hotel linens (towels, bedding, etc) to be sent with laundry or taken out of the building. Do not put these items in your laundry bag.

Neither Connections nor its laundry vendor are responsible for lost or damaged items.

V. LOITERING + GATHERING OUTSIDE

Loitering and/or gathering outside the Shelter, in both the front or the rear, is prohibited. At all times, the public sidewalks and those leading to and from the building must be clear for people to walk by. {Also see SMOKING.}

W. MAIL

If you receive your mail at Connections, it will be delivered to your room on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. If you are not present in your room at the time of delivery, the mail will be returned to the Operations Office (Rm 108) and you may pick it up at your convenience from Connections Staff. Mail will not be left under your door.

Participants are not to go to Connections' Main Office or Hilda's Place to pick up mail. Mail and/or packages are not to be mailed directly to the Shelter.

If you are not currently receiving your mail at Connections, but would like to, please see your Case Manager for further instruction.

X. MASKS

To protect everyone's health and safety, and because we have individuals living and working in the Shelter who are at high risk, **we continue to require the wearing of face masks at all times by anyone over the age of 2 when you are outside your room. Absolutely no exceptions will be permitted. Bandanas, scarves, face wraps, and/or neck gaiters are not acceptable.**

Masks are to be properly put on BEFORE you walk out of your room and BEFORE you walk into the Shelter from outside. Masks must be on to run down the hall for ice or to throw away garbage.

If you lose your mask, please contact Connections Staff. Safeguard and take good care of your mask.

Repeated failure to comply with wearing your mask will result in dismissal from the Shelter.

Y. MEALS

Connections partners with Volunteers and organizations throughout the city to provide you with three meals a day. Meals will be served on the 1st Floor during the following times:

Breakfast (8:30a – 10:00a)

Lunch (12:30p – 2:00p)

Dinner (5:45p – 7:15p)

After picking up your meal, you must return to your room to eat it. Meals may not be eaten in the common areas, including the Lobby, Courtyard, or hallways.

Still hungry? If you'd like an extra meal, you are welcome to check with Connections Staff to see if there are any leftover meals from the prior day available. To ensure that everyone has an opportunity to receive a meal, we are unable to provide you with an additional serving of the current day's meal.

Connections provides each Participant with a cup when he/she/they move into the Shelter, which can be brought to Dinner to receive lemonade with the meal. No other cups or containers may be used to receive the beverage.

Z. MICROWAVES + REFRIGERATORS

All rooms are equipped with a refrigerator. Refrigerators are to be kept clean and food should be regularly thrown away to keep from spoiling and/or developing mold. Refrigerators are not to be moved or unplugged.

Microwaves are available 24/7 on the 1st and 2nd Floors. You must remain at the microwave while your food is cooking. If your food creates any mess inside the microwave, please clean it out. All trash and debris are to be cleaned off the countertop and properly disposed of. At no time are any metal objects (ie. coffee travel mugs, aluminum foil containers) to be placed inside the microwave.

AA. PARKING

Connections and the Margarita Inn are unable to provide on-site parking for Participants who have vehicles. Street parking is available on the surrounding streets. Please pay close attention to parking restrictions, including time limits and street sweeping. Participants are solely responsible for any parking tickets they received while staying at the Shelter; Connections will not pay for tickets.

BB. PERSONAL PROPERTY

Participants are responsible for the safe storage of their own personal property. Neither Connections nor the Margarita Inn accept responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property. If a Participant believes their personal property has been stolen, he/she/they should inform Connections Staff. Connections will not search rooms for allegedly stolen property unless a Connections Staff member witnessed the theft or it was captured on a security camera. In such instances, Participants will be redirected to file a police report for the property.

Connections strongly discourages the loaning and borrowing of money and/or property between Participants. Participants are not to solicit Staff members.

CC. PEST CONTROL (Ants, Bed Bugs, etc.)

Please review the Connections' Pest Policy at the end of this handbook (Appendix 2).

DD. PETS

Animals of any kind are strictly prohibited from the Shelter, unless authorized in writing by Connections Management before the Participant moves into the Shelter.

EE. PHOTO DIRECTORY

In lieu of issuing ID Badges to Participants, all adult Participants residing in the Shelter will have a headshot taken upon moving into the Shelter so that Connections can maintain a photo directory of Participants. Photos will not be used or shared publicly in any way. Photos must clearly show each Participant's face – sunglasses, hats, etc must be removed.

FF. ROOM INSPECTIONS

Connections Staff will routinely enter Participant rooms, typically in conjunction with scheduled housekeeping, to visually inspect the cleanliness of the room, condition of the furniture, etc. Connections Management reserves the right to enter a room at any time if there is believed to be a health or safety issue within the room.

GG. SMOKING

Smoking is not allowed inside of the Shelter **at any time**. Smoking inside the Shelter and/or tampering with or disabling smoke detectors can lead to immediate dismissal from the Shelter.

Smoking is permitted 24/7 in the Courtyard, which can be accessed near the main entrance. Participants smoking in the Courtyard must remain 15' front the doors and at least 6' from any other individuals in the Courtyard. Repeated failure to social distance while in the Courtyard will result in a Participant's loss of access to this area. All cigarette butts are to be properly disposed of in the provided receptacles. {Also see COURTYARD.}

Participants are not permitted to smoke anywhere else on the Shelter property, including in front, behind or along the side of the building.

HH. TOILET PAPER + TOILETRIES

Participants will be supplied with toilet paper, if needed, as part of the weekly housekeeping. If toilet paper is needed at another point during the week, please contact the Connections Staff.

Connections maintains a stock of toiletry items (ie. deodorant, toothpaste) and is happy to provide participants with toiletries, when available. Please understand that we may not always have every item available and that we may limit the quantity of an item to ensure that we have enough for all Participants in the Shelter.

II. TRASH

Participants are expected to remove trash from their room frequently, particularly leftover food and food containers. This is essential to maintaining a clean and healthy environment for everyone in the Shelter. It is also critical in helping to reduce the presence of pest, such as ants.

Participants will be provided trash bags by the Connections Staff. Large trash bins are located on each floor near the elevator. Participants should bag their room trash and then place their individual bag of trash in the trash bin. Connections Staff will routinely empty the large bins.

At no time are bags of trash to be placed in the hallway. If the large trash bin is full, please contact the Connections Staff so that it can be emptied.

JJ. VISITING OTHER ROOMS/PARTICIPANTS

Participants are not to be in any Participant's room other than their own at any time or on a different floor (other than common areas) from their assigned room. Repeated violation of this rule will result in dismissal from the Shelter.

Participants not residing in the Congregate Room are prohibited from entering the Congregate Room and/or Room 106 at any time.

KK. VISITORS + OUTSIDE SERVICE PROVIDERS

There will be no visitors or guests allowed at any time in the Shelter. This includes children, grandchildren, and/or partners who are not determined to be a part of the Participant's household at the time of moving into the Shelter.

The only exception to this rule is in the case of a child custody change. In the event that there is a custody change and you are now in custody of your child(ren), you must speak to a Case Manager at least 48 hours before bringing your child(ren) to the Shelter. Any change to the number of occupants in a room must be approved in advance by Connections Management.

Participants who have caretakers or other outside service providers (i.e. in-home health aide) who need to enter the Shelter must receive approval from Connections Management at least 24 hours in advance.

APPENDIX 1: HOUSEKEEPING SCHEDULE

Each room has been assigned a 45-minute time frame during which the housekeeping will occur each week.

The actual cleaning is anticipated to take 15-20 minutes, during which time you will need to exit your room.

TUESDAY			THURSDAY			FRIDAY		
414	9:15 A	10:00 A	506	9:15 A	10:00 A	314	9:15 A	10:00 A
411	9:15 A	10:00 A	504	9:15 A	10:00 A	313	9:15 A	10:00 A
412	9:30 A	10:15 A	503	9:30 A	10:15 A	312	9:30 A	10:15 A
409	9:30 A	10:15 A	502	9:30 A	10:15 A	311	9:30 A	10:15 A
410	9:45 A	10:30 A	501	9:45 A	10:30 A	310	9:45 A	10:30 A
407	9:45 A	10:30 A	500	9:45 A	10:30 A	309	9:45 A	10:30 A
408	10:00 A	10:45 A				308	10:00 A	10:45 A
405	10:00 A	10:45 A	213	10:00 A	10:45 A	307	10:00 A	10:45 A
406	10:15 A	11:00 A	212	10:15 A	11:00 A	306	10:15 A	11:00 A
404	10:15 A	11:00 A	211	10:15 A	11:00 A	305	10:15 A	11:00 A
403	10:30 A	11:15 A	210	10:30 A	11:15 A	304	10:30 A	11:15 A
402	10:30 A	11:15 A	208	10:30 A	11:15 A	303	10:30 A	11:15 A
401	10:45 A	11:30 A				302	10:45 A	11:30 A
400	10:45 A	11:30 A	105	10:45 A	11:30 A	301	10:45 A	11:30 A
			Cong	11:00 AM	11:45 AM	300	11:00 AM	11:45 AM

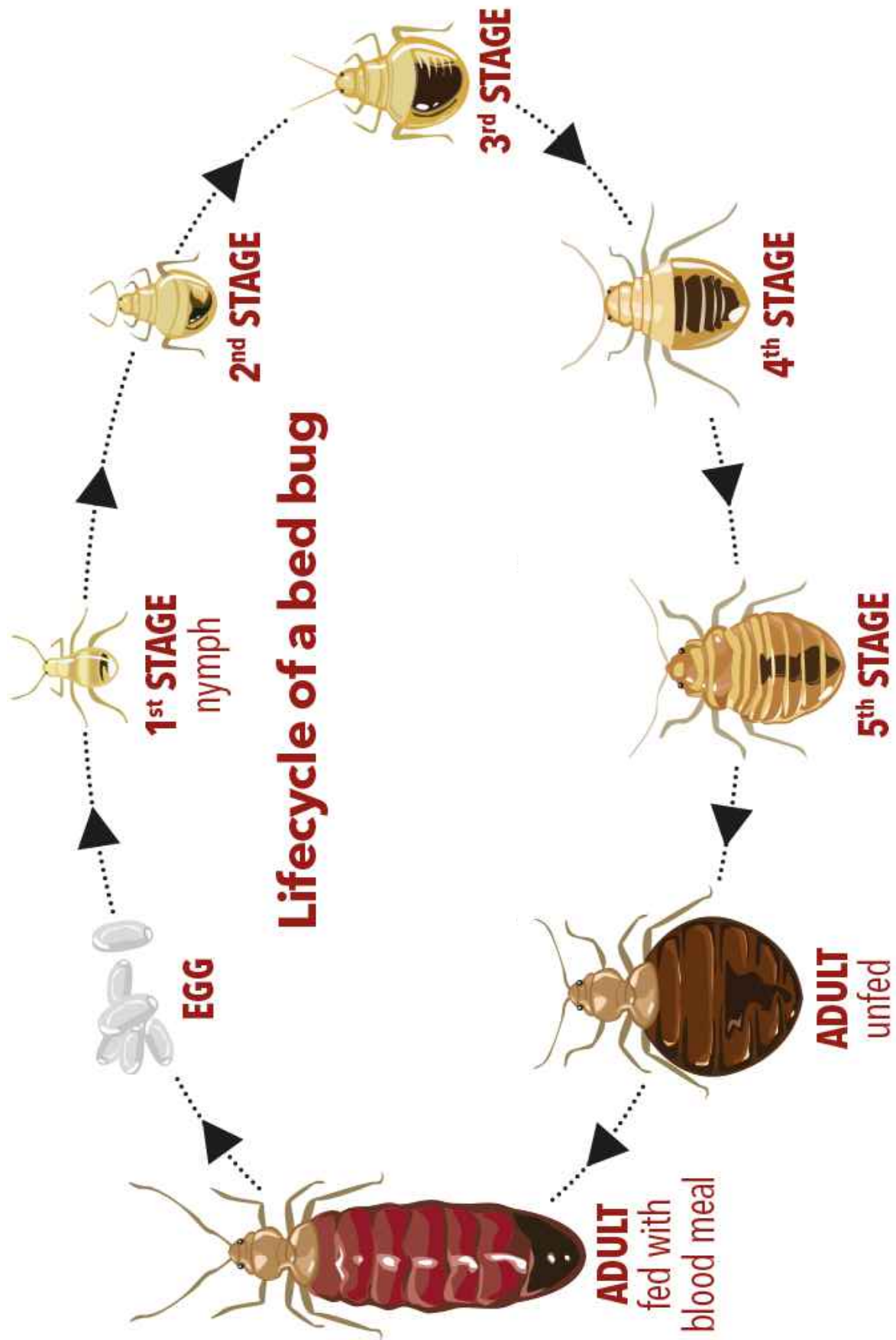
APPENDIX 2: PEST POLICY

Shelter Pest Policy + Guidelines

All Participants in Connections' Shelter are expected to follow the guidelines below as a condition of their stay in the Shelter. Failure to comply may result in dismissal from the Shelter.

- **Any indication of pests in your room is to be immediately reported to Connections Staff.** This includes, but is not limited to, bed bugs and/or ants.
- **Do not spray anything on the pests.** Connections Staff will use approved treatment products and/or methods once made aware of the pests.
- **Connections Staff will access your room weekly per the housekeeping schedule posted in each room.** During these visits, Staff will monitor for any pest issues and/or housekeeping issues that could lead to a pest problem developing in the room.
- **Regarding bed bugs:**
 - **When changing your sheets weekly, you should inspect the outer perimeter of the mattress encasement (cover),** both on the top and bottom of the mattress. *Do not open or remove the encasement at any time.* Look for castings, feces, and/or blood stains.
 - **Not everyone reacts to bites** (less than 50% of those bitten), so “no bites” doesn’t necessarily mean “no bugs.”
 - **Do NOT use bed bug sprays you can buy at the store.** Research does not recommend this. They just leave toxins in your room, send the bugs “hiding” for a bit, and then help them return even stronger which makes expert extermination even more difficult.
 - **Refer to the backside of this document for a diagram of the growth stage of a bed bug.** Note that they can look different over the course of their life cycle.

See following page for diagram of what bed bugs look like.



APPENDIX 3: INCLUSION POLICY FOR PARTICIPANTS

Inclusion Policy for Participants

You belong here! You deserve to be included and served with respect! Connections for the Homeless promises to serve all Participants fairly, and without discrimination based on any of these things:

- Your gender, gender status or gender expression
- If you're LGBTQI+
- Your race, color, tribe or ethnicity
- Your immigration, refugee or citizenship status or what country you're from
- Your income or lack of income, or source of income
- How well you read, write or speak English
- Your job status
- Your education level
- Your marital, family or partnership status
- Your religion or non-religion or personal philosophy
- Your health or mental health status
- Your physical, developmental, intellectual or emotional ability
- If you have HIV or AIDS
- If you have alcohol or drug use or addiction, or other addictions
- Your legal history
- Your veteran or military discharge status
- Your participation in the street economy
- Whether or not you follow a doctor's or therapist's medical or treatment suggestions
- Your body size
- Your age

This means when we assess your service needs and match you to programs you're eligible for, we will make decisions and provide care and services fairly and with respect.

These are some of the ways we do this:

1. We do not allow any speech, language, or behavior that is hateful or abusive for anyone who might come into our spaces. If you feel other Participants or Staff have mistreated you or made you feel bad or unsafe because of your identity, please let Staff know right away.
2. If you are transgender, genderqueer or gender non-conforming in your identity or experience, you can choose whether or not to discuss this with Staff or others. Your gender self-identity will be respected, regardless of whether you express that identity in a way others might expect. It won't matter whether you have chosen medical interventions, or changed your gender marker on your IDs. What matters is how you

identify. Staff will use your chosen name and pronouns and protect your privacy. You can work with Staff to decide what is safest for you in gendered spaces.

3. We don't need to know your immigration, refugee or citizenship status. We will not work together with ICE or any other law enforcement people, or even let them know we are serving you, unless they present an arrest warrant that is signed by a judge and names you.
4. We have these things to help you communicate with us if you need them:
 - a. TDD/TTY access
 - b. Large print forms and policies- available upon request
 - c. Language translation service
5. If you find it hard to read or write, Staff will read forms and other written things to you, or help you write on forms. We try hard to make our forms and writing easy to read and understand.
6. If you have mobility difficulties, Staff will help you decide which buildings are most accessible for you. We will send an Outreach worker as soon as possible to a mutually agreed upon location if needed.
7. Your family is your family, no matter what the ages and genders of the family members are. It's up to you to tell us who's in it, and you can stay together in the same program regardless if you're legally married, and no matter what your sexual or romantic orientation is, as long as space and housing stock make it possible to accommodate you safely.
8. You can have whatever religion or personal philosophy you want, and we don't expect you to go along with any religious activity while you're with us.
9. We really value diversity and want you to be feel safe expressing and celebrating your own culture!
10. Our programs might have rules that you can't drink alcohol or use illegal drugs on-site, but as long as you are behaving respectfully and being safe, it's your business about what you use off-site and whether or not you are intoxicated when you come to us. We do not do drug testing or keep people out because of drinking or using outside program spaces.
11. You don't need to tell us if you have HIV or AIDS, but if you do, we will protect your privacy, and it might help us find you housing faster.
12. If you feel you have been excluded or discriminated against because of your identity as listed above, you can file a complaint with Connections for the Homeless. The complaint process is below.
13. We hold everyone accountable to the same standards of inclusion and non-discrimination and anticipate that you will extend the same inclusive and non-discriminatory attitudes and behaviors toward other Participants, Connections for the Homeless agency program Staff, and program Volunteers.

Discrimination Complaint Process:

Step 1: As soon as possible after the discrimination happens, contact the Program Manager by filling out the Discrimination Complaint Form. Your worker will get you the form, and help you get the completed form to the Program Manager.

Step 2: The Program Manager will take up to 30 days to investigate your complaint by reviewing documents and talking to people who might know about the complaint. They will make a decision, and then will communicate the decision to you and others in 30 days after that.

Step 3: If you feel the Program Manager made the wrong decision, you may appeal the decision made by the Program Manager with their Supervisor. The grievance will be reviewed again and within 30 days you will be informed of the decision. This decision is final.

Discrimination complaints can also be directed to the Department of Housing and Urban Development: Chicago Regional Office: (800) 765-9372; or online at: https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/online-complaint

Inclusion / Non-discrimination policies:

Discrimination: Suburban Cook County Coordinated Entry (Entry Point) and its agencies do not discriminate in the course of assessment, matching, and referral for housing and other services on the sole basis of anyone's:

- gender, gender status or gender expression
- sexual identity or orientation
- race or color
- tribal identity or ethnicity
- immigrant or citizenship status or nationality
- income or lack of income, or source of income
- English language literacy or proficiency
- employment status
- marital, familial or partnership status
- education level
- religion or non-religion or personal philosophy
- health or mental health status
- physical, developmental, intellectual or emotional ability
- HIV serostatus
- alcohol or drug use or addiction, or other addictions
- veteran or military discharge status
- participation in the street economy
- adherence or non-adherence to medical or treatment recommendations
- physical size
- age
- alcohol or drug use or addiction, or other addictions
- veteran or military discharge status
- participation in the street economy
- adherence or non-adherence to medical or treatment recommendations
- physical size
- age

- legal history¹

We seek to serve those who have been marginalized or previously rendered service-ineligible for these or any other reasons. Therefore, we do not tolerate any speech, language, or behavior that is abusive or demoralizing to anyone who might participate in our services. We expect staff, interns, and volunteers to be vigilant in enforcing this standard.

Some programs may be required to prioritize enrollment based on regulations imposed by their funding sources and/or state or federal law. For example, a HOPWA-funded project might be required to serve only participants who have HIV/AIDS. Some programs are dedicated to veterans, youth, or survivors of domestic violence, etc. All such programs will avoid discrimination to the maximum extent allowed by their funding sources and their authorizing legislation.

All aspects of Entry Point will comply with all Federal, State, and local Fair Housing laws and regulations. Participants will not be “steered” toward any particular housing facility or neighborhood based on their race, color, national origin, religion, sex or gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or the presence of children.

The Entry Point Lead Agency conducts quarterly rotating training of staff on Coordinated Entry basic training, this Anti-Discrimination Policy and procedures, and on a wide array of cultural competency topics.

This Inclusion and Non-Discrimination policy pertains specifically to the client assessment, matching and referral processes, but it is assumed that each agency maintains an Inclusion and Non-Discrimination policy regarding their services and programs that substantially and materially echoes this policy, and this policy is not intended to circumvent or exempt an agency’s own policies.

Discrimination Complaint Process: Participants will be shown / read the Inclusion and Non-Discrimination policy as part of the standard assessment, and will sign to indicate that they have had it presented. The policy will also be posted in a visible location at all access points. The policy page will inform participants of their right to file a verbal or written Discrimination Complaint, and will contain all information needed to file the complaint.

When a Discrimination Complaint about the Entry Point process is received in verbal or written form, the Entry Point Lead Agency will complete an investigation of the complaint within 30 calendar days by attempting to contact and interview a reasonable number of persons who are likely to have relevant knowledge about the circumstances surrounding the complaint, and by collecting any documents that are likely to be relevant to the investigation. If a complaint is determined to pertain to matters outside the realm of assessment, prioritization, matching

¹ In the case that a client presents at an access point who is the subject of a Protective Order held by another client also being served at that access point, Entry Point will prioritize right of service at that location to the client holding the order. The client prohibited from proximity or contact will be referred to another Entry Point access point for assessment and/or service. If, during the course of housing matching and referral, it comes to the attention of the Entry Point Lead Team that a client has experienced abuse by their partner who would otherwise be housed together with them, the wishes of the abuse survivor regarding cohabitation will be honored. If a perpetrator of abuse cannot then be housed with their partner, they will be housed separately as an individual.

and/or referral, but is related to housing, shelter or other services of a particular agency or program, or involved complaint of mistreatment or discriminatory behavior between clients, grievances will be directed back to the appropriate agency for resolution. Within 30 days after concluding the investigation, the Entry Point Lead Agency will write a report of the investigation's findings, including a proposed decision about whether inappropriate discrimination occurred, and any action(s) recommended to prevent discrimination from occurring in the future. The findings of the investigation will be shared with the Entry Point Committee at the next scheduled meeting to finalize the decision, and will thereafter be shared with the client as soon as practicable. If necessary, the Entry Point Lead Agency may recommend that the client be re-assessed or re-prioritized for housing or services. The report will be retained on file at the Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County (Alliance) for two years. If the complainant or other parties continue to dispute the conclusion of the investigation and wish to appeal the decision, they may file an appeal through the Alliance with the Entry Point Committee within 30 calendar days after notice of the Entry Point Lead Team's determination. The Entry Point Committee will address the complaint appeal within 30 calendar days of its receipt by reviewing all relevant materials, notes and reports from the Entry Point Lead Team's investigation, and within 30 calendar days, will notify all parties of their disposition, which will be considered final.

Discrimination complaints can also be directed to the Department of Housing and Urban Development: Chicago Regional Office: (800) 765-9372; or online at: https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/online-complaint

Equal Access and Inclusion Regardless of Family Composition: Clients' designation of their familial relationships will be honored and respected, regardless of marital status, gender identity or expression, sexual or romantic orientation, age, disability, proof of legal guardianship, or any other feature of identity or circumstance. Family members will not be denied access or separated based upon these reasons, and will be accommodated together, when possible, within space limits of available shelter or housing stock.

Equal Access and Inclusion of Transgender ("trans*") and Gender Non-conforming Clients: In accordance with federal guidelines and pursuant to standard best practices, we recognize that trans* and gender non-conforming clients are among the most vulnerable who will enter our service spaces and programs. We respect the gender self-identification of all of our clients, use people's preferred names and pronouns, and invite trans* clients to consider and indicate what would be the safest arrangement for them for sleeping quarters and bathroom use. We do not consider gender markers on people's IDs, people's appearance, the gender assigned to someone at birth, or anything other than or over the person's self-identity. (In other words, regardless of how a client's gender features are read by staff or others or what her ID might say, if the client identifies as female, she may use the women's bathroom and shower and sleep in the women's section if she feels that is safest for her.) We do not ask intrusive questions about a clients' anatomy or medical business, or seek "proof" of anyone's gender status, and do not allow gossip or speculation about these things. We do not single out trans* clients for different treatment, but consider their comfort and safety to be paramount above the comfort level of cisgender (non-trans) clients, staff and volunteers. If a client feels more privacy is needed, we discreetly provide individual private shower or bathroom time for the client as much as possible. We do not, however, prescribe or demand more privacy or modesty from trans* clients than from their cisgender peers.

Access for people with disabilities: Appropriate auxiliary aids and services will be available for individuals with disabilities to ensure effective communication. The Suburban Cook Call Center has a TDD number, and each agency will utilize a TDD service as necessary to serve people who are Deaf or hard of hearing. Large type (and ability to enlarge text) versions of documents will be made available for people with visual impairments. Picture communication cards are available for those who are non-verbal. Staff will offer to assist clients in reading any forms, policies or written correspondence, and will offer to write on forms as needed.

Entry Point will ensure that individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs are able to access the Entry Point Assessment process by providing ADA accessible Access Points or arranging reasonable accommodations for mobility-impaired individuals such as assigning a Street Outreach worker or Housing Navigator to provide mobile assessment services. Marketing materials will clearly convey ADA accessible Access Points and processes.

Access for clients with limited English language literacy or proficiency: Forms and policies are to be made available in Spanish. Translation services are secured when needed to communicate with anyone whose primary language cannot be engaged by staff. Entry Point will take reasonable steps to offer process materials and participant instructions in multiple languages to meet the needs of minority, ethnic, and groups with Limited English Proficiency. Staff will offer to assist clients in reading any forms, policies or written correspondence, and will offer to write on forms as needed. The Inclusion and Non-Discrimination Policy and all other important policies and forms will be screened for literacy level using widely accepted best practices.

Cultural and Linguistic Competence: Staff use identity language chosen by clients, and do not select identity descriptors for clients during assessment. Assessments use culturally and linguistically competent questions for all persons that reduce cultural or linguistic barriers to housing and services for special populations, including LGBTQI people and families, youth, immigrants or refugees, devotees of minority religions, etc.

APPENDIX 4: GRIEVANCE POLICY, PROCEDURE + FORM

Grievance Policy + Procedure

A Grievance can be filed at any time if a Participant feels that they have been treated unfairly or would like to communicate a concern they have with Connections Staff or procedures. The procedure for submitting a Grievance is as follows:

- When a Participant would like to make a Grievance, it is asked that they complete it on the attached Grievance Form.
- The grievance can be given directly to a Case Manager or can be given to the Supervisor of whoever the Grievance is regarding. The Participant will be contacted regarding the grievance within 48 hours. If a Participant needs assistance writing the Grievance, Connections Staff can connect you with assistance.
- The Participant will be contacted with the outcome of the Grievance and any result of the Grievance will be communicated to the Participant. In some cases, there are confidential outcomes of a Grievance that cannot be shared and the Participant will be made aware of this.
- The Participant has the right to appeal the decision of a Grievance if they believe it was unfair and the Grievance will be passed to the next level manager.

For discrimination matters, please see the Inclusion Policy.



connections
FOR THE HOMELESS

2121 Dewey Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201
847.475.7070

PARTICIPANT GRIEVANCE FORM

A copy of our full Inclusion and Grievance Policy will be provided upon request.

Participant Name: _____

Date filed: ____ / ____ / ____

Best way to contact me: _____

Please describe the incident, mistreatment, or discrimination in as much detail as you can:

When did this event happen? ____ / ____ / ____

What staff and others were present or aware of the incident?

Were there any other witnesses? (If so, how can we reach them?)

What are you hoping will happen as a result of filing a complaint?

If you feel that you have been discriminated against at Connections for the Homeless, please specify how you were discriminated against:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> My gender, gender status or gender expression | <input type="checkbox"/> My physical, developmental, intellectual, or emotional ability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being LGBTQI+ | <input type="checkbox"/> My alcohol or drug use or addiction, or other addictions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My race, color, tribe, or ethnicity | <input type="checkbox"/> My legal history |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My immigration, refugee or citizenship status or nationality | <input type="checkbox"/> My veteran or military discharge status |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My income or lack of income, or source of income | <input type="checkbox"/> My body size |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My not following a doctor's or therapist's medical or treatment suggestions | <input type="checkbox"/> My participation in the street economy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How well I read, write, or speak English | <input type="checkbox"/> My religion or personal philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My job status or education level | <input type="checkbox"/> My health or mental health status, or having HIV or AIDS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My marital, family or partnership status | <input type="checkbox"/> My age |

I promise that everything I have said is true to the best of my memory:

_____ Participant Name (Print) _____ Participant Signature _____ Date

FOR PROGRAM USE ONLY

Date complaint received: ____ / ____ / ____

Findings:

Resolution:

Date participant informed of disposition: ____ / ____ / ____

Staff signature: _____

Date: _____

Staff printed name: _____

Title: _____

APPENDIX 5: TV CHANNEL LINE UP

DIRECTV RESIDENTIAL EXPERIENCE



Margarita European Inn Ascend Collection Hotel

2 CBS-WBBM HD	265 A&E HD	361 AccuWeather HD
5 NBC-WMAQ HD	269 History HD	363 GEB: Golden Eagle Broadcasting
7 ABC-WLS HD	271 Viceland HD	364 Inspiration HD
9 IND-WGN HD	274 Ovation HD	365 GOD TV
11 PBS-WTTW HD	275 QVC HD	366 Jewish Life TV
20 PBS-WYCC	276 National Geographic HD	367 World Harvest Television
23 IND-WWME	278 Discovery Channel HD	368 Hope Channel
26 CW-WCIU HD	280 TLC HD	369 Daystar
32 FOX-WFLD HD	281 MotorTrend HD	370 EWTN
38 ION-WCPX	282 Animal Planet HD	371 Hillsong Channel
44 TMO-WNSN HD	285 Investigation Discovery HD	372 TBN
50 MNT-WPWR HD	289 Disney Junior HD	373 The Word
56 PBS-WYIN HD	290 Disney Channel (East) HD	374 BYU TV
60 UMA-WXFT HD	291 Disney Channel (West)	375 Link TV
62 IND-WJYS	292 Disney XD HD	376 Christian Television Network
66 UNI-WGBO HD	293 BabyFirstTV	377 TCT Network
100 DirecTV Cinema Screening Room	296 Cartoon Network (East) HD	378 NRB Network
202 CNN HD	297 Cartoon Network (West)	379 Uplift
204 Headline News HD	299 Nickelodeon/Nick at Nite (East) HD	380 Impact
206 ESPN HD	300 Nickelodeon/Nick at Nite (West)	388 JBS
207 ESPNNews HD	301 Nick Jr HD	401 Aqui
208 ESPNU HD	303 TeenNick	402 Univision HD
209 ESPN2 HD	304 TV Land HD	404 Galavision HD
214 MAVTV HD	311 Freeform HD	447 ONCE Mexico
219 Fox Sports 1 HD	312 Hallmark Channel HD	448 Enlace
226 Shop LC	313 Jewelry Television Network	461 HITN TV
228 Gem Shopping Network	315 QVC 2	501 HBO HD
229 HGTV HD	316 EVINE	502 HBO2 East HD
231 Food Network HD	319 NEW Channel	503 HBO Signature East HD
236 E! Entertainment Television HD	321 Russia Today TV	504 HBO West HD
237 Bravo HD	327 CMT HD	505 HBO2 West HD
238 REELZ Channel HD	329 BET HD	506 HBO Comedy HD
239 Audience Network HD	331 MTV HD	507 HBO Family East HD
240 HSN HD	332 MTV2	508 HBO Family West
241 Paramount HD	335 VH1 HD	509 HBO Zone East HD
242 USA Network HD	340 AXS HD	511 HBO Latino HD
244 Syfy HD	344 Son Life Broadcasting Network	515 Cinemax East HD
245 TNT HD	345 RFD-TV HD	516 Cinemax West HD
246 truTV HD	347 OAN HD	517 MoreMax HD
247 TBS HD	348 Free Speech TV	519 ActionMax HD
248 FX HD	349 Newsmax	520 5StarMax HD
249 Comedy Central HD	350 C-SPAN	521 MovieMax HD
252 Lifetime HD	351 C-SPAN2	522 ThrillerMax HD
254 AMC HD	353 Bloomberg Television HD	523 Cinemáx HD
256 TCM HD	355 CNBC HD	557 Sundance HD
259 FXX HD	356 MSNBC HD	565 Hallmark Movies & Mysteries HD
260 WE: Women's Television HD	359 Fox Business Network HD	604 Pursuit Channel HD
264 BBC America HD	360 Fox News Channel HD	



SHELTER RESIDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

2121 Dewey Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201
847.475.7070

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of Connections' Shelter Resident Handbook (*revised 11.01.2021*). I understand that receipt of this Acknowledgement is a requirement for me to be a Participant in Connections' Shelter.

I understand that it is my responsibility to read and abide by the policies and procedures outlined within this Handbook. Furthermore, I understand that it is my responsibility to contact Connections Staff with any questions or concerns I have about the Shelter policies and procedures.

I understand that Connections reserves the right to amend, add, and retract its policies and procedures as deemed necessary for the health, safety, and well-being of Participants, Staff, and the Community. When possible, these changes will be communicated to me in writing in advance of their implementation.

Participant Name (PRINT): _____

Participant Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Phone Number: _____

Laundry Bag: _____

Staff Initials: _____