

THE WILLIAM S DAVIES HOMELESS SHELTERS, INC.
EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

February 2026



Comprehensive Guide to Shelter Operations,
Guest Services, and Organizational Standards

Revised: February 2026

This document has been redacted for public portfolio use. Pending policy decisions and facility-specific details have been generalized to protect the privacy and safety of staff and guests.

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WORK HOURS & SCHEDULES

STANDARD BUSINESS HOURS

Administrative Office Hours:

The Davies Shelters administrative office is open:

- **Monday through Friday:** 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
- **Weekends and Holidays:** Closed (administrative functions only)

Administrative staff should be available during these hours for:

- Phone inquiries and visitor reception
- Coordination with community partners and donors
- Processing donations and grant-related correspondence
- Supporting shelter operations as needed

Shelter Operating Hours

Weekend Operations (Saturday and Sunday):

Shelters are staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week on weekends
Guests may remain in the shelter throughout the day and night
Staff coverage is continuous

Weekday Operations (Monday through Friday):

Shelters are staffed from **5:00 PM to 8:00 AM**

During daytime hours (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM), guests are generally required to leave the shelter to:

- Attend work or job training programs
- Complete goals and tasks identified in case management meetings
- Attend appointments (medical, legal, social services)
- Participate in job searches and community programming

Exception for Night Shift Workers:

- Guests who work night shifts and sleep during the day are permitted to remain in the shelter

- When guests are present in the shelter during daytime hours, a staff member must be on-site
- Staff coverage for daytime guest occupancy is scheduled on an as-needed basis

SHIFT SCHEDULES

Standard Shifts

Davies Shelters operates two primary shifts to provide continuous overnight coverage:

Evening Shift:

Hours:** 5:00 PM - 1:00 AM

Duration:** 8 hours

Primary Responsibilities:**

- Guest check-in and intake procedures
- Dinner service and evening programming
- Guest support and conflict resolution
- Facility security and safety checks
- Transition to overnight shift

Overnight Shift (Night Watch):

Hours: 12:00 AM (Midnight) - 8:00 AM

Duration: 8 hours

Primary Responsibilities:

Facility security and safety monitoring
 Guest supervision and crisis response
 Breakfast preparation and service
 Morning check-out procedures
 Facility cleaning and preparation for next day

Shift Overlap:

There is a one-hour overlap (12:00 AM - 1:00 AM) between evening and overnight shifts

This overlap allows for:

Shift handoff and communication about guest needs or incidents

Coordination on any ongoing situations
 Joint facility checks

Variable and Special Schedules

Weekend Day Coverage:

- Additional staff may be scheduled for daytime hours on weekends
- Hours vary based on programming and operational needs
- Typically 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM when scheduled

Case Manager Schedules:

- Case managers typically work standard business hours but may adjust schedules to meet with guests
- Flexible scheduling accommodates guest availability and case meeting needs

Administrative Staff:

- Administrative and development staff work standard office hours (10:00 AM - 3:00 PM)
- May occasionally adjust hours for special events, board meetings, or donor cultivation activities

On-Call Requirements:

- Certain positions may have on-call responsibilities (specified in job description)
- On-call staff must be reachable by phone and able to respond to emergencies

MEAL & REST BREAKS

Legal Requirements

While Georgia law does not mandate meal or rest breaks for adult employees, Davies Shelters provides breaks to support employee wellbeing and maintain quality of care for guests.

Meal Breaks

Duration and Timing:

- Employees working shifts of 6 hours or more are entitled to ****one (1) hour unpaid meal break****
- Meal breaks should be taken approximately midway through the shift when operationally feasible
- Example timing:

Evening shift (5 PM - 1 AM): Meal break around 8:30-9:00 PM

Overnight shift (12 AM - 8 AM): Meal break around 3:30-4:00 AM

On-Site Meal Breaks:

- Staff are required to eat meals on-site
- Staff should remain in the facility during meal breaks to maintain building security
- Staff must remain available to respond to emergencies during meal breaks

Rest Breaks

Duration and Frequency:

Employees working 8-hour shifts are entitled to ****two (2) 15-minute paid rest breaks****

Rest breaks are typically scheduled:

One break during the first half of the shift

One break during the second half of the shift

Example Break Schedule (8-hour shift):

First rest break: ~2 hours into shift

Meal break: ~4 hours into shift

Second rest break: ~6 hours into shift

Rest Break Guidelines:

- Paid rest breaks are considered work time
- Employees may use rest breaks for personal needs, phone calls, or relaxation
- Rest breaks cannot be "saved up" or taken at the beginning or end of a shift

Special Considerations for Night Watch Staff

Breaks During Guest Sleep Hours:

- Night watch staff may take breaks and meal breaks while guests are sleeping
- Staff should continue to monitor the facility through periodic checks even during breaks
- Audio monitors or alert systems should remain active

Sleep Policy for Night Watch:

- Once all guests are checked in and settled for the night, night watch staff may sleep in designated staff areas
- Staff must:
 - Set alarms to wake periodically for facility checks (recommended every 1-2 hours)
 - Remain dressed and able to respond immediately to emergencies
 - Keep doors unlocked or ajar so they can hear guest needs or alarms
 - Wake for regular rounds and safety checks

Solo Overnight Staffing:

- When working alone overnight, night watch staff may not leave the building
- All breaks (meal and rest) must be taken on-site
- Staff must remain available to respond to guest needs and emergencies at all times

Break Coverage and Coordination

Multiple Staff on Duty:

- When multiple staff members are on duty, breaks should be staggered to maintain coverage
- Staff must coordinate break times with coworkers before leaving their work areas

Solo Staffing:

- Employees working alone remain responsible for facility safety during breaks
- Breaks should be taken during quieter periods when possible

Flexibility:

- Supervisors recognize that shelter operations may require flexibility in break timing

- If operational needs prevent taking a scheduled break, employees should notify their supervisor
- Breaks may be rescheduled within the same shift when necessary

TIME TRACKING REQUIREMENTS

Timekeeping System

Method:

- Davies Shelters uses ****paper timesheets**** for all hourly employees
- Timesheets are provided by the Administrative Coordinator or Operations Manager
- Employees are responsible for accurate and complete timesheet documentation

Recording Time Worked

Required Information:

Employees must record on their timesheet:

- Date of work
- Shift start time (clock in)
- Shift end time (clock out)
- Total hours worked
- Supervisor signature or initials (daily or weekly, per department practice)

Accuracy Requirements:

- Time must be recorded in ****actual minutes worked****, not rounded to scheduled shifts
- Record time to the nearest 15-minute increment (e.g., 5:00, 5:15, 5:30, 5:45)
- Do not record time before you actually begin work or after you finish work

Daily Documentation:

- Employees should complete their timesheet ****each day**** at the end of their shift
- If working a shift that spans two calendar days (e.g., midnight to 8 AM), record hours on the date the shift began

Timesheet Submission

Submission Schedule:

- Timesheets must be submitted ****every 2 weeks****
- Submission deadline: the designated deadline as communicated by the Operations Manager
- Submit timesheets to your direct supervisor. Case Managers will make sure that all timesheets are delivered to the Operations Manager by their agreed deadline

Late Submissions:

- Late timesheets may delay paycheck processing
- Employees experiencing difficulty submitting timesheets on time should contact their supervisor immediately

Supervisor Responsibilities

Review and Approval:

- Supervisors must review and approve all timesheets before submission to payroll
 - **Supervisors verify:**
 - Hours worked align with scheduled shifts
 - Meal breaks are properly recorded
 - Overtime hours (if any) were pre-approved
 - Time records are complete and legible

Corrections:

- If errors are found, supervisors will return timesheets to employees for correction
- Employees must initial any corrections made to timesheets

Timesheet Integrity

Prohibited Actions:

- Falsifying time records (recording time not actually worked)
- Recording time for another employee or asking another employee to record time for you
- Altering timesheets after supervisor approval
- Working "off the clock" (working without recording time)

Consequences:

- Timesheet falsification or fraud is grounds for immediate termination
- Employees who work off the clock without recording time may face disciplinary action

Questions or Concerns

Employees who have questions about timesheet completion or who identify errors in their recorded time should immediately contact:

- Their direct supervisor, OR
- The Operations Manager, OR
- The Executive Director

SCHEDULE CHANGES AND SHIFT COVERAGE

Staffing Pattern Responsibility

- The ****Operations Manager**** is responsible for scheduling all shelter shifts
- Schedules are created to ensure 365-day coverage of all shelter facilities
- Schedules are typically posted in advance, with adequate time for staff to plan accordingly

Requesting Specific Shifts

- The Operations Manager will, to the extent possible, coordinate requests for specific shifts
- Shift preferences should be communicated in writing to the Operations Manager
- Shift assignments are based on operational needs and cannot always accommodate individual preferences

Time Off Requests

Advance Notice Required:

- Employees must submit requests for annual leave or time off with ****at least 2 weeks' written notice****
- Submit requests to the Operations Manager
- Requests are approved based on operational needs and coverage availability

Emergency or Short-Notice Time Off:

- Employees with urgent needs (illness, family emergency) should contact their supervisor as soon as possible
- Short-notice time off may be approved at supervisor's discretion based on available coverage

Schedule Change Approval

Policy:

- ****No schedule change is permitted without approval from the Operations Manager****
- Employees may not trade shifts, adjust start/end times, or modify schedules without authorization

Requesting a Schedule Change:

1. Submit written request to Operations Manager explaining the need for change
2. Propose coverage solution if possible (e.g., coworker willing to swap shifts)
3. Await approval before making any changes
4. Document approved changes in writing

Employee Responsibility for Coverage

Finding a Replacement:

- Steps:
 1. Notify the Operations Manager of scheduling issue
 2. Operations Manager and Case Manager will work together to get the shift covered
 3. Obtain approval before finalizing any shift changes
 4. Confirm the replacement is aware of all shift responsibilities

When Coverage Cannot Be Found:

- If an employee cannot find coverage, they must notify the Operations Manager immediately
- Failure to work a scheduled shift without approved coverage may result in disciplinary action

Unexcused Absences:

- Employees who fail to report for a scheduled shift and do not follow proper absence reporting procedures may be subject to progressive discipline (see Attendance & Punctuality section)

This policy ensures safe, consistent staffing while supporting employee wellbeing and operational excellence.

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

EXPECTATIONS

Attendance Standards

Davies Shelters operates 24/7 to provide safe, consistent care for guests experiencing homelessness. Reliable attendance is essential to:

- Ensure guest safety and uninterrupted services
- Maintain adequate staffing levels at all times

- Support coworkers who depend on scheduled coverage
- Uphold the organization's commitment to the community

All employees are expected to:

- Report to work on time for all scheduled shifts
- Remain at work for the entirety of their scheduled shift
- Notify their supervisor as soon as possible if unable to work
- Follow proper procedures for requesting time off in advance

Punctuality Standards

Punctuality is critical in shelter operations. Guests depend on staff arriving on time for:

- Evening check-in procedures (5:00 PM)
- Shift handoffs between evening and overnight staff (12:00 AM - 1:00 AM)
- Morning procedures and guest departures (8:00 AM)

Late arrivals create safety concerns, place undue burden on coworkers, and disrupt daily operations.

TARDINESS

Definition of Tardiness

An employee is considered tardy when they arrive more than 5 minutes after their scheduled start time without prior supervisor approval.

Examples:

- Scheduled shift start: 5:00 PM Tardy if arrival is after 5:05 PM
- Scheduled shift start: 12:00 AM (midnight) Tardy if arrival is after 12:05 AM
- Scheduled shift start: 8:00 AM Tardy if arrival is after 8:05 AM

Reporting Tardiness

If an employee knows they will be late, they must:

1. Contact their direct supervisor immediately (call or text)
2. Provide estimated time of arrival
3. Notify any coworker who may be waiting to hand off the shift

Note: Notifying the supervisor does not excuse the tardiness but demonstrates professionalism and allows for operational adjustments.

Documenting Tardiness

- Supervisors will document all instances of tardiness
- Employees must accurately record their actual arrival time on timesheets (not the scheduled start time)
- Repeated tardiness, even when reported, is subject to progressive discipline

Progressive Discipline for Tardiness

Davies Shelters uses a progressive discipline approach for tardiness:

1st - 2nd Occurrence:

- Informal coaching conversation with supervisor
- Supervisor documents the conversation
- Employee receives verbal reminder of punctuality expectations

3rd Occurrence within 90 Days:

- ****Verbal Warning**** (documented in personnel file)
 - Meeting with supervisor to discuss:
 - Specific dates and times of tardiness
 - Impact on operations and coworkers
 - Expectations for improvement
 - Consequences of continued tardiness
- Employee acknowledges receipt of warning

5th Occurrence within 90 Days:

- ****Written Warning**** (placed in personnel file)
- Formal meeting with supervisor and/or Operations Manager
 - **Written documentation outlining:**
 - History of tardiness
 - Required improvements and timeline
 - Statement that continued tardiness may result in termination
- Employee signature required (signature indicates receipt, not agreement)

7th Occurrence within 90 Days:

- ****Final Written Warning****
- **Meeting with Operations Manager and/or Executive Director**
- Clear statement that employment is in jeopardy
- Any additional tardiness within the next 90 days will result in termination
- Employee signature required

9th Occurrence within 90 Days:

- ****Termination of Employment****
- Employment relationship ends due to chronic unreliability
- Final pay issued in accordance with Georgia law (see Separation of Employment section)

Tardiness Rolling Period

- Tardiness occurrences are tracked on a ****rolling 90-day basis****
- After 90 days from the date of an occurrence, that instance no longer counts toward progressive discipline totals
- ****Example:**** Employee is tardy on January 1. This occurrence drops off on April 1 (90 days later).

Exceptions to Tardiness Policy

Tardiness may be excused in extraordinary circumstances such as:

- Documented vehicle accident en route to work
- Extreme weather conditions creating unsafe travel (supervisor discretion)

- Family emergency requiring immediate response (documentation may be requested)

Employees must still notify their supervisor immediately in these situations. Supervisors have discretion to excuse tardiness on a case-by-case basis.

ABSENCE REPORTING PROCEDURES

Notification Requirements

When an employee must miss work, they are required to notify their direct supervisor as follows:

For Illness or Emergency:

- Notify supervisor ****as soon as possible**** before the scheduled shift start time
- Explain the general nature of the absence (illness, family emergency, etc.)
- Provide estimated return-to-work date if known

For Other Absences (Non-Emergency):

- Notify supervisor ****at least 24 hours in advance**** via email to the Operations Manager
- Explain the reason for the absence
- Propose any coverage arrangements if possible

Acceptable Methods of Notification

Employees may notify their supervisor by:

- ****Phone call**** (preferred for same-day absences)
- ****Text message**** (acceptable if supervisor confirms receipt)

If using text message:

- Send to supervisor's work phone number

- Wait for confirmation that the message was received
- If no confirmation within 30 minutes, follow up with a phone call
- Do not assume notification is complete without confirmation

Email notification is acceptable for non-emergency absences planned 24+ hours in advance but should not be used for same-day illness or emergency absences.

Who to Notify

Primary Contact:

- Employees must notify their ****direct supervisor**** first

If Supervisor is Unavailable:

- Contact the ****Operations Manager****
- Leave a voicemail with callback number and brief explanation
- Follow up via text message

Never Acceptable:

- Asking a coworker to relay the message
- Sending a message to a non-supervisor coworker
- Failing to notify anyone and assuming the absence will be understood

COVERAGE REQUIREMENTS

Employee Responsibility

As outlined in the Work Hours & Schedules section:

- Employees must notify the Operations Manager of an proposed coverage arrangement and obtain approval
- The shift must not go unstaffed

When Coverage Cannot Be Secured

If an employee cannot find coverage:

1. Notify the Operations Manager immediately
2. Provide as much advance notice as possible
3. The Operations Manager will determine next steps

Important: Making a good-faith effort to find coverage and notifying the supervisor demonstrates responsibility, even if coverage cannot be secured. Failure to try may result in the absence being classified as unexcused.

EXCUSED VS. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Excused Absences

An absence is considered excused if:

- The employee is ill or experiencing a medical emergency
- The employee has a family emergency (serious illness, death, urgent childcare issue)
- The employee notified their supervisor according to the reporting procedures outlined above
- The absence was pre-approved (scheduled time off, approved leave)

Examples of Excused Absences:

- Employee calls supervisor at 4:30 PM to report illness; scheduled shift is 5:00 PM - 1:00 AM
- Employee experiences a car breakdown and texts supervisor immediately with estimated arrival time or inability to arrive
- Employee emails Operations Manager 3 days in advance requesting a day off for a medical appointment
- Employee's child becomes ill, and employee contacts supervisor 2 hours before shift

Important: Even excused absences are documented and tracked. Excessive absences, even when properly reported, may lead to performance discussions (see Excessive Absences section below).

Unexcused Absences

An absence is considered unexcused if:

- The absence is for reasons **other than illness or emergency**, AND
- The employee **did not provide at least 24 hours' advance notice**

Examples of Unexcused Absences:

- Employee decides the night before to take a personal day and texts supervisor 2 hours before shift (not an emergency)
- Employee has a social event and calls in "sick" the morning of their shift (if supervisor suspects dishonesty)
- Employee misses a shift because they forgot they were scheduled (no notification)
- Employee takes time off for personal errands without advance approval
- Employee oversleeps and misses the beginning of their shift without calling

Note: Absences related to approved leave (vacation, bereavement, jury duty, FMLA) are not classified as unexcused absences. See the Paid Time Off and Unpaid Leave sections for more information.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE FOR UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Davies Shelters uses a progressive discipline approach for unexcused absences:

1st Unexcused Absence:

- **Verbal Warning** (documented in personnel file)

- Meeting with supervisor to discuss:
 - The circumstances of the absence
 - Proper absence reporting procedures
 - Importance of advance notice for non-emergency absences
 - Expectations going forward
- Documentation placed in personnel file

2nd Unexcused Absence within 90 Days:

- ****Written Warning****
- Formal meeting with supervisor and/or Operations Manager
 - Written documentation outlining:
 - Dates of unexcused absences
 - Impact on operations and team
 - Clear statement of attendance expectations
 - Warning that continued unexcused absences will result in termination
- Employee signature required (signature indicates receipt, not agreement)

3rd Unexcused Absence within 90 Days:

- ****Final Written Warning****
- Meeting with Operations Manager and/or Executive Director
- Clear statement that employment is in jeopardy
- Any additional unexcused absence will result in immediate termination
- Employee signature required

4th Unexcused Absence within 90 Days:

- ****Termination of Employment****
- Employment ends due to failure to meet attendance expectations
- Final pay issued in accordance with Georgia law

Unexcused Absence Rolling Period

- Unexcused absences are tracked on a ****rolling 90-day basis****
- After 90 days from the date of an unexcused absence, that instance no longer counts toward progressive discipline totals

NO-CALL / NO-SHOW

Definition

A no-call/no-show occurs when an employee:

- Fails to report for a scheduled shift, AND
- Does not notify their supervisor before the shift start time or within a reasonable time afterward

Example: Employee is scheduled to work 5:00 PM - 1:00 AM. Employee does not show up and does not call or text the supervisor at any point before, during, or after the shift. This is a no-call/no-show.

Seriousness of No-Call/No-Show

No-call/no-shows are among the most serious attendance violations because they:

- Leave the shelter unstaffed, creating ****safety risks for guests and staff****
- Force coworkers to work extended shifts without warning
- Prevent supervisors from arranging emergency coverage
- Demonstrate a lack of professionalism and accountability

Progressive Discipline for No-Call/No-Show

Due to the serious nature of no-call/no-shows, progressive discipline may be accelerated or bypassed entirely at the discretion of the Operations Manager or Executive Director.

1st No-Call/No-Show:

- ****Final Written Warning**** (may skip earlier discipline steps)

- Mandatory meeting with Operations Manager and/or Executive Director
- Clear documentation that:
 - The employee failed to report for work and did not notify anyone
 - The employee is on final warning status
 - Any additional no-call/no-show within 12 months will result in immediate termination
 - Any pattern of attendance issues may also result in termination
- Employee signature required

2nd No-Call/No-Show within 12 Months:

- ****Immediate Termination****
- Employment ends effective immediately
- Final pay issued in accordance with Georgia law

3 Consecutive Days of No-Call/No-Show:

- ****Job Abandonment**** (automatic termination)
- Considered voluntary resignation without notice
- Employee is removed from schedule and all systems access is terminated
- Final pay issued in accordance with Georgia law
- Employee is ineligible for rehire

Exceptions

In rare and extraordinary circumstances (hospitalization, incarceration, natural disaster), the Executive Director may waive the no-call/no-show designation if:

- The employee provides documentation proving they were unable to make contact
- The employee contacts the organization as soon as reasonably possible after the event
- The Executive Director determines the circumstances were truly beyond the employee's control

Employees should not assume an exception will be granted. It is always the employee's responsibility to notify their supervisor, even in emergency situations.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES (EVEN IF EXCUSED)

Monitoring for Excessive Absences

While Davies Shelters recognizes that employees may occasionally need to miss work for legitimate reasons, chronic absenteeism even when properly reported can negatively impact operations and team morale.

Supervisors will monitor attendance patterns and may address excessive absences even when all proper reporting procedures were followed.

Threshold for Performance Review

An employee who has more than 10 absences within a 12-month period (even if all absences were excused and properly reported) will be required to participate in a performance review meeting with their supervisor.

This threshold includes:

- Sick days (called in properly)
- Emergency absences (family, car trouble, etc.)
- Any other absence that results in missing a scheduled shift

This threshold does NOT include:

- Approved vacation or paid time off (PTO) requested in advance
- Approved bereavement leave
- Approved jury duty or military leave
- FMLA-protected leave

- ADA-related accommodations

Performance Review Meeting

During the performance review meeting, the supervisor will:

- Review the employee's attendance record over the past 12 months
- Discuss the reasons for absences (employee may share if comfortable)
- Assess whether there are underlying issues affecting attendance (health, transportation, childcare)
- Explore potential solutions or accommodations (schedule adjustments, referral to resources, etc.)
- Set clear expectations for improved attendance going forward
- Document the conversation in the employee's personnel file

Potential Outcomes:

- ****Continued employment with no changes:**** If absences were truly unavoidable and isolated incidents
- ****Performance Improvement Plan (PIP):**** If a pattern suggests the need for improvement, a formal PIP may be implemented with specific attendance goals
- ****Schedule modification:**** If feasible, the supervisor may work with the employee to adjust their schedule to better accommodate personal circumstances
- ****Medical documentation requirement:**** The supervisor may require medical documentation for future absences to verify ongoing health issues and explore ADA accommodations
- ****Termination consideration:**** If absences continue to exceed acceptable levels or if the employee is unable to meet attendance expectations, termination may be considered

Monitoring for Patterns

Supervisors will monitor for attendance patterns that suggest abuse or unreliability, such as:

- Frequent absences on Mondays or Fridays

- Absences immediately before or after scheduled days off, holidays, or vacation time
- Calling in sick on days when the employee requested time off but was denied
- Repeated absences on the same day of the week or during the same shift
- Absences that consistently follow late nights or weekends (based on social media posts or employee statements)

If a supervisor identifies a concerning pattern, they may:

- Meet with the employee to discuss the pattern and expectations
- Require documentation (such as a doctor's note) for future absences, even if not typically required
- Move forward with progressive discipline if the pattern suggests dishonesty or abuse of sick leave
- Consult with the Executive Director about potential termination

Important: Supervisors must exercise good judgment and fairness when evaluating patterns. Some employees may have legitimate recurring commitments (such as medical appointments that occur on the same day each month). Supervisors will consider context and give employees the opportunity to explain before taking disciplinary action.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

General Policy

Davies Shelters does not require employees to provide medical documentation (such as doctor's notes) for routine illness-related absences. The organization trusts employees to honestly report when they are too ill to work.

However, documentation may be required in the following circumstances:

When Documentation May Be Required

1. Suspected Abuse or Pattern of Dishonesty:

- If a supervisor has reason to believe an employee is abusing sick leave or providing false reasons for absences, the supervisor may require documentation (such as a doctor's note, towing bill, police report, etc.) for future absences.
- This requirement will be communicated to the employee in writing.

2. Excessive Absences Triggering Performance Review:

- During a performance review meeting for excessive absences, the supervisor may require medical documentation for future health-related absences to:
 - Verify ongoing health issues
 - Determine if ADA accommodations are appropriate

3. Extended Illness or Medical Leave:

- If an employee is absent for ****3 or more consecutive days**** due to illness, the supervisor may request a doctor's note confirming the employee was unable to work and providing a return-to-work date.
- This helps ensure the employee is medically cleared to return to work and that no accommodations are needed.

4. FMLA, ADA, or Workers' Compensation Situations:

- Documentation is always required when absences are related to:
 - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation requests
 - Workers' compensation claims
- See the Unpaid Leave section for more information on these protected leave types.

Providing Documentation

- Documentation must be submitted to the employee's supervisor or the Operations Manager within ****5 business days**** of the request (or return to work, whichever is sooner)
 - Documentation should include:
 - Date(s) the employee was unable to work
 - General reason (illness, injury, family emergency) - specific diagnosis is not required
 - Any work restrictions or accommodations needed upon return

- Employees may redact specific medical diagnoses or sensitive information; general verification of inability to work is sufficient

Confidentiality

All medical documentation and health-related information is kept strictly confidential and stored separately from general personnel files. Access is limited to:

- The employee's direct supervisor (as needed for scheduling and accommodation purposes)
 - Operations Manager
 - Executive Director
 - Authorized HR personnel (admin)

ATTENDANCE AND AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT

Important Reminder

While this policy outlines progressive discipline steps for attendance issues, Davies Shelters remains an at-will employer. This means:

- The organization reserves the right to skip steps in the progressive discipline process if circumstances warrant (such as for no-call/no-shows or serious patterns of unreliability)
- The organization may terminate employment at any time, with or without cause, with or without notice
- Nothing in this attendance policy alters the at-will employment relationship
- Employees also retain the right to resign at any time, with or without notice

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Davies Shelters recognizes that some attendance issues may stem from challenges employees are facing in their personal lives. If you are experiencing difficulties that affect your ability to maintain reliable attendance, we encourage you to:

1. Speak with Your Supervisor:

- Your supervisor may be able to adjust your schedule or provide flexibility where operationally feasible
- Supervisors can refer you to community resources for transportation, childcare, healthcare, or other needs

2. Request a Leave of Absence:

- If you need extended time away from work for medical, family, or personal reasons, you may request a leave of absence (see Unpaid Leave section)

3. Explore FMLA or ADA Accommodations:

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Contact the Executive Director to discuss your situation confidentially

4. Seek Community Resources:

- Davies Shelters can connect you with community resources for transportation assistance, childcare, healthcare access, and other services that may improve your ability to attend work regularly

The organization is committed to supporting employees while maintaining the operational reliability necessary to serve guests experiencing homelessness.

DRESS CODE & PERSONAL APPEARANCE

PURPOSE

Davies Shelters maintains a casual and inclusive dress code that allows employees to dress comfortably while maintaining a professional environment. The dress code supports:

- Employee comfort during long shifts
- A welcoming, non-intimidating atmosphere for guests
- Respect for diverse cultural and religious expressions
- Basic standards of professionalism and appropriateness

This policy applies to all employees regardless of role or position.

GENERAL DRESS STANDARDS

Casual Dress Environment

Davies Shelters operates with a casual dress code. Employees are welcome to wear:

- Jeans (clean, in good condition)
- T-shirts (with appropriate graphics or plain)
- Casual pants, khakis, or slacks
- Casual shirts, polos, or blouses
- Sweatshirts or hoodies
- Sneakers, athletic shoes, sandals, boots, or other comfortable footwear
- Shorts (weather-appropriate)
- Leggings, yoga pants, or athletic wear

The key expectations are:

- Clothing should be ****clean and in good repair**** (no excessive stains, tears, or holes)

- Clothing should be ****appropriate for a professional environment**** where you interact with guests, coworkers, and community partners
- Clothing should allow you to ****perform your job duties safely and effectively****

PROHIBITED CLOTHING AND APPEARANCE

Sleepwear and Loungewear

Employees may not wear pajamas or sleepwear while on duty.

This includes:

- Pajama pants or pajama tops
- Bathrobes or slippers designed for sleeping
- Clothing explicitly designed and marketed as sleepwear

Rationale: Even though night watch staff may sleep during their shifts after guests are settled, employees must be dressed in regular clothing that allows them to respond professionally to any situation that arises.

Note: Sweatpants, joggers, and other casual athletic wear are acceptable and are not considered sleepwear.

Offensive or Inappropriate Content

Employees may not wear clothing, accessories, or visible tattoos that display:

Profanity or Vulgar Language:

- Any curse words, slang, or language that would be inappropriate in a professional setting
- Abbreviations or symbols that represent profane language

Drug or Alcohol References:

- Images or text promoting illegal drug use
- References to marijuana, alcohol brands, or substance abuse (even in states where marijuana is legal)
- "420" references or other drug culture symbols

Violent or Threatening Imagery:

- Weapons, gore, or graphic violence
- Threatening language or imagery

Sexually Suggestive or Explicit Content:

- Sexually explicit images, language, or innuendo
- Objectifying or demeaning content

Hate Speech or Discriminatory Content:

- Symbols, language, or imagery associated with hate groups
- Content that demeans or discriminates against any protected class (race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, etc.)

Political Statements or Campaign Messaging:

- As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Davies Shelters must remain nonpartisan
- Employees may not wear clothing with political candidate names, campaign slogans, or partisan political messaging while on duty
- General civic messages (e.g., "Vote," "I Voted") are acceptable

Rationale: Davies Shelters serves a diverse population of guests with varied backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences. Offensive or divisive clothing can:

- Make guests feel unwelcome or unsafe
- Undermine the organization's commitment to dignity and respect
- Create a hostile or uncomfortable work environment for coworkers
- Jeopardize the organization's nonprofit status (in the case of political messaging)

PERSONAL HYGIENE AND GROOMING

Basic Hygiene Expectations

Employees are expected to maintain basic personal hygiene standards, including:

- Wearing clean clothing each day
- Practicing daily personal hygiene (bathing, deodorant, etc.)
- Maintaining grooming in a manner that does not create discomfort for guests or coworkers

Rationale: Employees work in close proximity to guests and coworkers, often in shared spaces. Basic hygiene supports a respectful and comfortable environment for everyone.

Addressing Hygiene Concerns

If a supervisor has concerns about an employee's personal hygiene, they will:

- Address the issue privately and respectfully with the employee
- Provide the employee an opportunity to explain any underlying circumstances (medical condition, housing instability, lack of access to laundry, etc.)
- Work with the employee to identify solutions or accommodations where appropriate
- Maintain confidentiality and dignity throughout the process

Employees who are experiencing challenges that affect their ability to maintain hygiene (such as housing instability, lack of transportation to laundry facilities, or medical conditions) are encouraged to speak with their supervisor or the Executive Director. Davies Shelters may be able to connect employees with resources or provide accommodations.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND EXCEPTIONS

Religious Expression

Davies Shelters respects and accommodates religious expression in dress and appearance. Employees may wear:

- Religious head coverings (hijab, turban, yarmulke, headscarf, etc.)
- Religious jewelry or symbols (cross necklaces, Star of David, religious bracelets, etc.)
- Clothing required by religious beliefs or practices (modest dress, specific garments, etc.)
- Religious facial hair or hairstyles (beards, uncut hair, dreadlocks, etc.)

No supervisor approval is required for religious dress or grooming. Employees are free to express their faith through their appearance.

If there are questions about whether a particular religious accommodation can be made due to safety or operational concerns, the employee should speak with the Executive Director. Davies Shelters will work to accommodate all sincerely held religious beliefs to the fullest extent possible.

Cultural Dress and Expression

Davies Shelters celebrates cultural diversity and welcomes employees to wear traditional or cultural dress, hairstyles, and accessories that reflect their heritage or identity.

This includes:

- Cultural or ethnic clothing (dashiki, sari, kimono, kente cloth, etc.)
- Hairstyles with cultural significance (locs, braids, natural hair, head wraps, etc.)
- Cultural jewelry or accessories

No supervisor approval is required. Employees are free to express their cultural identity through their appearance.

Medical and Disability Accommodations

Employees who require modifications to the dress code due to a medical condition or disability should contact their supervisor or the Executive Director to request an accommodation.

Examples may include:

- Specific footwear due to a foot or leg condition
- Compression garments for medical purposes
- Head coverings during medical treatment (e.g., chemotherapy)
- Adaptive clothing for mobility or dexterity challenges
- Temperature-regulating clothing for medical conditions

Davies Shelters will engage in an interactive process to identify reasonable accommodations that allow the employee to perform their job duties while meeting medical or disability-related needs.

Temporary Exceptions

Supervisors may grant temporary exceptions to the dress code for specific circumstances, such as:

- Participation in a community event or fundraiser where specific attire is required (e.g., volunteer t-shirts, team jerseys)
- Special organizational events (e.g., casual Friday, holiday-themed days)
- Weather emergencies or facility issues (e.g., broken heating or air conditioning)

Employees should obtain supervisor approval before assuming an exception applies.

CONSEQUENCES FOR DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

Minor Violations

If an employee arrives at work wearing clothing that violates the dress code, the supervisor will:

1. Address the issue privately and respectfully
2. Explain which aspect of the dress code was violated
3. Ask the employee to change clothing if possible (e.g., employee has a change of clothes in their car or at the facility)
4. Send the employee home to change if necessary (time away from work may be unpaid)
5. Document the conversation for personnel records

First-time minor violations (e.g., wearing a shirt with mild profanity, wearing pajama pants) will typically result in a verbal warning and an opportunity to correct the issue.

Repeated or Serious Violations

Repeated dress code violations (after prior warnings) or serious violations (e.g., wearing clothing with hate speech, sexually explicit content, or severely offensive material) may result in:

- Written warning
- Suspension (unpaid)
- Termination (in cases of egregious violations or refusal to comply)

Supervisors will use discretion and consider the severity and frequency of violations when determining appropriate consequences.

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

Clarification of Dress Code

If you are unsure whether a particular item of clothing is appropriate, you may:

- Ask your supervisor before wearing it to work

- Err on the side of caution and choose a different option

Supervisors are available to answer questions and provide guidance on dress code expectations.

Reporting Concerns

If you observe a coworker wearing clothing that you believe violates the dress code (particularly offensive content), you may:

- Report your concern to your supervisor or the Operations Manager
- Provide a description of the clothing and why you believe it is inappropriate

Supervisors will address dress code concerns discreetly and professionally.

Discrimination or Harassment

If you believe you have been subjected to discrimination or harassment related to your dress, appearance, or requests for religious, cultural, or medical accommodations, you should immediately report the concern to:

- Your supervisor (if they are not the source of the concern)
- The Operations Manager
- The Executive Director

Davies Shelters prohibits retaliation against employees who report dress code concerns or request accommodations in good faith.

SUMMARY

Davies Shelters maintains a casual, inclusive dress code that prioritizes:

- ****Comfort and practicality**** for employees working long shifts
- ****Respect and professionalism**** in interactions with guests and the community
- ****Cultural and religious expression**** for employees of all backgrounds
- ****Reasonable standards**** that maintain a welcoming environment for everyone

Key Points:

- Dress casually and comfortably (jeans, t-shirts, sneakers are all fine)
- Avoid pajamas/sleepwear and offensive content
- Maintain basic hygiene and cleanliness
- Religious, cultural, and medical accommodations are always respected
- Questions? Ask your supervisor

This policy supports our mission to create a welcoming, dignified environment for both guests and staff.

WORKPLACE SAFETY

PURPOSE

The safety of Davies Shelters staff, guests, volunteers, and visitors is a top priority. This section outlines safety expectations, injury reporting procedures, de-escalation techniques, and protocols for responding to emergencies. All employees are expected to follow these guidelines and use good judgment to maintain a safe environment.

GENERAL SAFETY EXPECTATIONS

Facility Awareness

All employees must familiarize themselves with the following safety features at their assigned shelter location:

Emergency Exits:

- Know the location of all emergency exits in the building
- Ensure emergency exits remain unblocked and accessible at all times
- Never prop open emergency exit doors except during emergency evacuation

Fire Extinguishers:

- Know the location of all fire extinguishers in the facility
- Understand how to operate a fire extinguisher (training provided during orientation)
- Report any discharged, damaged, or missing fire extinguishers to your supervisor immediately

First Aid Kits:

- Know the location of first aid kits in the facility

- Report low supplies or missing items to your supervisor
- Use first aid supplies only for their intended purpose

Security Alarms:

- Each shelter is equipped with security alarm systems
- Employees will be trained on how to arm/disarm the alarm system during orientation
- Never share alarm codes with unauthorized individuals
- Report any alarm malfunctions to the Executive Director immediately

Daily Safety Practices

Maintain a Clean and Safe Environment:

- Clean up spills immediately to prevent slips and falls
- Keep walkways, hallways, and exits clear of obstructions
- Report any facility hazards (broken equipment, damaged flooring, electrical issues, etc.) to your supervisor immediately
- Use caution when moving furniture or heavy items; ask for assistance if needed

Secure the Facility:

- Lock doors and windows as required by facility procedures
- Do not allow unauthorized individuals to enter the building
- Follow check-in procedures for all guests and visitors
- Report suspicious activity to your supervisor or law enforcement

Personal Belongings:

- Keep personal belongings (purse, wallet, phone, keys) secure and out of sight
- Do not leave valuables unattended in common areas or staff spaces
- Davies Shelters is not responsible for lost or stolen personal property

INJURY REPORTING PROCEDURES

Immediate Reporting Requirement

Any employee who sustains an injury requiring medical attention while on duty must report the injury immediately to the Executive Director.

This includes injuries such as:

- Cuts, burns, or lacerations requiring medical treatment
- Sprains, strains, or broken bones
- Injuries from physical altercations with guests
- Exposure to bodily fluids or infectious materials
- Any injury requiring a doctor's visit, emergency room care, or urgent care

Minor injuries that do not require medical attention (small scrapes, minor bruises, etc.) do not need to be reported but may be documented at the employee's discretion.

Reporting Process

Step 1: Seek Immediate Medical Attention (if needed)

- If the injury is life-threatening or requires emergency care, call 911 first
- If the injury requires medical attention but is not life-threatening, notify the Executive Director before seeking care when possible

Step 2: Notify the Executive Director

- Contact the Executive Director ****immediately**** after the injury occurs
 - **Provide details about:**
 - What happened and how the injury occurred
 - The nature and severity of the injury
 - Whether medical attention was sought or is needed
 - Names of any witnesses

Step 3: Complete Incident Documentation

- Complete an incident report form as soon as possible (within 24 hours)
 - **Provide a detailed account of the incident, including:**
 - Date, time, and location of injury
 - Description of what happened

- Names of any guests or staff involved
- Names of witnesses
- Medical treatment received (if any)

Step 4: Follow Medical Treatment Instructions

- Follow all instructions provided by medical professionals
- Keep all medical appointments related to the injury
- Provide medical documentation to the Executive Director as requested

Guest Injuries

If a guest is injured on shelter property:

- Provide immediate first aid if trained and safe to do so
- Call 911 if the injury is serious or the guest requests emergency medical attention
- Notify your supervisor and the Executive Director as soon as possible
- Document the incident in detail, including witness statements
- Do not admit fault or liability on behalf of Davies Shelters

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Workers' Compensation Insurance Coverage

Davies Shelters maintains workers' compensation insurance to cover employees who are injured while performing job duties. Workers' compensation provides:

- Coverage for medical expenses related to work injuries
- Partial wage replacement if the injury prevents you from working
- Compensation for permanent disability (in qualifying cases)

Filing a Workers' Compensation Claim

If you sustain a work-related injury requiring medical attention:

1. Notify the Executive Director immediately (as outlined in Injury Reporting section above)
2. The Executive Director will contact the workers' compensation insurance provider to initiate the claim process and obtain instructions for filing
3. Follow all instructions provided by the insurance company, which may include:
 - Seeking treatment from an approved medical provider
 - Completing claim forms
 - Providing medical records and documentation
 - Attending independent medical examinations (if required)
4. Submit all paperwork to the Administrative team unless otherwise specified by the insurance provider
 - Administrative staff will manage the claim documentation and communication with the insurance company
 - The Executive Director will coordinate with you regarding claim status and next steps

Employee Responsibilities

- Report all work-related injuries immediately, even if they seem minor at first
- Attend all required medical appointments and follow treatment plans
- Keep Davies Shelters informed of your recovery status and ability to return to work
- Provide requested documentation (medical records, receipts, claim forms) in a timely manner
- Do not sign any settlement agreements or releases without understanding your rights (consult with an attorney if needed)

Return to Work

- Employees may return to work when medically cleared by their treating physician

- Provide a written return-to-work release from your doctor to the Executive Director
- Davies Shelters will make reasonable accommodations for work restrictions when operationally feasible
- If you are unable to return to your previous role due to injury, the Executive Director will work with you to explore alternative positions or accommodations

PERSONAL SAFETY PROTOCOLS WHEN WORKING WITH GUESTS

Understanding the Population We Serve

Davies Shelters serves individuals experiencing homelessness who may be dealing with:

- Trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Mental health conditions
- Substance use disorders
- Medical conditions and chronic pain
- Frustration, fear, and uncertainty about their situation

Trauma-informed care recognizes that many guests have experienced significant trauma. Staff interactions should prioritize:

- Safety and trust
- Choice and empowerment
- Collaboration and respect
- Recognition that behaviors often stem from trauma responses, not malicious intent

De-Escalation Principles

De-escalation is the use of verbal and non-verbal techniques to reduce tension and prevent a situation from escalating to violence or crisis.

Core Principles:

1. Stay calm - Your calm demeanor can help calm the other person
2. Show respect - Treat the person with dignity, even in conflict
3. Listen actively - Let the person express their concerns without interruption
4. Offer choices - Give the person some control over the situation
5. Set clear boundaries - Be firm but kind about expectations and consequences

Non-Verbal De-Escalation Techniques

Your body language is more important than your words, especially when someone is escalated.

DO:

- ****Maintain a calm, neutral facial expression**** - Avoid looking angry, scared, or judgmental
- ****Use an open stance**** - Keep your hands visible and at your sides (not crossed or in pockets)
- ****Give personal space**** - Stand at least 3-4 feet away; do not crowd or corner the person
- ****Position yourself at an angle**** - Stand slightly to the side rather than directly facing the person
- ****Stay at or below eye level**** - Sit down if the person is sitting; avoid "looming over" them
- ****Use slow, deliberate movements**** - Quick movements can be perceived as threatening
- ****Maintain soft eye contact**** - Brief, natural eye contact shows you're engaged without being confrontational

DO NOT:

- Point fingers or make aggressive gestures

- Invade the person's personal space
- Block exits or escape routes (for either of you)
- Touch the person unless absolutely necessary for safety
- Stare intensely or make prolonged eye contact
- Cross your arms or put hands on hips (appears defensive or authoritative)

Verbal De-Escalation Techniques

Tone of Voice:

- Speak in a ****calm, even tone**** - Avoid sounding angry, condescending, or overly cheerful
- Keep your ****volume low to moderate**** - Raising your voice will escalate the situation
- ****Slow down your speech**** - Fast talking can increase anxiety
- Use a ****low pitch**** - Higher-pitched voices can sound more anxious or aggressive

What to Say:

1. Acknowledge Their Feelings (Empathy)

- "I can see you're upset."
- "That sounds really frustrating."
- "I understand why you'd be angry about that."
- "It makes sense that you're feeling this way."

2. Ask Open-Ended Questions (Engagement)

- "Can you tell me more about what happened?"
- "What can I do to help right now?"
- "What would make this situation better for you?"
- "Help me understand what you need."

3. Offer Choices (Control)

- "Would you like to sit down and talk about this, or would you prefer some time alone first?"

- "You can stay here and we can work this out, or you can take a walk to cool down. What feels better to you?"
- "I can help you with this now, or we can talk about it in the morning. What works for you?"

4. Set Boundaries Calmly (Limits with Respect)

- "I want to help you, but I need you to lower your voice so we can talk."
- "I hear what you're saying, but I can't allow yelling in the shelter. Let's take a minute to calm down."
- "I understand you're angry, but if you continue to threaten me, I'll need to call for assistance."

5. Use Collaborative Language (Partnership)

- "Let's figure this out together."
- "We're on the same team here."
- "I want to help you solve this problem."
- "What can we do to make this work?"

What NOT to Say:

Avoid:

- "Calm down" or "Relax" (dismissive and often makes things worse)
- "You need to..." or "You have to..." (sounds controlling)
- "That's just the rule" without explanation (feels arbitrary)
- "I don't have time for this" (dismissive)
- Sarcasm or humor (can be misinterpreted as mocking)
- Comparisons to other guests (e.g., "No one else has this problem")
- Threats or ultimatums unless absolutely necessary

Recognizing Warning Signs of Escalation

Watch for these verbal and physical cues that someone is becoming escalated:

Verbal Warning Signs:

- Raised voice or yelling
- Cursing or name-calling

- Rapid or pressured speech
- Making threats (even vague ones)
- Repetitive statements or questions
- Demanding or entitled language

Physical Warning Signs:

- Pacing or restless movement
- Clenched fists or jaw
- Tense body posture
- Invading personal space
- Pointing or aggressive gestures
- Sudden movements or throwing objects
- Sweating, red face, or rapid breathing
- Eyes darting or intense staring

If you notice these signs, take immediate action to de-escalate before the situation worsens.

Practical De-Escalation Steps

Step 1: Recognize the Escalation

- Notice the warning signs early
- Acknowledge to yourself: "This person is escalating"

Step 2: Assess Your Safety

- Can you safely stay in the situation?
- Do you have an escape route?
- Is anyone else in danger?

Step 3: Stay Calm and Regulate Your Own Response

- Take a deep breath
- Lower your shoulders and relax your body
- Remind yourself: "This is not personal. They are struggling."

Step 4: Give Space

- Step back 3-4 feet

- Position yourself at an angle (not directly facing)
- Do not block exits

Step 5: Use Your Voice

- Lower your voice and slow your speech
- Acknowledge their feelings: "I can see you're really upset."
- Ask what they need: "How can I help?"

Step 6: Offer Choices

- "Would you like to sit down and talk, or take a few minutes alone?"
- "We can talk about this now, or we can revisit it later when things are calmer."

Step 7: Set Boundaries (if needed)

- "I want to help, but I need you to stop yelling."
- "If you continue to threaten me, I will need to call for backup."

Step 8: Call for Assistance (if situation does not improve)

- See "When to Call for Backup" section below

When De-Escalation Is Not Working

If the situation continues to escalate despite your efforts:

- ****Do not put yourself at risk trying to de-escalate****
- ****Call for backup immediately**** (see next section)
- ****Create distance**** between yourself and the escalated person
- ****Remove other guests from the area**** if possible
- ****Do not attempt to physically restrain or control the person**** unless you or others are in immediate danger

WHEN TO CALL FOR BACKUP

Calling Another Staff Member

Always call for backup (another staff member) when:

Before Difficult Conversations:

- You need to discharge a guest or enforce serious consequences
- You are addressing a serious rule violation
- You anticipate the conversation may become confrontational

During Escalating Situations:

- A guest is verbally agitated and showing signs of escalation
- A guest is pacing, yelling, or displaying aggressive body language
- You feel uncomfortable or unsafe in any way
- An argument is occurring between guests

Anytime You Feel It's Needed:

- Trust your instincts - if something feels off, call for backup
- It is always better to have support and not need it than to be alone in an unsafe situation

How to Call for Backup:

- ****Call or text a coworker**** on their cell phone
- ****Use the facility phone**** to call another staff member
- If no one is available on-site, contact your supervisor or the Operations Manager

Guest-Related Situations Requiring Backup

Two-Person Situations (Best Practice When Feasible):

While Davies Shelters recognizes that staffing constraints may not always allow for a second staff member to be present, it is best practice to have two staff members present when:

1. Disciplinary or Discharge Conversations

- Informing a guest they must leave the shelter
- Addressing serious rule violations that may result in consequences
- Having performance or behavior discussions with a guest

Why: Safety (guest may become aggressive) and protection from false accusations for both parties

2. Handling Guest Money, Medications, or Valuables *(if applicable)*

- Assisting a guest with storing or retrieving cash, valuables, or medications
- Conducting property inventories

Why: Protects staff from theft accusations

3. Behind-Closed-Door Meetings

- One-on-one case management meetings or counseling sessions in private offices

Why: Protects both staff and guests from false accusations

Best Practice: When feasible, conduct meetings with the door open, in view of a window, or with another staff member nearby

4. Transporting Guests

- Driving guests to appointments, events, or other locations

Why: Safety and liability protection

Best Practice: When feasible, have two staff members in the vehicle OR ensure guest sits in the back seat

5. Providing Personal Care *(if applicable)*

- Assisting with medication administration, wound care, or personal hygiene needs

Why: Liability and false accusation protection

6. Property Searches *(if applicable)*

- Searching a guest's belongings, bed area, or room

Why: Witness protection for legal compliance

Important Note: These are recommended best practices when operationally feasible. Davies Shelters recognizes that limited staffing may make it impossible to have two staff members present at all times. Use good judgment:

- ****Prioritize safety**** - if a situation feels unsafe, do not proceed alone
- ****Document when working alone**** - note in your records when you handled a sensitive situation solo
- ****Inform your supervisor**** - let them know when you've had to handle high-risk situations alone so they can address staffing if possible

WHEN TO CALL LAW ENFORCEMENT

Situations Requiring Police Response

Call 911 or local law enforcement immediately when:

1. Weapons Present

- A guest has a weapon (knife, gun, improvised weapon)
- You see or suspect someone is carrying a weapon
- A weapon is brandished or used to threaten

2. Physical Assault

- Physical violence is occurring or about to occur
- Someone has been physically assaulted
- A guest threatens imminent violence against themselves, staff, or others

3. Threats to Harm Self or Others

- A guest makes credible threats to harm themselves
- A guest makes credible threats to harm staff, other guests, or people outside the shelter
- A guest is exhibiting signs of severe mental health crisis that poses immediate danger

4. Drug Dealing on Property

- You witness drug sales or distribution
- You have reasonable suspicion that dealing is occurring on shelter property

5. Guest Requests Police

- A guest asks for police to be called for their own protection
- A guest wants to file a police report

6. Trespassing

- A banned or discharged guest refuses to leave the property
- An unauthorized person refuses to leave after being asked
- Individuals are loitering on property after being asked to leave

7. Theft or Destruction of Property

- Major theft of organizational or guest property
- Intentional destruction or vandalism of shelter property

8. Medical Emergency *(if EMS is unavailable or police assistance is needed)*

- A guest is unresponsive or in medical distress
- Overdose suspected (call 911 for EMS; police may respond as well)

What to Tell the 911 Dispatcher

When calling 911, provide:

- ****Your location**** (shelter address and specific area if possible)
- ****Nature of emergency**** ("We have a guest with a knife threatening staff" or "A guest is refusing to leave after being discharged")
- ****Description of the person**** (physical description, clothing, location in building)
- ****Whether anyone is injured****
- ****Your name and callback number****

Stay on the line until the dispatcher tells you it's safe to hang up.

After Calling Police

- ****Remove yourself and others from immediate danger**** if possible
- ****Do not attempt to physically restrain or control the person**** unless you or others are in imminent danger of serious harm
- ****Stay available**** to speak with officers when they arrive
- ****Provide factual information**** about what you witnessed
- ****Document the incident**** after police leave (incident report)
- ****Notify the Executive Director**** as soon as possible

Police as Partners

Law enforcement officers are partners in maintaining safety at Davies Shelters. When appropriate police involvement occurs:

- Officers are generally respectful and professional with guests
- Davies Shelters values collaboration with local police to address safety concerns
- Staff should call police when needed without hesitation or guilt

However, police should not be called for:

- Minor rule violations that can be handled by staff
- Situations that can be de-escalated without law enforcement
- Non-emergency matters that do not pose immediate safety risks

EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEMS

Security Alarms

Each Davies Shelters facility is equipped with security alarm systems to protect the building and its occupants.

Alarm System Use:

- Employees will be trained on how to arm and disarm the alarm during orientation

- Alarms should be activated when the building is unoccupied or as directed by facility procedures
- ****Never share alarm codes**** with unauthorized individuals (including guests)

Alarm Malfunctions:

- If the alarm fails to activate, makes unusual sounds, or triggers unexpectedly, notify the Executive Director immediately
- Do not ignore alarm issues or attempt to repair the system yourself

False Alarms:

- If you accidentally trigger the alarm, contact the alarm monitoring company immediately to provide your authorization code
- Notify your supervisor of any false alarms

Communication During Emergencies

Davies Shelters does not currently have panic buttons or emergency call systems.

If you need emergency assistance while on duty:

- ****Call 911**** if the situation requires police, fire, or EMS
- ****Call or text another staff member**** if you need backup or support
- ****Use the facility phone**** if your personal phone is unavailable

Night Watch Staff:

- If working alone overnight, keep your cell phone fully charged and accessible at all times
- Know the location of the facility phone
- If you feel unsafe, call for backup (another staff member) or law enforcement as appropriate

VEHICLE AND TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Organizational Vehicles

Davies Shelters does not own or maintain organizational vehicles.

If transportation is needed for organizational purposes (transporting supplies, attending offsite meetings, etc.), employees must use their personal vehicles or arrange alternative transportation (rideshare, public transit, rental vehicle, etc.).

Transporting Guests

Employees may only transport guests in personal vehicles with prior approval from the Executive Director.

Approved Reasons for Transporting Guests:

- Organization-sanctioned events (community service projects, volunteer activities, etc.)
- Emergency situations approved by the Executive Director on a case-by-case basis

Prohibited:

- Transporting guests for personal errands or appointments without Executive Director approval
- Allowing guests to drive staff personal vehicles
- Transporting guests under the influence of drugs or alcohol

Requirements for Transporting Guests

Before transporting any guest, employees must:

1. Obtain approval from the Executive Director
 - Explain the reason for transport
 - Identify the guest(s) being transported
 - Confirm the destination and estimated timeframe
2. Verify valid auto insurance

- Employee must have current, valid auto insurance on their personal vehicle

- Proof of insurance must be on file with Davies Shelters

3. Follow safety protocols

- Best Practice: Have two staff members in the vehicle when transporting guests

- If only one staff member is available, the guest should sit in the back seat

- Ensure all passengers wear seatbelts

- Follow all traffic laws

4. Document the transport

- Record the date, time, guest name(s), destination, and purpose of transport

- Note any incidents or concerns that occurred during transport

Liability and Insurance

Important: If an employee transports a guest in their personal vehicle, the employee's personal auto insurance is the primary coverage in the event of an accident.

Davies Shelters' insurance may provide secondary coverage, but employees should understand:

- ****You are responsible for any deductibles on your personal auto insurance****
- ****Your insurance rates may increase if you are involved in an accident****
- ****Davies Shelters does not reimburse employees for increased insurance premiums or deductibles****

For this reason, transporting guests should be done only when necessary and with Executive Director approval.

Reimbursement for Mileage

Employees who use their personal vehicles for approved organizational purposes (not including commuting to/from work) may be eligible for mileage reimbursement at the current IRS standard mileage rate.

To request reimbursement:

- Track your mileage (date, starting location, destination, miles driven, purpose)
- Submit a mileage reimbursement form to the Executive Director
- Reimbursement will be processed with your next paycheck

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Fire Evacuation

If you discover a fire:

1. Activate the fire alarm (pull station)
2. Call 911 to report the fire
3. Evacuate all guests and staff from the building immediately
4. Use the nearest safe exit - do not use elevators
5. Assist guests with mobility limitations if safe to do so
6. Meet at the designated assembly point outside the building
7. Conduct a headcount to ensure everyone is accounted for
8. Do not re-enter the building until fire department gives the all-clear

If you hear the fire alarm:

- Evacuate immediately
- Do not stop to gather belongings
- Help guests evacuate quickly and calmly
- Close doors behind you (but do not lock them)
- Stay low if there is smoke
- Feel doors before opening (if hot, use another exit)

Severe Weather

Tornado or Severe Weather Warning:

- Move all guests and staff to the designated shelter area (interior rooms, away from windows)
- Stay away from windows and exterior walls
- Wait for the all-clear before returning to normal activities

Flooding:

- If flooding is imminent, move guests and staff to higher floors
- Do not attempt to drive or walk through flooded areas
- Follow evacuation orders from local authorities

Medical Emergencies

If a guest or staff member has a medical emergency:

1. Call 911 if the person is unconscious, not breathing, having chest pain, bleeding severely, or in severe distress
2. Provide first aid if you are trained and it is safe to do so
3. Stay with the person until EMS arrives
4. Notify your supervisor and the Executive Director as soon as possible
5. Document the incident (what happened, time, medical response, outcome)

Overdose Response:

- If you suspect an overdose, ****call 911 immediately****
- If Narcan (naloxone) is available and you are trained to use it, administer according to training
- Stay with the person until EMS arrives
- Provide information about what substances may have been used (if known)

Active Threat or Intruder

If there is an active threat or violent intruder in the building:

RUN:

- If you can safely evacuate, do so immediately
- Leave belongings behind
- Help others escape if possible, but do not delay your own escape

HIDE:

- If you cannot escape, find a place to hide
- Lock and barricade doors
- Turn off lights and silence phones
- Stay quiet and out of sight

FIGHT:

- As a last resort, if your life is in immediate danger, attempt to disrupt or incapacitate the threat
- Use any available objects as weapons
- Act with physical aggression and commit to your actions

Once Safe:

- Call 911 when it is safe to do so
- Provide your location and description of the threat
- Follow instructions from law enforcement

STAFF WELL-BEING AND SELF-CARE

Recognizing Vicarious Trauma and Burnout

Working with individuals experiencing homelessness, trauma, mental health crises, and substance use can take a toll on staff mental health and well-being. Vicarious trauma (also called secondary trauma or compassion fatigue) occurs when you are repeatedly exposed to others' traumatic experiences.

Signs of vicarious trauma or burnout:

- Feeling emotionally numb or detached
- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares
- Increased anxiety or irritability
- Feeling hopeless or cynical about your work
- Physical symptoms (headaches, fatigue, stomach issues)
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions

If you experience these symptoms:

- Talk to your supervisor about your workload and stress levels
- Take your breaks and use your paid time off for rest and recovery
- Seek support from a mental health professional (therapist, counselor)
- Connect with coworkers for peer support
- Practice self-care strategies (exercise, hobbies, time with loved ones)

Self-Care Strategies

During Your Shift:

- Take your breaks - step away from the work environment when possible
- Use deep breathing or grounding techniques when feeling stressed
- Connect with a coworker for support after difficult interactions
- Maintain professional boundaries with guests to protect your emotional well-being

Outside of Work:

- Engage in activities that bring you joy and relaxation
- Spend time with supportive friends and family
- Get adequate sleep, nutrition, and exercise
- Limit exposure to additional trauma (news, social media, violent media)
- Consider therapy or counseling to process your experiences

Davies Shelters supports staff well-being and encourages employees to use their paid time off and seek resources when needed. Your health and safety matter.

SUMMARY

Workplace safety is everyone's responsibility. This policy:

- Sets clear expectations for maintaining a safe environment
- Provides de-escalation techniques to prevent conflict
- Outlines when to call for backup or law enforcement
- Ensures injuries are properly reported and covered by workers' compensation
- Protects staff through best-practice protocols when working with guests

Employees are expected to:

- Follow all safety protocols and use good judgment
- Report injuries and safety hazards immediately
- Use de-escalation techniques before situations escalate to crisis
- Call for backup or law enforcement when needed
- Maintain professional boundaries with guests
- Practice self-care to prevent burnout

Safety is not just about rules - it's about looking out for each other, staying calm under pressure, and creating an environment where everyone feels secure.

Questions about this policy should be directed to your supervisor, the Operations Manager, or the Executive Director.

\ud83c\udfaf **NEXT SECTION: WEAPONS POLICY**

This should be quick! I just need to know:

1. Are weapons prohibited on shelter property?

- For all staff? For guests?

2. Does this include:

- Firearms (guns)?
- Knives (beyond what might be reasonable - pocket knives vs. combat knives)?
- Other weapons (brass knuckles, tasers, pepper spray)?

3. Exceptions:

- Law enforcement carrying on duty?
- Any staff who have concealed carry permits?
- Reasonable pocket tools (small multi-tools, pocket knives)?

4. Consequences:

- Immediate termination for staff carrying weapons?
- Guest discharge for weapons possession?

Answer these and I'll knock out the Weapons Policy section quickly! \ud83d\udd2b\ud83d\udeab",

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]

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=====

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add that, guests who have weapons on them when they arrive must forfeit them. The staff that confiscate them must dispose of them and they are not to be returned to the guest under any circumstances",

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=====
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1. Prohibits all weapons on shelter property for both staff and guests

2. Includes firearms, knives, brass knuckles, tasers, pepper spray, etc.
3. NO exceptions - even for law enforcement on duty, staff with concealed carry permits, or reasonable pocket tools
4. Immediate termination for staff, discharge for guests
5. If guests arrive with weapons, they must forfeit them
6. Staff confiscate and dispose of them
7. Weapons are NEVER returned to guests under any circumstances

This is a very strict zero-tolerance policy. I need to make sure I frame this clearly and strongly. I should also note that this applies even to law enforcement who are on-duty, which is unusual but if that's what they want, I'll write it.

Actually, wait - I should clarify the law enforcement part. It seems extreme to say "no exceptions" if that means on-duty police officers can't carry their service weapons when they respond to calls at the shelter. Let me write it but flag this for them to confirm.",

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ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Davies Shelters maintains a strict zero-tolerance weapons policy. Weapons of any kind are absolutely prohibited on shelter property at all times. This policy applies to all employees, guests, volunteers, visitors, contractors, and anyone else on Davies Shelters property.

The presence of weapons creates an unsafe environment for guests experiencing trauma, staff working in close quarters, and the broader shelter community. This policy is non-negotiable and will be enforced without exception.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

The following items are strictly prohibited on all Davies Shelters property, including shelter buildings, parking lots, and surrounding grounds:

Firearms

- Handguns (revolvers, pistols)
- Rifles and shotguns
- BB guns, pellet guns, and air rifles
- Stun guns or tasers
- Any other device designed to fire a projectile

Knives and Bladed Weapons

- Fixed-blade knives of any size
- Folding knives of any size (including pocket knives, multi-tools with knife blades)
- Switchblades, butterfly knives, or automatic knives
- Daggers, dirks, or stilettos
- Box cutters or utility knives (except when used for approved organizational work purposes under direct supervision)
- Machetes, hatchets, or axes
- Swords, sabers, or other bladed weapons
- Any other sharp object designed or intended to be used as a weapon

Impact Weapons

- Brass knuckles
- Batons, clubs, or nightsticks
- Blackjacks or saps
- Nunchucks or other martial arts weapons
- Metal pipes, chains, or similar objects carried or used as weapons

Chemical Weapons

- Pepper spray or mace
- Tear gas

Improvised Weapons

- Any object carried, displayed, or used in a manner intended to intimidate, threaten, or cause harm

Explosive Devices

- Fireworks
- Explosives or incendiary devices of any kind

NO EXCEPTIONS

This weapons policy has NO EXCEPTIONS.

- **Employees** may not carry weapons on shelter property under any circumstances, even if they possess a valid concealed carry permit issued by the State of Georgia or any other jurisdiction.
- **Guests** may not possess weapons on shelter property under any circumstances.
- **Volunteers and visitors** may not bring weapons onto shelter property.
- **Law enforcement officers** who are not actively responding to an emergency at the shelter should secure their weapons before entering the building for non-emergency purposes (meetings, community events, etc.). Officers responding to emergency calls at the shelter may carry their service weapons as required by their duties.

Reasonable tools used for legitimate organizational purposes (box cutters for opening donation boxes, utility knives for facility maintenance, etc.) may be used only when:

- The tool is provided by Davies Shelters for a specific work task
- The tool is used under direct supervision
- The tool is secured in a locked area immediately after use
- The tool is never left unattended or accessible to guests

Employees found carrying personal knives, pocket knives, or multi-tools on their person while on duty will be subject to immediate termination.

GUEST WEAPON CONFISCATION AND DISPOSAL

Weapons Discovered Upon Arrival

If a guest arrives at the shelter with a weapon in their possession:

Step 1: Immediate Notification

- Staff must notify the guest that weapons are strictly prohibited on shelter property
- Explain that the guest may not enter or remain in the shelter while in possession of the weapon

Step 2: Voluntary Surrender

- Ask the guest to ****voluntarily surrender the weapon**** to staff immediately
- If the guest refuses, they will be denied entry or asked to leave the shelter

Step 3: Confiscation

- Staff will take possession of the weapon
- ****Important:**** Staff should use caution when handling weapons and should not put themselves at risk. If the weapon appears dangerous or the guest is uncooperative, ****call law enforcement immediately**** rather than attempting to confiscate it yourself.

Step 4: Documentation

- Document the incident, including:
 - Guest name

- Date and time
- Description of the weapon
- How the weapon was discovered
- Disposition of the weapon (confiscated, law enforcement called, etc.)

Step 5: Disposal

- ****Confiscated weapons will be immediately and permanently disposed of.****
- ****Weapons will NOT be returned to the guest under any circumstances****, even if the guest requests it back, even if the guest leaves the shelter, and even if the weapon has sentimental value.
 - **Disposal methods may include:**
 - Turning the weapon over to law enforcement for destruction
 - Destroying the weapon onsite (breaking, dismantling) if safe to do so
 - Disposing of the weapon in a manner that renders it permanently unusable

The guest will be informed at the time of confiscation that the weapon will not be returned.

Weapons Discovered After Admission

If a weapon is discovered in a guest's possession after they have been admitted to the shelter:

Step 1: Staff Safety First

- Assess the situation for immediate danger
- ****If the guest is actively displaying or threatening with the weapon, call 911 immediately and evacuate the area****
- Do not attempt to confront or disarm the guest if doing so would put you or others at risk

Step 2: Address the Guest

- If the situation is not an immediate threat, calmly inform the guest that weapons are prohibited
- Request that the guest immediately surrender the weapon to staff

Step 3: Confiscation and Disposal

- Follow the same confiscation and disposal procedures outlined above

- ****The weapon will NOT be returned under any circumstances****

Step 4: Discharge from Shelter

- Possession of a weapon is grounds for ****immediate discharge from the shelter****
- The guest will be asked to leave the property immediately
- If the guest refuses to leave, law enforcement will be called for trespassing

Step 5: Documentation and Reporting

- Document the incident in detail
 - **Notify the Executive Director immediately**
- File an incident report

Staff Who Discover Weapons

Staff who discover a weapon on shelter property must:

1. Prioritize safety - do not put yourself or others at risk attempting to confiscate a weapon
2. Call for backup - notify another staff member or supervisor immediately
3. Call law enforcement if the situation poses an immediate threat
4. Document the incident thoroughly
5. Report to the Executive Director as soon as the situation is safe

Do not:

- Attempt to physically disarm a guest who is holding or displaying a weapon
- Handle firearms unless you are trained and the weapon is clearly unloaded and safe
- Return confiscated weapons to guests for any reason

CONSEQUENCES FOR POLICY VIOLATIONS

Staff Violations

Employees found in possession of a weapon on shelter property will be subject to immediate termination.

This includes:

- Firearms of any kind
- Knives or bladed weapons (including pocket knives, multi-tools, etc.)
- Any other prohibited items listed in this policy

There are no warnings or progressive discipline steps for weapons violations. Possession of a weapon is grounds for immediate termination on the first offense.

Guest Violations

Guests found in possession of a weapon will be immediately discharged from the shelter.

- The guest will be asked to leave the property immediately
- The weapon will be confiscated and permanently disposed of
- The guest may be banned from returning to Davies Shelters for a specified period or permanently, depending on the circumstances

Exceptions:

- If the guest voluntarily surrenders the weapon upon arrival before entering the shelter, and the incident was clearly unintentional (e.g., forgot a pocket knife in their bag), the guest may be allowed to stay at the discretion of the supervisor. However, the weapon will still be confiscated and disposed of.

Criminal Consequences

In addition to organizational consequences, weapons violations may result in criminal charges:

- Georgia law prohibits certain weapons in certain locations
- Threatening others with a weapon is a criminal offense
- Staff will cooperate with law enforcement in any investigation related to weapons on shelter property

REPORTING SUSPECTED WEAPONS

If you see or suspect that an employee, guest, or visitor has a weapon:

Do not confront the person directly if you feel unsafe.

Instead:

1. Notify your supervisor or the Operations Manager immediately
2. Call 911 if there is an immediate threat to safety
3. Keep a safe distance from the person
4. Alert other staff and guests to avoid the area if necessary
5. Follow instructions from law enforcement if they respond

Staff are protected from retaliation for reporting weapons concerns in good faith. If you see something, say something.

RATIONALE FOR THIS POLICY

Davies Shelters serves a vulnerable population, many of whom have experienced trauma, violence, and fear. The presence of weapons:

- Creates an unsafe and threatening environment
- Triggers trauma responses in guests with PTSD
- Increases the risk of violence and injury
- Undermines trust between staff and guests

- Violates the organization's commitment to providing a safe, healing environment

This policy is rooted in our core values of Sacred Worth and Welcome Community. Every person deserves to feel safe and secure in the shelter, and the presence of weapons is incompatible with that goal.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Georgia Law and Concealed Carry Permits:

Georgia is a "shall issue" state for concealed carry permits, and Georgia law generally allows permit holders to carry firearms in most public places. However:

- ****Private property owners have the right to prohibit weapons on their premises****
- Davies Shelters, as a private nonprofit organization, ****exercises this right to maintain a weapons-free environment****
- ****Having a concealed carry permit does not grant the right to carry a weapon on Davies Shelters property****

Employees who possess concealed carry permits and wish to carry firearms for personal protection must leave their weapons secured in their personal vehicles (not on their person) or at home while on duty at Davies Shelters.

"Stand Your Ground" and Self-Defense:

While Georgia law provides certain self-defense protections, Davies Shelters' weapons policy is designed to prevent situations where weapons might be used, rather than relying on self-defense justifications after an incident occurs.

Staff who feel unsafe are encouraged to:

- Use de-escalation techniques (see Workplace Safety section)

- Call for backup from other staff members
- Call law enforcement when appropriate
- Remove themselves and others from dangerous situations

Self-defense does not require a weapon. Staff are trained in verbal de-escalation and crisis response, which are far more effective and appropriate for the shelter environment.

EDUCATING GUESTS ABOUT THE WEAPONS POLICY

At Intake

All guests will be informed of the weapons policy during the intake process:

- "Davies Shelters has a strict no-weapons policy. You may not bring firearms, knives, or any other weapons onto the property."
- "If you have a weapon with you, you must surrender it to staff now. It will be permanently disposed of and will not be returned."
- "Possession of a weapon on shelter property will result in immediate discharge."

Guest Handbook and Signage

The weapons policy is included in the guest handbook and posted in visible locations throughout the shelter:

- At the entrance/check-in area
- In common areas
- In sleeping areas

Ongoing Reminders

Staff may remind guests of the weapons policy during community meetings, case management sessions, or as needed.

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

Employees who have questions about the weapons policy should contact:

- Their direct supervisor
 - The Operations Manager
 - The Executive Director

This policy is non-negotiable and applies to everyone, without exception.

SUMMARY

Davies Shelters is a weapons-free zone. This policy:

- Prohibits all weapons on shelter property
- Applies to all staff, guests, volunteers, and visitors
- Has no exceptions (except law enforcement responding to active emergencies)
- Results in immediate termination for staff violations
- Results in immediate discharge for guest violations
- Requires confiscation and permanent disposal of any weapons discovered

Your safety and the safety of our guests depend on strict adherence to this policy. Thank you for your cooperation.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

POLICY STATEMENT

Davies Shelters is committed to maintaining a drug-free workplace in compliance with the Georgia Drug-Free Workplace Act (O.C.G.A. § 34-9-410 et seq.) and federal law. The use, possession, sale, or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol on shelter property, or being under the influence of such substances while on duty, is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

This policy protects the safety of employees, guests, and the community we serve. Substance abuse impairs judgment, increases the risk of accidents and injuries, and undermines the professional, trauma-informed environment that Davies Shelters is committed to providing.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Substances Covered by This Policy

This policy applies to:

- **Illegal drugs:** Marijuana (except as noted below for registered medical marijuana patients), cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, hallucinogens, and any other controlled substances prohibited under federal or Georgia law
- **Alcohol:** Beer, wine, liquor, and any other alcoholic beverages
- **Abuse of legal substances:** Misuse of prescription medications, over-the-counter drugs, or inhalants in a manner that impairs job performance or creates safety concerns

Prohibited Activities

Employees are strictly prohibited from:

1. Being Under the Influence While on Duty

- Reporting to work while impaired by drugs or alcohol
- Using drugs or alcohol during work hours (including meal breaks and rest breaks)
- Remaining on duty while impaired by drugs or alcohol

2. Possession of Drugs or Alcohol

- Possessing illegal drugs on shelter property (buildings, parking lots, grounds)
- Possessing alcohol on shelter property, except as specifically authorized for organizational events

3. Distribution or Sale

- Selling, distributing, or providing illegal drugs to anyone on shelter property
- Selling, distributing, or providing alcohol to guests or coworkers

4. Off-Duty Conduct Affecting Work

- Using illegal drugs or abusing alcohol off-duty in a manner that:
 - Impairs your ability to perform your job duties
 - Creates a safety risk for yourself, coworkers, or guests
 - Damages the organization's reputation
 - Results in arrest or criminal charges that prevent you from fulfilling job responsibilities

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SHELTER ENVIRONMENT

Working in a Substance-Present Environment

Davies Shelters serves individuals experiencing homelessness, many of whom struggle with substance use disorders. Staff will inevitably encounter guests who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or who possess drug paraphernalia.

This is NOT a violation of the Drug-Free Workplace Policy. Guests' substance use is a separate matter governed by guest policies and harm reduction principles.

Staff are expected to:

- ****Remain professional and non-judgmental**** when interacting with guests who are intoxicated or using substances
- ****Apply trauma-informed care principles**** - substance use is often a coping mechanism for trauma
- ****Follow guest policies and procedures**** for addressing substance use or intoxication that creates safety concerns
- ****Never use or participate in substance use with guests**** under any circumstances
- ****Report safety concerns**** (overdoses, violent behavior) to supervisors or emergency services as appropriate

Staff may NOT:

- Use the presence of guest substance use as an excuse or justification for their own substance use
- Share, provide, or facilitate access to drugs or alcohol with guests
- Use drugs or alcohol on shelter property, even if guests are doing so

Handling Guest Drug Paraphernalia

Staff may occasionally need to handle or dispose of drug paraphernalia (needles, pipes, foil, etc.) found on shelter property.

Safety Protocols:

- ****Do not touch needles or syringes with bare hands**** - use puncture-resistant gloves and sharps containers
- ****Use appropriate PPE**** (gloves, eye protection if needed) when handling any drug paraphernalia
- ****Dispose of drug paraphernalia properly.****

- Used needles/syringes → Sharps container (never trash or recycling)
- Pipes, foil, other items → Regular trash (sealed in a bag if necessary)
- ****Report findings to your supervisor**** if you discover a significant amount of paraphernalia or evidence of on-site drug use

Staff will not be disciplined for incidental exposure to drugs or paraphernalia while performing job duties in good faith.

Naloxone (Narcan) Administration

Davies Shelters provides Naloxone (Narcan) for overdose response. Staff who are trained to administer Naloxone will not be considered in violation of this policy for possessing or administering Naloxone in an emergency.

Staff must:

- Complete required Naloxone training before administering
- Use Naloxone only in suspected overdose emergencies
- Call 911 immediately when overdose is suspected
- Document the incident and report to the Executive Director

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS AND LEGAL SUBSTANCES

Lawful Use of Prescription Medications

Employees may take prescription medications as directed by their physician while on duty, provided the medication does not impair their ability to safely perform their job duties.

If you take prescription medication that may cause:

- Drowsiness or impaired alertness
- Dizziness or impaired coordination

- Confusion or impaired judgment
- Any other side effects that could affect your job performance or safety

You should:

- ****Notify your supervisor**** so accommodations can be made if necessary (schedule adjustments, temporary duty modifications, etc.)
- ****Consult with your doctor**** about whether you can safely perform your job duties while taking the medication
- ****Do not operate vehicles or machinery**** if your medication label warns against it

You are NOT required to disclose your specific medical condition or diagnosis - only that you are taking medication that may affect your work performance.

Medical Marijuana

Georgia Law:

Georgia has a Low THC Oil Registry that allows individuals with specific qualifying medical conditions to possess and use cannabis oil containing up to 5% THC.

Exception for Registered Medical Marijuana Patients:

Employees who are registered with the Georgia Low THC Oil Registry and have a valid registration card are exempt from marijuana-related discipline, provided they:

- Provide proof of valid Georgia Low THC Oil Registry registration to the Executive Director
- Do not use marijuana while on duty or report to work under the influence
- Maintain job performance and safety standards
- Comply with all other workplace policies

Out-of-State Medical Marijuana Cards:

Georgia does not recognize medical marijuana cards from other states. Employees with out-of-state medical marijuana cards are subject to the same drug testing and discipline policies as employees who use recreational marijuana.

If you test positive for marijuana and do not have a valid Georgia Low THC Oil Registry card, you may be terminated.

Federal Law Consideration:

While Georgia law permits low THC oil for registered patients, marijuana remains illegal under federal law. Davies Shelters recognizes Georgia's Low THC Oil Registry as a valid medical accommodation but employees should be aware of the ongoing federal prohibition.

Over-the-Counter Medications

Employees may use over-the-counter medications (pain relievers, cold medicine, allergy medication, etc.) as directed.

However, if an over-the-counter medication causes impairment (e.g., drowsiness from antihistamines), you must notify your supervisor and may be temporarily restricted from certain duties.

SIGNS OF IMPAIRMENT

Supervisors and coworkers should be aware of signs that an employee may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol:

Physical Signs:

- Slurred speech
- Unsteady gait or lack of coordination
- Bloodshot or glassy eyes
- Dilated or constricted pupils
- Unusual sweating or tremors
- Odor of alcohol or marijuana

Behavioral Signs:

- Extreme mood swings or emotional instability
- Agitation, irritability, or aggression
- Unusual lethargy or fatigue
- Paranoia or confusion
- Talking excessively or incoherently

Performance Signs:

- Significant decline in work quality
- Missing shifts or chronic tardiness following the signs above
- Falling asleep on the job
- Accidents or near-misses

REASONABLE SUSPICION TESTING

If a supervisor has reasonable suspicion that an employee is under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on duty, the employee may be required to submit to drug and alcohol testing.

Reasonable suspicion is based on specific, observable facts and rational inferences about an employee's appearance, behavior, speech, or body odor.

If reasonable suspicion testing is required:

1. The supervisor will document the observations that led to the suspicion and notify the Executive Director immediately
2. The employee will be immediately removed from duty and may not drive themselves home
3. The employee will be transported to an approved testing facility for drug and alcohol screening
4. A positive test result or refusal to test will result in immediate termination (see Employment Practices section for full testing procedures)

Employees who refuse to submit to reasonable suspicion testing will be terminated.

For complete details on drug and alcohol testing procedures, see the Drug and Alcohol Testing section in the Employment Practices chapter of this handbook.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT A COWORKER IS IMPAIRED

If you observe a coworker exhibiting signs of impairment:

Step 1: Prioritize Safety

- If the coworker is operating a vehicle, machinery, or engaging in any activity that could cause harm, intervene immediately to prevent injury
- Remove the coworker from duties that pose safety risks

Step 2: Notify a Supervisor

- Immediately notify your supervisor, the Operations Manager, or the Executive Director
- Provide specific observations (what you saw, heard, or smelled)
- Do not diagnose or accuse - simply report the facts

Step 3: Document

- Write down your observations as soon as possible while details are fresh
- Include date, time, location, specific behaviors, and any witnesses

Step 4: Maintain Confidentiality

- Do not discuss the situation with other coworkers or guests

- Respect the employee's privacy while ensuring safety is addressed

Employees who report suspected impairment in good faith are protected from retaliation.

ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

Employee Assistance

Davies Shelters recognizes that substance abuse is a serious health issue that affects many individuals. Employees who are struggling with substance use are encouraged to seek help.

Options for assistance:

- Speak confidentially with the Executive Director about treatment options
- Seek services from community substance abuse treatment providers
- Access mental health and substance abuse resources through your health insurance (if applicable)

Voluntary Self-Disclosure:

Employees who voluntarily disclose a substance abuse problem and seek help before testing positive or exhibiting impaired behavior at work may be granted a leave of absence to participate in treatment.

However:

- Employees who test positive for drugs or alcohol or who are found to be impaired on duty will be terminated, even if they subsequently seek treatment
- Self-disclosure does not excuse policy violations that have already occurred
- Employees returning from substance abuse treatment must provide proof of treatment completion and submit to a return-to-work drug test

Confidentiality

All information related to an employee's substance use, testing results, treatment, or request for assistance will be kept strictly confidential and maintained in accordance with applicable laws.

Information will only be shared with:

- The Executive Director and authorized supervisors (on a need-to-know basis)
- Medical professionals involved in testing or treatment
- Law enforcement or legal authorities as required by law

CONSEQUENCES FOR POLICY VIOLATIONS

Violations of the Drug-Free Workplace Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

Immediate Termination Offenses

The following violations will result in immediate termination without progressive discipline:

- Being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while on duty
- Positive drug or alcohol test result (pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, post-incident, or random) - **except for employees with valid Georgia Low THC Oil Registry cards who test positive for marijuana only**
- Refusal to submit to required drug or alcohol testing
- Possession of illegal drugs on shelter property
- Sale, distribution, or provision of illegal drugs on shelter property
- Providing alcohol to guests
- Conviction of a drug-related offense that occurs on shelter property or during work hours

Additional Consequences

In addition to termination, policy violations may result in:

- Denial of unemployment benefits (substance-related terminations may disqualify you from unemployment compensation in Georgia)
- Criminal charges (if applicable)
- Notification to licensing boards (if your position requires professional licensure)

COMPLIANCE WITH GEORGIA DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE ACT

Davies Shelters maintains a drug-free workplace program in compliance with the Georgia Drug-Free Workplace Act (O.C.G.A. § 34-9-410 et seq.). This compliance allows the organization to receive a discount on workers' compensation insurance premiums.

As part of this program:

- All employees receive a copy of this Drug-Free Workplace Policy
- Employees acknowledge receipt and understanding of the policy
- The organization conducts drug and alcohol testing as outlined in the Employment Practices section
- Employees who violate the policy are subject to discipline, including termination

LEGAL USE OF CANNABIS (CBD PRODUCTS)

Cannabidiol (CBD) products derived from hemp are legal under federal law and Georgia law, provided they contain less than 0.3% THC.

However:

- Some CBD products may contain trace amounts of THC that could result in a positive drug test
- Davies Shelters' drug testing policy prohibits THC, regardless of the source
- **Employees who test positive for THC will be subject to discipline, unless they have a valid Georgia Low THC Oil Registry card**

If you choose to use CBD products, you do so at your own risk. If you test positive for THC and do not have a Georgia Low THC Oil Registry card, you may be terminated.

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

Employees who have questions about the Drug-Free Workplace Policy should contact:

- Their direct supervisor
- The Operations Manager
- The Executive Director

For detailed information about drug and alcohol testing procedures, see the Drug and Alcohol Testing section in the Employment Practices chapter.

SUMMARY

Davies Shelters maintains a drug-free workplace. This policy:

- Prohibits being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on duty

- Prohibits possession, sale, or distribution of illegal drugs on shelter property
- Recognizes that staff work in an environment where guests may use substances (this is not a policy violation for staff)
- Allows lawful use of prescription medications that do not impair job performance
- **Provides exception for employees with valid Georgia Low THC Oil Registry cards**
- Provides for drug and alcohol testing (see Employment Practices section for details)
- Results in immediate termination for violations

Your safety, the safety of your coworkers, and the safety of our guests depend on maintaining a drug-free workplace. Thank you for your commitment to this policy.

WEAPONS POLICY

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Davies Shelters maintains a strict zero-tolerance weapons policy. Weapons of any kind are absolutely prohibited on shelter property at all times. This policy applies to all employees, guests, volunteers, visitors, contractors, and anyone else on Davies Shelters property.

The presence of weapons creates an unsafe environment for guests experiencing trauma, staff working in close quarters, and the broader shelter community. This policy is non-negotiable and will be enforced without exception.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

The following items are strictly prohibited on all Davies Shelters property, including shelter buildings, parking lots, and surrounding grounds:

Firearms

- Handguns (revolvers, pistols)
- Rifles and shotguns
- BB guns, pellet guns, and air rifles
- Stun guns or tasers
- Any other device designed to fire a projectile

Knives and Bladed Weapons

- Fixed-blade knives of any size

- Switchblades, butterfly knives, or automatic knives
- Daggers, dirks, or stiletos
- Box cutters or utility knives (except when used for approved organizational work purposes under direct supervision)
- Machetes, hatchets, or axes
- Swords, sabers, or other bladed weapons
- Any other sharp object designed or intended to be used as a weapon

Impact Weapons

- Brass knuckles
- Batons, clubs, or nightsticks
- Blackjacks or saps
- Nunchucks or other martial arts weapons
- Metal pipes, chains, or similar objects carried or used as weapons

Chemical Weapons

- Pepper spray or mace
- Tear gas

Improvised Weapons

- Any object carried, displayed, or used in a manner intended to intimidate, threaten, or cause harm

Explosive Devices

- Fireworks
- Explosives or incendiary devices of any kind

NO EXCEPTIONS

This weapons policy has NO EXCEPTIONS.

- **Employees** may not carry weapons on shelter property under any circumstances, even if they possess a valid concealed carry permit issued by the State of Georgia or any other jurisdiction.
- **Guests** may not possess weapons on shelter property under any circumstances.
- **Volunteers and visitors** may not bring weapons onto shelter property.
- **Law enforcement officers** who are not actively responding to an emergency at the shelter should secure their weapons before entering the building for non-emergency purposes (meetings, community events, etc.). Officers responding to emergency calls at the shelter may carry their service weapons as required by their duties.

Reasonable tools used for legitimate organizational purposes (box cutters for opening donation boxes, utility knives for facility maintenance, etc.) may be used only when:

- The tool is provided by Davies Shelters for a specific work task
- The tool is used under direct supervision
- The tool is secured in a locked area immediately after use
- The tool is never left unattended or accessible to guests

Employees found carrying personal knives, pocket knives, or multi-tools on their person while on duty will be subject to immediate termination.

GUEST WEAPON CONFISCATION AND DISPOSAL

Weapons Discovered Upon Arrival

If a guest arrives at the shelter with a weapon in their possession:

Step 1: Immediate Notification

- Staff must notify the guest that weapons are strictly prohibited on shelter property
- Explain that the guest may not enter or remain in the shelter while in possession of the weapon

Step 2: Voluntary Surrender

- Ask the guest to **voluntarily surrender the weapon** to staff immediately
- If the guest refuses, they will be denied entry or asked to leave the shelter

Step 3: Confiscation

- Staff will take possession of the weapon
- **Important:** Staff should use caution when handling weapons and should not put themselves at risk. If the weapon appears dangerous or the guest is uncooperative, **call law enforcement immediately** rather than attempting to confiscate it yourself.

Step 4: Documentation

- Document the incident, including:
 - Guest name
 - Date and time
 - Description of the weapon
 - How the weapon was discovered
 - Disposition of the weapon (confiscated, law enforcement called, etc.)

Step 5: Disposal

- **Confiscated weapons will be immediately and permanently disposed of.**
- **Weapons will NOT be returned to the guest under any circumstances**, even if the guest requests it back, even if the guest leaves the shelter, and even if the weapon has sentimental value.
 - Disposal methods may include:
 - Turning the weapon over to law enforcement for destruction
 - Destroying the weapon onsite (breaking, dismantling) if safe to do so
 - Disposing of the weapon in a manner that renders it permanently unusable

The guest will be informed at the time of confiscation that the weapon will not be returned.

Weapons Discovered After Admission

If a weapon is discovered in a guest's possession after they have been admitted to the shelter:

Step 1: Staff Safety First

- Assess the situation for immediate danger
- **If the guest is actively displaying or threatening with the weapon, call 911 immediately and evacuate the area**
- Do not attempt to confront or disarm the guest if doing so would put you or others at risk

Step 2: Address the Guest

- If the situation is not an immediate threat, calmly inform the guest that weapons are prohibited
- Request that the guest immediately surrender the weapon to staff

Step 3: Confiscation and Disposal

- Follow the same confiscation and disposal procedures outlined above
- **The weapon will NOT be returned under any circumstances**

Step 4: Discharge from Shelter

- Possession of a weapon is grounds for **immediate discharge from the shelter**
- The guest will be asked to leave the property immediately
- If the guest refuses to leave, law enforcement will be called for trespassing

Step 5: Documentation and Reporting

- Document the incident in detail
 - Notify the Executive Director immediately
- File an incident report

Staff Who Discover Weapons

Staff who discover a weapon on shelter property must:

1. Prioritize safety - do not put yourself or others at risk attempting to confiscate a weapon
2. Call for backup - notify another staff member or supervisor immediately

3. Call law enforcement if the situation poses an immediate threat
4. Document the incident thoroughly
5. Report to the Executive Director as soon as the situation is safe

Do not:

- Attempt to physically disarm a guest who is holding or displaying a weapon
- Handle firearms unless you are trained and the weapon is clearly unloaded and safe
- Return confiscated weapons to guests for any reason

CONSEQUENCES FOR POLICY VIOLATIONS

Staff Violations

Employees found in possession of a weapon on shelter property will be subject to immediate termination.

This includes:

- Firearms of any kind
- Knives or bladed weapons (including pocket knives, multi-tools, etc.)
- Any other prohibited items listed in this policy

There are no warnings or progressive discipline steps for weapons violations. Possession of a weapon is grounds for immediate termination on the first offense.

Guest Violations

Guests found in possession of a weapon will be immediately discharged from the shelter.

- The guest will be asked to leave the property immediately

- The weapon will be confiscated and permanently disposed of
- The guest may be banned from returning to Davies Shelters for a specified period or permanently, depending on the circumstances

Exceptions:

- If the guest voluntarily surrenders the weapon upon arrival before entering the shelter, and the incident was clearly unintentional (e.g., forgot a pocket knife in their bag), the guest may be allowed to stay at the discretion of the supervisor. However, the weapon will still be confiscated and disposed of.

Criminal Consequences

In addition to organizational consequences, weapons violations may result in criminal charges:

- Georgia law prohibits certain weapons in certain locations
- Threatening others with a weapon is a criminal offense
- Staff will cooperate with law enforcement in any investigation related to weapons on shelter property

REPORTING SUSPECTED WEAPONS

If you see or suspect that an employee, guest, or visitor has a weapon:

Do not confront the person directly if you feel unsafe.

Instead:

1. Notify your supervisor or the Operations Manager immediately
2. Call 911 if there is an immediate threat to safety
3. Keep a safe distance from the person
4. Alert other staff and guests to avoid the area if necessary
5. Follow instructions from law enforcement if they respond

Staff are protected from retaliation for reporting weapons concerns in good faith. If you see something, say something.

RATIONALE FOR THIS POLICY

Davies Shelters serves a vulnerable population, many of whom have experienced trauma, violence, and fear. The presence of weapons:

- Creates an unsafe and threatening environment
- Triggers trauma responses in guests with PTSD
- Increases the risk of violence and injury
- Undermines trust between staff and guests
- Violates the organization's commitment to providing a safe, healing environment

This policy is rooted in our core values of Sacred Worth and Welcome Community. Every person deserves to feel safe and secure in the shelter, and the presence of weapons is incompatible with that goal.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Georgia Law and Concealed Carry Permits:

Georgia is a "shall issue" state for concealed carry permits, and Georgia law generally allows permit holders to carry firearms in most public places. However:

- ****Private property owners have the right to prohibit weapons on their premises****
- Davies Shelters, as a private nonprofit organization, ****exercises this right to maintain a weapons-free environment****
- ****Having a concealed carry permit does not grant the right to carry a weapon on Davies Shelters property****

Employees who possess concealed carry permits and wish to carry firearms for personal protection must leave their weapons secured in their personal vehicles (not on their person) or at home while on duty at Davies Shelters.

"Stand Your Ground" and Self-Defense:

While Georgia law provides certain self-defense protections, Davies Shelters' weapons policy is designed to prevent situations where weapons might be used, rather than relying on self-defense justifications after an incident occurs.

Staff who feel unsafe are encouraged to:

- Use de-escalation techniques (see Workplace Safety section)
- Call for backup from other staff members
- Call law enforcement when appropriate
- Remove themselves and others from dangerous situations

Self-defense does not require a weapon. Staff are trained in verbal de-escalation and crisis response, which are far more effective and appropriate for the shelter environment.

EDUCATING GUESTS ABOUT THE WEAPONS POLICY

At Intake

All guests will be informed of the weapons policy during the intake process:

- "Davies Shelters has a strict no-weapons policy. You may not bring firearms, knives, or any other weapons onto the property."
- "If you have a weapon with you, you must surrender it to staff now. It will be permanently disposed of and will not be returned."
- "Possession of a weapon on shelter property will result in immediate discharge."

Ongoing Reminders

Staff may remind guests of the weapons policy during community meetings, case management sessions, or as needed.

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

Employees who have questions about the weapons policy should contact:

- Their direct supervisor
- The Operations Manager
- The Executive Director

This policy is non-negotiable and applies to everyone, without exception.

SUMMARY

Davies Shelters is a weapons-free zone. This policy:

- Prohibits all weapons on shelter property
- Applies to all staff, guests, volunteers, and visitors

- Has no exceptions (except law enforcement responding to active emergencies)
- Results in immediate termination for staff violations
- Results in immediate discharge for guest violations
- Requires confiscation and permanent disposal of any weapons discovered

Your safety and the safety of our guests depend on strict adherence to this policy. Thank you for your cooperation.

CODE OF CONDUCT & PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

PURPOSE

This Code of Conduct establishes professional and ethical standards for all Davies Shelters employees. These standards reflect our organizational values and commitment to providing safe, dignified, trauma-informed services to guests experiencing homelessness.

Employees are expected to conduct themselves with integrity, respect confidentiality, maintain professional boundaries, and uphold the mission and reputation of Davies Shelters.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR STANDARDS

General Expectations

All employees are expected to:

- Treat guests, coworkers, volunteers, donors, and community partners with dignity and respect
- Demonstrate honesty, integrity, and ethical decision-making in all aspects of work
- Follow organizational policies, procedures, and professional standards
- Maintain a professional demeanor in interactions with others
- Represent Davies Shelters positively in the community
- Report suspected policy violations, safety concerns, or unethical behavior to supervisors

- Embody the organization's core values: Sacred Worth, Restorative Journey, and Welcome Community

Prohibited Conduct

Employees may not:

- Engage in discrimination, harassment, or retaliation against any person based on protected characteristics (race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, etc.)
- Use abusive, threatening, or demeaning language toward guests, coworkers, or others
- Engage in physical violence or threats of violence
- Steal, misappropriate, or misuse organizational property or resources
- Falsify records, documents, or time sheets
- Work under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Violate confidentiality or privacy requirements
- Accept or solicit bribes, kickbacks, or inappropriate gifts
- Use organizational resources for personal gain or unauthorized purposes

Violations of these standards may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

CONFIDENTIALITY

General Confidentiality Requirements

Confidential information includes:

- ****Guest Information:**** Names, personal histories, case notes, medical information, family details, housing plans, employment status, substance use history, mental health information, legal issues, and any other personally identifiable information about guests

- ****Staff Information:**** Personnel records, salary information, performance reviews, disciplinary actions, medical information, and personal contact information
- ****Organizational Information:**** Financial records, strategic plans, donor lists, grant applications, proprietary systems and processes, and internal communications

Employees must:

- Keep all confidential information strictly private
- Access confidential information only when necessary for job duties (need-to-know basis)
- Store confidential documents and electronic records securely
- Never discuss confidential information in public places or with unauthorized individuals
- Never remove confidential documents from the workplace without authorization
- Dispose of confidential documents securely (shredding, secure deletion)

Confidentiality obligations continue after employment ends. Former employees remain bound by confidentiality requirements indefinitely.

Guest/Client Privacy

All information about guests is confidential and may not be disclosed without proper authorization.

What is Confidential

The following information about guests is confidential:

- Names and identifying information
- Presence or absence at the shelter ("We cannot confirm or deny whether someone is/was a guest here")
- Personal history, family situation, or background
- Case management records, goals, and progress
- Medical information, diagnoses, medications, or treatment
- Substance use or mental health information

- Legal issues, criminal history, or court involvement
- Housing plans, employment status, or financial information
- Any other personally identifiable information

When Information May Be Shared

Guest information may ONLY be shared:

1. With Guest's Written Consent

- Guest must sign a release authorizing disclosure of specific information to specific individuals or organizations
- Releases must be current (not expired) and on file

2. For Coordination with Community Partners *(with advance notice to guest)*

- Staff may share relevant information with community partners (social services, housing providers, medical providers, etc.) when necessary to coordinate services and support the guest's goals
- ****Important:**** Staff must inform the guest in advance that information will be shared and with whom
- Share only the minimum information necessary to achieve the coordination purpose

3. When Required by Law

- Court orders or subpoenas (consult Executive Director before releasing)
- Mandatory reporting of child abuse, elder abuse, or vulnerable adult abuse (see Mandatory Reporting section)
- Imminent threats to safety (see Safety Exception below)

4. Internal Communication for Service Provision

- Staff may discuss guest information with other Davies Shelters staff members on a need-to-know basis for the purpose of providing services
- Keep discussions private and professional; do not gossip about guests

Safety Exception

If a guest poses an imminent threat of serious harm to themselves or others, staff may disclose information necessary to protect safety (e.g., calling 911, notifying mental health crisis services).

This exception applies only to immediate safety threats, not general safety concerns.

Verification of Guest Status

Staff may not verify whether someone is or was a guest at Davies Shelters.

If a family member, friend, law enforcement officer, social worker, or anyone else asks, "Is [name] staying at your shelter?", the correct response is:

> "I cannot confirm or deny whether anyone is or was a guest here. Our guest information is confidential."

Exceptions:

- Guest has signed a release authorizing verification
- Law enforcement presents a valid court order or warrant
- Imminent safety threat (e.g., credible threat of violence)

No Discussion of Guests Outside of Work

Employees may not discuss guests outside of work, even without using names.

Examples of prohibited conduct:

- Discussing a guest's situation at a restaurant, social gathering, or in front of family/friends
- Telling stories about "a guest" (even anonymously) outside the workplace
- Posting about guest situations on social media (see Social Media Policy)

If you need to debrief or process a difficult situation with a guest:

- Speak with your supervisor or coworkers in a private setting at work
- Seek support from a mental health professional bound by confidentiality
- Never identify guests or share details that could identify them

Consequences for Confidentiality Breaches

Breaches of guest confidentiality are serious violations that may result in:

- Immediate termination

- Legal liability (civil lawsuits for invasion of privacy)
- Damage to organizational reputation and guest trust
- Loss of funding or community partnerships

Handling Information Close to HIPAA Standards

While Davies Shelters is not subject to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), we handle sensitive personal information using practices as close to HIPAA standards as our resources allow.

HIPAA-Informed Practices:

1. Minimum Necessary Standard

- Access only the information you need to perform your job duties
- Share only the minimum information necessary when coordinating services

2. Secure Storage

- Keep paper records in locked cabinets or secure areas
- Lock computers when stepping away
- Use strong passwords and do not share login credentials
- Do not leave confidential information visible on desks or screens

3. Secure Disposal

- Shred paper documents containing confidential information
- Permanently delete electronic files (empty recycle bin)
- Do not place confidential documents in regular trash

4. Reporting Breaches

- If you accidentally disclose confidential information or suspect a breach, report it to the Executive Director immediately
- The organization will take steps to mitigate harm and prevent future breaches

Staff Privacy

Personal information about employees is also confidential, including:

- Personnel records and employment history
- Salary and compensation information
- Performance evaluations and disciplinary records
- Medical information and disability accommodations
- Personal contact information

Employees may not access other employees' personnel files or discuss another employee's confidential information unless they have a legitimate work-related need to know.

DONOR PRIVACY

Confidentiality of Donor Information

All donor information is confidential and may not be shared outside the organization without authorization.

Donor information includes:

- Names and contact information
- Donation amounts and frequency
- Payment methods
- Communication preferences
- Any other personally identifiable information

Staff do not have general access to donor information. Donor data is managed by development and administrative staff and is not shared with other employees unless there is a legitimate work-related need.

Equal Confidentiality

All donors receive the same level of confidentiality, regardless of donation size. There are no special protections for major donors; all donor information is treated with the highest level of privacy.

Disclosure of Donor Information

Donor information may only be disclosed:

- With the donor's explicit written permission
- As required by law (e.g., IRS audits, subpoenas)
- To authorized staff members on a need-to-know basis for fundraising or donor relations purposes

MANDATORY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Who Are Mandated Reporters?

Under Georgia law, counselors and certain other licensed professionals are mandated reporters who must report suspected abuse or neglect.

At Davies Shelters, counselors (licensed professional counselors, social workers, or therapists on staff) are mandated reporters.

Other staff members (case managers, night watch, administrative staff) are not legally classified as mandated reporters under Georgia law.

Encouraged Reporting for All Staff

While not legally mandated, all Davies Shelters staff are strongly encouraged to report suspected abuse or neglect of children, elderly individuals, or vulnerable adults.

If you witness or reasonably suspect:

- Child abuse or neglect
- Elder abuse or neglect (adults 65+)
- Abuse or neglect of vulnerable adults (adults with disabilities who are unable to protect themselves)

You should report it, even if you are not a mandated reporter.

What to Report

Report suspected abuse or neglect if you observe:

Physical Abuse:

- Unexplained bruises, burns, fractures, or injuries
- Injuries inconsistent with the explanation provided
- Fear of a caregiver or family member

Neglect:

- Lack of basic care (food, shelter, hygiene, medical care)
- Abandonment or lack of supervision
- Unsafe living conditions

Sexual Abuse:

- Allegations or disclosures of sexual abuse
- Physical signs of sexual abuse
- Inappropriate sexual behavior or knowledge

Emotional Abuse:

- Verbal threats, humiliation, or intimidation
- Extreme fear or anxiety in the presence of a caregiver
- Behavioral changes indicating trauma

Financial Exploitation (for elderly/vulnerable adults):

- Unexplained loss of money or property
- Coercion to sign documents or change wills
- Caregiver inappropriately controlling finances

How to Report

If you are a mandated reporter (counselor) or choose to report suspected abuse/neglect:

Step 1: Report Immediately

- Do not wait or investigate on your own
- Reports must be made within ****24 hours**** of suspicion

Step 2: Contact the Appropriate Agency

For child abuse or neglect:

- ****Georgia Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) Child Abuse Hotline:**** 1-855-GA-CHILD (1-855-422-4453)
- Available 24/7
- Provide as much detail as possible (names, ages, location, description of suspected abuse)

For elder abuse or vulnerable adult abuse:

- ****Georgia Adult Protective Services (APS):**** Contact your local DFCS office or call 1-866-552-4464
- Available during business hours; after hours, call local law enforcement for emergencies

For imminent danger or life-threatening situations:

- ****Call 911**** immediately

Step 3: Notify Your Supervisor

- After making the report to DFCS/APS, notify your supervisor and the Executive Director
- Document what you observed and reported

Step 4: Document

- Write down what you observed, when, and to whom you reported
- Do not conduct your own investigation or confront the alleged abuser
- Maintain confidentiality – do not discuss the report with other staff or guests

Protection from Retaliation

Georgia law protects mandated reporters and voluntary reporters from retaliation for making good-faith reports of suspected abuse or neglect.

Davies Shelters will not retaliate against any employee who makes a good-faith report.

Failure to Report (Mandated Reporters)

Mandated reporters (counselors) who fail to report suspected abuse or neglect may face:

- Criminal penalties under Georgia law (misdemeanor)
- Professional disciplinary action (loss of license)
- Termination from employment

GUEST/CLIENT INTERACTION POLICIES

Trauma-Informed Care Principles

All staff are expected to interact with guests using trauma-informed care principles:

- **Safety:** Create physical and emotional safety
- **Trustworthiness and Transparency:** Be honest and clear about expectations
- **Peer Support:** Recognize the healing power of community
- **Collaboration:** Share power and decision-making with guests
- **Empowerment:** Build on guests' strengths and skills
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Recognize and honor cultural differences

Professional Boundaries

Staff must maintain professional boundaries with guests at all times.

Professional boundaries include:

- Treating all guests fairly and consistently
- Avoiding favoritism or special treatment
- Maintaining emotional distance (empathy without over-involvement)
- Not sharing personal contact information (phone number, address, social media)
- Not meeting guests outside of work for social purposes
- Not accepting or providing gifts (see Gifts & Gratuities section)
- Not loaning or borrowing money
- Not providing transportation in personal vehicles (except with Executive Director approval for organizational purposes)

Communication Guidelines

When communicating with guests:

- Use person-first language ("person experiencing homelessness" not "homeless person")
- Use preferred names and pronouns
- Speak respectfully, avoiding slang, profanity, or demeaning language
- Avoid assumptions or judgments about guests' situations
- Listen actively and validate feelings
- Set clear expectations and boundaries
- Maintain a calm, professional tone even in conflict

Addressing Concerns or Misconduct

If a guest violates shelter rules or engages in problematic behavior:

- Address the behavior through established procedures (guest policies, case management, discharge protocols)
- Use de-escalation techniques (see Workplace Safety section)

- Do not shame, humiliate, or exclude guests as punishment
- Apply consequences consistently and fairly
- Focus on the behavior, not the person

All staff must follow the Mandatory Reporting procedures in this handbook when abuse or neglect is suspected.

If the child cannot be promptly reunited with the parent/guardian or staff believe the situation meets the threshold of neglect or endangerment, staff will contact Georgia Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) and/or law enforcement as appropriate.

Staff will attempt to locate the parent/guardian immediately and document the incident.

If a child is left unattended or without appropriate supervision, staff must take immediate steps to ensure the child's safety.

Unattended Child Protocol (DFCS Reporting)

Parents/guardians must follow all shelter rules regarding noise, quiet hours, and respectful behavior. Repeated safety or supervision issues may result in a case review and could affect continued eligibility to stay.

Any illness, injury, or medical concern must be reported to staff promptly. Staff may direct a parent/guardian to seek medical care when safety concerns exist.

Parents/guardians must ensure children are appropriately clothed, clean, and have necessary supplies (diapers, wipes, formula, medications) for daily needs.

Health, Hygiene, and Conduct

Parents/guardians are responsible for preventing children from running, climbing on furniture, entering other guests' sleeping spaces, or disrupting program operations.

Children are not permitted in staff-only areas (offices, medication storage, restricted storage) or areas that create safety risks (kitchen during meal prep unless staff-approved, maintenance areas, parking areas without hand-holding).

Children must remain in approved common areas and the family's designated sleeping area, as directed by staff.

Restricted Areas and Safety

Parents/guardians must have a realistic plan for work, appointments, or emergencies so children are not left unattended at the shelter.

Children may not be left with other guests, volunteers, or staff. Staff may not provide babysitting or supervision except in an emergency to prevent immediate harm.

Children must remain within the direct sight and supervision of their parent or legal guardian at all times while on shelter property.

Parent/Guardian Supervision Requirements

Davies Shelters permits children to accompany a parent or legal guardian at the Women's Shelter only when the parent or legal guardian maintains direct supervision at all times. The shelter does not provide childcare.

Guests with Children (Women's Shelter)

GIFTS & GRATUITIES

No Gifts To or From Guests

Employees and volunteers may not request, accept, or give personal gifts, money, or favors to/from guests or their families.

This prohibition includes:

- Money or cash
- Gift cards
- Personal items (clothing, food, household goods given outside official channels)
- Loans or financial assistance
- Personal services (rides, housing, employment in personal businesses)

Exceptions

The following are acceptable:

1. Organizational Appreciation Gifts (with supervisor approval)
- Guests may give small tokens of appreciation to the organization as a whole (e.g., thank-you card, small donated item for the shelter)
 - Supervisor must review and approve before staff accepts

2. Nominal Tokens

- Handmade cards or artwork created by guests may be accepted as expressions of gratitude
- These should be shared with the team or displayed in common areas when appropriate

3. Food Sharing

- Staff and guests may share meals or snacks during communal events (holiday dinners, celebrations) when the food is provided by the organization or part of a group activity

All other gifts must be reported to leadership for review before accepting.

Staff May Not Loan Money or Provide Rides

Staff may never:

- Loan money to or borrow money from guests
- Provide rides in personal vehicles (except with Executive Director approval for official organizational purposes – see Vehicle/Transportation Policy)
- Allow guests to use staff personal property (phones, computers, vehicles)

Rationale

These boundaries protect:

- Staff from exploitation or manipulation
- Guests from feeling obligated or indebted
- The organization from conflicts of interest and liability
- The professional helping relationship

DUAL RELATIONSHIPS AND ROMANTIC/SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Prohibition on Staff-Guest Relationships

Employees are strictly prohibited from engaging in romantic or sexual relationships with current guests.

This prohibition applies to:

- Dating or romantic involvement
- Sexual contact or activity
- Flirting or romantic advances
- Exchanging personal contact information for romantic purposes

This policy applies regardless of whether the relationship is "consensual." The inherent power imbalance between staff and guests means true consent cannot exist.

Former Guests – One-Year Waiting Period

Employees may not engage in romantic or sexual relationships with former guests for at least one year after the guest exits the shelter.

Rationale: Even after a guest leaves, the power dynamic and professional relationship continue to influence the interaction. A one-year waiting period allows sufficient time for the professional relationship to end and for the individual to stabilize.

Counselors: No Relationships Ever

Counselors (licensed professional counselors, therapists, social workers providing clinical services) may NEVER engage in romantic or sexual relationships with current or former clients, regardless of how much time has passed.

This is an ethical requirement of professional licensure and violates professional codes of conduct.

Consequences for Violations

Engaging in a romantic or sexual relationship with a current guest will result in immediate termination.

Engaging in a relationship with a former guest within the one-year waiting period may result in:

- Written warning (first offense, if relationship ends immediately)
- Termination (repeated violations or refusal to end relationship)

Staff-Staff Relationships

Romantic relationships between staff members are permitted, provided they do not create conflicts of interest or interfere with work performance.

Requirements:

- ****Both parties must disclose the relationship to their supervisor****
- The disclosure must be documented and reported to the Executive Director
- Neither party may supervise, evaluate, or make employment decisions about the other
- If a supervisory relationship exists, one party must be reassigned (if operationally feasible) or the relationship must end

Supervisors will:

- Treat disclosure confidentially (shared only with leadership as needed)
- Ensure work assignments and schedules minimize conflicts
- Monitor for any impact on work performance or team dynamics

Staff-Volunteer Relationships

Romantic relationships between staff and volunteers are permitted and subject to the same disclosure requirements as staff-staff relationships.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Definition

A conflict of interest occurs when an employee's personal interests could influence, or appear to influence, their professional judgment or decision-making on behalf of Davies Shelters.

Examples of Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest may include:

Financial Conflicts:

- Having a financial interest in a vendor, contractor, or organization that does business with Davies Shelters
- Receiving personal benefits (kickbacks, commissions, gifts) from vendors or partners
- Using organizational resources or information for personal financial gain

Personal Relationships:

- Hiring, supervising, or evaluating a family member or romantic partner
- Making decisions that benefit a friend, family member, or personal associate
- Awarding contracts or making purchases from businesses owned by friends or family

Outside Employment:

- Working for a competing organization (another homeless shelter or social services provider)
- Holding a second job that creates scheduling conflicts or compromises job performance

- Using skills, knowledge, or contacts gained at Davies Shelters for personal business ventures

Use of Organizational Resources:

- Using Davies Shelters' name, reputation, or contacts for personal gain
- Using organizational equipment, supplies, or technology for personal business
- Soliciting donations or support for personal causes using organizational connections

Disclosure Requirement

Employees must disclose any potential or actual conflicts of interest to the Executive Director.

When to disclose:

- Before accepting a position with Davies Shelters (if a conflict exists)
- Immediately upon becoming aware of a potential conflict
- Annually (or as requested by leadership)

How to disclose:

- Submit a written disclosure to the Executive Director describing:
 - The nature of the conflict
 - The parties involved
 - How the conflict may affect decision-making or job duties

What happens after disclosure:

- The Executive Director will review the disclosure and determine whether a conflict exists
 - If a conflict exists, the Executive Director will work with the employee to:
 - Avoid the conflict (recuse from decision-making, reassignment, etc.)
 - Mitigate the conflict (establish safeguards, require approval from others, etc.)
 - Eliminate the conflict (end the conflicting relationship or activity)
- Disclosure itself is not a violation; failure to disclose is

Consequences for Undisclosed Conflicts

Failure to disclose a conflict of interest may result in:

- Disciplinary action up to and including termination
- Legal action if the conflict resulted in financial harm to the organization
- Requirement to return any improper benefits or compensation

This policy complies with IRS Form 990 and Georgia nonprofit conflict-of-interest standards.

SOCIAL MEDIA & PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Personal Social Media Guidelines

Employees may use personal social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, etc.) but must adhere to the following guidelines when posting about work:

What You CAN Do

Employees may:

- Post general, positive statements about working at Davies Shelters
 - Example: "Had a great day at work today! Proud to be part of the Davies team."
- Share Davies Shelters' official social media posts (retweet, share, repost)
- Tag Davies Shelters in posts that do not violate other rules
- Use their own judgment about identifying their employer on personal profiles (e.g., listing "Davies Shelters" as employer on LinkedIn or Facebook)

What You CANNOT Do

Employees may NOT:

1. Post Photos or Videos:

- No photos of the shelter building (interior or exterior)

- No photos of shelter events or activities
- No photos or videos that include guests (even if faces are not visible)
- No photos of staff members at work (without their permission)

Rationale: Guests have a right to privacy. Photos could inadvertently identify guests or reveal the shelter location, creating safety risks.

2. Violate Confidentiality:

- Never post about specific guests, cases, or situations (even anonymously)
- Never share names, details, or stories about guests
- Never post information that could identify a guest

3. Post Offensive or Inappropriate Content About Work:

- Do not post complaints, criticisms, or negative comments about Davies Shelters, coworkers, supervisors, or organizational decisions
- Do not post content that could damage the organization's reputation
- Do not post discriminatory, harassing, or offensive content related to work

4. Speak on Behalf of the Organization:

- Do not make official statements or speak for Davies Shelters unless authorized
- If posting about work, clarify that views are your own: "Opinions are my own and do not represent Davies Shelters."

Connecting with Guests on Social Media

Current Guests:

Employees may NOT "friend," follow, or connect with current guests on any personal social media platform (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, LinkedIn, etc.).

Former Guests – One-Year Waiting Period:

Employees may NOT connect with former guests on social media until at least one year after the guest exits the shelter.

After one year, employees may connect with former guests at their discretion, but should consider:

- Whether maintaining professional boundaries is still important

- Whether the connection could be perceived as inappropriate by others
- Whether the former guest may feel pressured to accept the connection

Counselors: No Connections Ever

Counselors (licensed professional counselors, therapists, social workers providing clinical services) may NEVER connect with current or former clients on personal social media, regardless of time elapsed.

This is an ethical requirement of professional licensure.

Connecting with Donors on Social Media

Due to the small size of Rome, Georgia, and the overlapping social circles, staff and donors are likely to be connected on social media.

Davies Shelters recognizes that it is impractical to prohibit social media connections with donors in a small community.

Guidelines:

- Use discretion and professionalism when interacting with donors on social media
- Do not post content that could embarrass the organization or harm donor relationships
- Maintain confidentiality (do not discuss donor information, donation amounts, or internal matters)

Organizational Social Media Protocols

Only authorized staff may post on Davies Shelters' official social media accounts.

Authorized staff include:

- Executive Director
- Development/Marketing staff (if designated)
- Other staff explicitly authorized by the Executive Director

If you would like to suggest content for organizational social media, submit ideas to the Executive Director or designated marketing staff.

Speaking to Media

Only the Executive Director (or their designee) may speak to media representatives on behalf of Davies Shelters.

If a reporter, journalist, or media representative contacts you:

- Politely decline to comment: "I'm not authorized to speak to the media. Please contact our Executive Director at [contact info]."
 - Immediately notify the Executive Director

Do not:

- Answer questions or provide information
- Speculate or offer opinions
- Discuss organizational matters, guest situations, or internal issues

SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT (SECOND JOBS)

Policy on Outside Employment

Employees may hold second jobs or engage in outside employment, provided the outside employment does not:

- Create scheduling conflicts with Davies Shelters shifts
- Create conflicts of interest
- Compromise job performance or reliability at Davies Shelters

Disclosure Requirement

Employees must disclose all outside employment to their supervisor.

When to disclose:

- Before accepting a second job

- If employment circumstances change (new employer, new hours, new job duties)

How to disclose:

- Notify your supervisor verbally and in writing
- Provide: name of employer, job title, work schedule, general job duties

Documentation:

- Your supervisor will document the disclosure and report it to the Executive Director

Prohibited Outside Employment

Employees may NOT:

1. Work for Competing Organizations

- May not work for other homeless shelters or social service providers in the region if it creates a conflict of interest
- May not work for organizations that compete for the same funding sources, donors, or clients

2. Create Scheduling Conflicts

- Outside employment may not interfere with Davies Shelters' scheduling needs
- Employees must be available to work their assigned shifts
- Outside employment may not cause excessive tardiness, absences, or unreliability

3. Create Conflicts of Interest

- Outside employment may not involve vendors, contractors, or partners of Davies Shelters (see Conflict of Interest Policy)
- Employees may not use Davies Shelters' name, reputation, or contacts to advance outside business interests
- Employees may not use organizational time, equipment, or resources for outside employment

Consequences

Failure to disclose outside employment or engaging in prohibited outside employment may result in:

- Written warning
- Requirement to end the outside employment
- Termination (if conflicts are severe or undisclosed)

OFF-DUTY CONDUCT

Private Life is Private

Davies Shelters respects employees' privacy and personal lives.

Off-duty conduct is generally private and not subject to organizational oversight, provided it does not:

- Affect the employee's ability to perform job duties
- Damage the organization's reputation
- Violate laws that affect employment eligibility

Disclosure of Criminal Charges

Employees must disclose any criminal charges or arrests to the Executive Director immediately.

This includes:

- Arrests or criminal charges for any offense (misdemeanor or felony)
- DUI/DWI charges
- Drug-related charges
- Violent offenses
- Theft, fraud, or other crimes of dishonesty
- Any other criminal charges

Disclosure Process:

- Notify the Executive Director within ****24 hours**** of arrest or charge
- Provide details about the nature of the charge (you do not need to provide extensive details, but the organization needs to understand the general nature of the charge)

Why Disclosure is Required:

- Criminal charges may affect background check status and employment eligibility
- The organization needs to assess whether the charge affects your ability to perform job duties (e.g., DUI affecting driving responsibilities)
- Early disclosure allows the organization to support employees and make informed decisions

Review Process:

- The Executive Director will review the charge on a ****case-by-case basis****
 - **Factors considered:**
 - Nature of the charge
 - Relationship to job duties
 - Impact on background check status
 - Impact on ability to work with vulnerable populations
 - Organizational reputation and liability

Possible Outcomes:

- No action (charge does not affect employment)
- Temporary reassignment or modified duties (e.g., suspension of driving privileges pending DUI resolution)
- Suspension pending resolution of charges
- Termination (if charge involves serious misconduct incompatible with employment)

Failure to disclose criminal charges may result in immediate termination.

Sobriety at Work

Employees must be sober while at work and while commuting to/from work.

Off-duty alcohol use:

- Alcohol consumption on personal time is permitted
- Employees must not report to work under the influence of alcohol
- Employees must not consume alcohol while commuting to/from work (e.g., no drinking and driving)

Off-duty drug use:

- Use of drugs illegal under Georgia law is prohibited, even off-duty
 - ****Exception:**** Employees with a valid ****Georgia medical marijuana license**** may use medical marijuana off-duty, provided they:
 - Do not come to work under the influence
 - Maintain job performance and safety standards
 - Provide proof of valid Georgia medical marijuana registration if requested

See the Drug-Free Workplace Policy for complete details.

Public Conduct

Off-duty conduct that damages the organization's reputation or brings negative attention to Davies Shelters may be grounds for disciplinary action.

Examples of problematic conduct:

- Public altercations or violent behavior that makes the news or becomes widely known in the community
- Social media posts that are offensive, discriminatory, or inappropriate and are linked to employment at Davies Shelters
- Criminal activity that reflects poorly on the organization

Private life is private, but employees should be mindful that their actions outside of work can impact the organization, especially in a small community like Rome, Georgia.

REPORTING POLICY VIOLATIONS

Duty to Report

All employees have a duty to report suspected violations of this Code of Conduct or other organizational policies.

If you witness or become aware of:

- Policy violations
- Unethical behavior
- Conflicts of interest
- Confidentiality breaches
- Harassment or discrimination
- Misuse of organizational resources
- Safety concerns

You should report it.

How to Report

Step 1: Report to Your Supervisor

- In most cases, report concerns to your direct supervisor

Step 2: Report to Executive Director (if supervisor is unavailable or involved)

- If the concern involves your supervisor, report directly to the Executive Director

Step 3: Anonymous Reporting (if needed)

- If you are uncomfortable reporting directly, you may submit an anonymous written report
- Place the report in a sealed envelope addressed to the Executive Director

No Retaliation

Davies Shelters prohibits retaliation against employees who report policy violations or participate in investigations in good faith.

Retaliation includes:

- Termination, demotion, or unfavorable work assignments
- Harassment or intimidation
- Exclusion from meetings, trainings, or opportunities

If you experience retaliation for reporting a concern, report it immediately to the Executive Director.

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS

Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

Serious violations that may result in immediate termination include:

- Confidentiality breaches
- Romantic/sexual relationships with current guests
- Acceptance of bribes or inappropriate gifts
- Theft, fraud, or misuse of organizational resources
- Harassment, discrimination, or violence
- Failure to report mandatory abuse/neglect (for mandated reporters)

Other violations may be addressed through progressive discipline (verbal warning, written warning, final warning, termination).

SUMMARY

The Code of Conduct reflects Davies Shelters' commitment to ethical, professional, trauma-informed service.

Key Points:

- Maintain **confidentiality** of guest, staff, and donor information
- Uphold **professional boundaries** with guests
- **No gifts, loans, or personal relationships** with guests (1-year waiting period for former guests)
- **Disclose conflicts of interest** and outside employment
- Use **social media responsibly** (no photos, no guest connections for 1 year)
- **Report criminal charges** to Executive Director
- **Be sober at work**; off-duty conduct is private unless it affects work or organizational reputation
- **Report policy violations** without fear of retaliation

Questions about the Code of Conduct should be directed to your supervisor or the Executive Director.

TECHNOLOGY & INFORMATION SECURITY

PURPOSE

Technology is essential to Davies Shelters' operations, enabling staff to manage guest records, coordinate services, process donations, and communicate with community partners. This section establishes policies for the acceptable use of technology, protection of confidential information, and security of organizational systems.

All employees are responsible for using technology appropriately and protecting sensitive data related to guests, donors, staff, and organizational operations.

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to:

- All organizational technology resources (computers, phones, software, applications, networks, data)
- All employees, volunteers, contractors, and board members who access organizational systems
- Both organization-provided devices and personal devices used for work purposes

ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

General Principles

Organizational technology resources are provided for business purposes.

Employees are expected to:

- Use technology resources responsibly and professionally
- Protect confidential information and organizational data
- Follow security procedures and policies
- Report security concerns or violations immediately
- Respect intellectual property and copyright laws
- Avoid activities that could harm the organization's reputation or systems

Prohibited Activities

Employees may NOT use organizational technology resources to:

- Access, create, store, or transmit offensive, discriminatory, harassing, or sexually explicit material
- Engage in illegal activities (piracy, hacking, fraud, etc.)
- Violate confidentiality or privacy policies
- Introduce malware, viruses, or other harmful code
- Attempt to bypass security controls or access unauthorized systems
- Use organizational resources for personal business ventures or commercial gain
- Send spam, chain letters, or mass unsolicited emails
- Impersonate others or misrepresent identity
- Download or install unauthorized software without approval

Limited Personal Use

Personal use of organizational technology is discouraged.

Employees have access to their personal devices during work hours and should use those devices for personal matters (checking personal email, browsing social media, personal calls, etc.).

If organizational devices must be used for brief personal purposes (emergency call, urgent personal email), the use must be:

- Minimal and infrequent
- During breaks or non-work time
- Professional and appropriate (PG-rated content only)
- Not interfering with job duties or organizational operations

Excessive personal use of organizational technology may result in disciplinary action.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVICES & EQUIPMENT

Desktop Computers

Davies Shelters provides desktop computers at each shelter location for staff use in accessing organizational data applications, managing guest records, and performing job duties.

Current Access:

- Computers are currently shared among staff using a single login account
- ****Future Goal:**** Individual staff logins for better security and accountability

Guidelines for Computer Use:

- Computers must be used for work purposes only
- Lock the computer when stepping away (Windows Key + L)
- Do not install unauthorized software or make system changes
- Report technical issues to the Administrative team immediately
- Keep the computer area clean and organized
- Shut down or log off at the end of your shift

Organizational Phones

Davies Shelters provides cell phones at each shelter location for staff use in communicating with supervisors, emergency services, and community partners.

Current Access:

- Shelter phones are shared among staff
- All staff have access to the shelter phone as needed

Guidelines for Organizational Phone Use:

- Use for work-related calls, texts, and communication only
- Do not use for personal calls except in emergencies
- Keep the phone charged and accessible during shifts
- Report lost or stolen phones immediately to the Administrative team
- Do not share the phone number with guests for personal communication
- Do not allow guests to use the organizational phone except with supervisor approval for emergency situations

Administrative & Executive Devices

Administrative and Executive staff may use organization-provided computers, laptops, or personal devices for work purposes.

Organization-Provided Devices:

- Provided at the organization's discretion based on role and need
- Must be returned upon separation from employment
- Subject to all technology and security policies

Personal Devices:

- Administrative and Executive staff currently use personal phones for work communication
- The organization is working toward providing dedicated organizational phones for these roles in the future

PERSONAL DEVICES FOR WORK (BYOD - BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE)

General Policy

Employees may use personal devices (phones, tablets, computers) for limited work purposes, subject to the restrictions outlined below.

Security Requirements for Personal Devices Used for Work:

- Devices must have a passcode, PIN, or biometric lock enabled
- Devices must be kept secure and not left unattended in public places
- Devices must not be used to store guest information (see Data Storage Policy below)

Email Access from Personal Devices

Employees may access their organizational email accounts from personal phones or tablets.

Guidelines:

- Use the official email app or web browser to access email
- Do not forward organizational emails to personal email accounts
- Do not save or screenshot confidential emails containing guest or donor information
- Log out of email when finished or when device is not in use

Organizational Data Applications (Dataverse/Power Apps) - Restricted Access

Access to organizational data applications (Dataverse, Power Apps, SharePoint) from personal devices is RESTRICTED.

Who May Access from Personal Devices:

- ****Administrative staff and Executive staff only**** may access organizational data applications from personal devices (phones, tablets, personal computers)
- This is permitted because there are situations where information needs to be accessed outside of regular office hours for operational or emergency purposes

Who May NOT Access from Personal Devices:

- ****Case Managers, Night Managers, and Counselors may NOT access organizational data applications from personal devices****
- These staff members must use organizational desktop computers at the shelter to access systems

Rationale:

- Protects guest confidentiality by limiting where sensitive data can be accessed
- Reduces risk of guest data being saved to personal devices
- Ensures data is accessed in secure, controlled environments

Work Hours Access Restrictions

Case Managers, Night Managers, and Counselors should NOT access organizational data applications outside of their scheduled work hours.

Accessing guest records, case notes, or other organizational data should occur only during shifts when staff are on duty and using organizational computers.

Exceptions:

- Administrative and Executive staff may access systems outside of regular hours as needed for operational purposes

Consequences for Unauthorized Access

If staff are found accessing organizational data applications:

- From unauthorized devices (personal phones/computers when not permitted)
- Outside of work hours (when not authorized)

- In violation of access restrictions

Consequences include:

- First offense: Verbal warning and retraining on policy
- Second offense: Written warning
- Third offense: Final written warning
 - **Fourth offense: Termination**

However, if unauthorized access involves sharing or disclosing guest, staff, or organizational information, this will result in immediate termination (see Confidentiality Violations below).

Personal Computers for Remote Work

Use of personal computers for remote work is limited to Administrative and Executive staff, unless the organization provides computers for other roles.

Guidelines for Remote Work on Personal Computers:

- Access organizational systems through secure connections (HTTPS, VPN if required)
- Do not save organizational data to personal computer hard drives (work within cloud applications like Dataverse, SharePoint, OneDrive for Business)
- Ensure antivirus software is installed and up to date
- Use strong passwords and enable device encryption if possible
- Work in private locations where screens cannot be viewed by others

EMAIL & INTERNET USE

Organizational Email Accounts

Davies Shelters is implementing organizational email addresses for all staff.

Purpose:

- Professional communication with community partners, donors, and external organizations
- Access to organizational systems and applications (Dataverse, Power Apps, SharePoint)
- Internal communication (though most internal communication currently occurs via phone or in person)

Email Guidelines:

Professional Use:

- Use organizational email for work-related communication only
- Maintain a professional tone in all emails
- Do not use organizational email for personal business, political advocacy, or commercial purposes
- Include appropriate email signatures with your name, title, and contact information

Confidentiality:

- Do not send confidential guest or donor information via email to unauthorized recipients
- If guest information must be shared via email (e.g., with community partners), ensure the recipient is authorized and the guest has provided consent
- Be cautious with "Reply All" to avoid accidentally disclosing information to unintended recipients
- Do not forward organizational emails to personal email accounts

Security:

- Do not open attachments or click links from unknown senders
- Report suspicious emails (phishing attempts) to the Administrative team immediately
- Do not share your email password with anyone

Organizational Monitoring:

- Organizational email accounts are the property of Davies Shelters
- The organization reserves the right to monitor, access, or review email accounts for security, compliance, or investigative purposes
- Employees should not expect privacy in organizational email accounts

Internet Use

Employees may use the internet on organizational devices for work-related purposes only.

Acceptable Work-Related Internet Use:

- Researching community resources, housing options, or services for guests
- Accessing organizational systems and cloud applications
- Professional development or training
- Communicating with community partners or external organizations

Prohibited Internet Activities:

- Accessing inappropriate or offensive content (sexually explicit material, hate speech, violent content, etc.)
- Streaming video or music for entertainment purposes
- Online shopping or browsing for personal purposes
- Social media use for personal purposes (staff should use personal devices for personal social media)
- Downloading unauthorized software, files, or media
- Gambling or gaming websites

PG-Rated Standard:

- All content accessed on organizational devices must be appropriate for a general audience (PG-rated)
- If you would not feel comfortable viewing it on a screen visible to coworkers or guests, do not access it on an organizational device

Personal Devices for Personal Internet Use:

- Staff have access to their personal devices during work hours
- Personal internet browsing, social media, and entertainment should be conducted on personal devices during breaks

DATA SECURITY & CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential Information

The following types of information are confidential and must be protected:

Guest/Client Information:

- Names, contact information, and identifying details
- Case notes, goals, and progress records
- Medical information, substance use history, mental health records
- Legal issues, criminal history, or court involvement
- Housing plans, employment status, financial information
- Any other personally identifiable information

Donor Information:

- Names, contact information, and identifying details
- Donation amounts, payment methods, and giving history
- Communication preferences and engagement records

Staff Information:

- Personnel records, employment history, and performance evaluations
- Salary and compensation information
- Medical information and disability accommodations
- Personal contact information

Organizational Information:

- Financial records, budgets, and grant applications
- Strategic plans and internal communications
- Proprietary systems, processes, and intellectual property

Data Storage Policy

All organizational data must be stored in approved organizational systems only.

Approved Storage Locations:

- Dataverse (Microsoft Power Platform)
- SharePoint
- OneDrive for Business (organizational accounts only)
- Organizational email accounts
- Other systems specifically authorized by the Executive Director or Administrative team

PROHIBITED Storage Locations:

Employees may NOT store organizational data, guest information, or donor information in:

- Personal cloud storage (Google Drive, Dropbox, iCloud, personal OneDrive)
- External storage devices (USB drives, external hard drives, SD cards)
- Personal email accounts
- Personal devices (phones, tablets, computers) - except for accessing data through approved cloud applications (not saving locally)
- Paper copies taken home (except Administrative and Executive staff in rare circumstances when necessary - and even then, this should be minimized)

Rationale:

- Personal storage is not secure and creates risk of data breaches
- Organizational data must remain under organizational control
- Confidential information must be protected from unauthorized access

If you need to access data outside the office:

- Use approved organizational systems (Dataverse, SharePoint, OneDrive for Business) accessed through secure cloud connections
- Do not download or save copies to personal devices

Data Backup & Recovery

Organizational data is backed up automatically.

Dataverse and SharePoint:

- Microsoft provides automatic backup and disaster recovery for cloud-based systems
- Data is redundantly stored and protected against loss

Employees are NOT responsible for manually backing up organizational data.

However, employees should:

- Save work frequently while entering data
- Report any data loss or system errors immediately to the Administrative team
- Follow data entry procedures to ensure information is properly saved

Record Retention

Guest Records:

- Guest records will be retained for **7 years after the guest exits the shelter**
- After 7 years, records may be securely deleted or archived with identifying information removed
- Aggregate data (non-identifying statistics) may be retained indefinitely for program evaluation purposes

Donor Records:

- Donor records are generally retained indefinitely to maintain donor relationships and giving history
- Donor records may be deleted only with Executive Director approval and in compliance with legal and tax requirements

Other Records:

- Financial records, grant records, and employment records are retained in accordance with IRS and legal requirements (typically 7 years)

Secure Disposal of Data

When data must be deleted or disposed of:

Electronic Data:

- Delete files and empty the recycle bin
- For highly sensitive data, use secure deletion tools or contact the Administrative team for assistance

Paper Records:

- Shred all documents containing confidential information
- Do not place confidential documents in regular trash or recycling

Devices:

- Before disposing of or repurposing computers, phones, or storage devices, contact the Administrative team to ensure data is securely wiped

PASSWORDS & AUTHENTICATION

Password Requirements

All employees must use strong passwords to protect organizational systems and accounts.

What is a Strong Password?

- At least 12 characters long
- Includes a mix of uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols
- Not easily guessable (avoid names, birthdays, common words like "password" or "shelter")
- Unique (do not reuse passwords from other accounts)

Password Tips:

- Use a passphrase (e.g., "MyDog!Loves2Run@ThePark")
- Use a password manager to generate and store strong passwords
- Change passwords if you suspect they have been compromised

No Password Sharing

Employees may NOT share passwords with coworkers, supervisors, or anyone else.

Each employee is responsible for protecting their own passwords and accounts.

If you forget your password:

- Contact the Administrative team to reset it
- Do not ask a coworker to log in on your behalf

Shared Accounts (Current Practice)

Currently, shelter desktop computers and organizational phones are accessed using shared accounts.

Guidelines for Shared Accounts:

- Do not share the password outside of authorized staff
- Log out or lock the computer when stepping away
- Respect that actions taken on shared accounts can be traced to all users - conduct yourself professionally

Future Goal:

- The organization is working toward implementing individual user logins for better security and accountability

Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)

If organizational systems require multi-factor authentication (MFA), employees must enable and use it.

MFA adds an extra layer of security by requiring a second form of verification (such as a code sent to your phone) in addition to your password.

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA APPLICATIONS (DATAVERSE/POWER APPS)

Overview

Organizational data applications (built on Microsoft Dataverse and Power Apps) are used to manage guest records, case notes, goals, discharge information, and operational data.

Access to these systems is restricted based on role and need.

Access Permissions

Who Has Access:

Current Access:

- Administrative staff
- Executive staff
 - Executive Board members
- Counselors
 - Case Managers

Future Access:

- Night Managers (access will be granted when new system sections are added for their workflows)

Permission Levels:

- Security roles are configured within Dataverse and Power Apps to control what data each user can view, edit, create, or delete
- Employees can access only the data necessary for their job duties
- Security roles are established and maintained by the Administrative team

Account Creation & Management

All accounts for organizational data applications are created and maintained by the Administrative team.

New Employees:

- Accounts are created during onboarding after background checks are complete and employment is confirmed
- Usernames and temporary passwords are provided by the Administrative team
- Employees must change their password upon first login

Account Changes:

- Role changes, permission updates, or access modifications are handled by the Administrative team only
- Do not attempt to modify your own permissions or access unauthorized data

Account Deactivation:

- When an employee separates from employment, their account is deactivated by the Administrative team within 24 hours
- Former employees may not access organizational systems under any circumstances

Device & Location Restrictions

Where Organizational Data Applications May Be Accessed:

Case Managers, Night Managers, and Counselors:

- May ONLY access organizational data applications on organizational desktop computers at the shelter
- May NOT access from personal devices (phones, tablets, personal computers)
- May NOT access from home or outside of work hours

Administrative and Executive Staff:

- May access organizational data applications from organizational computers and from personal devices (phones, tablets, personal computers)
- This flexibility is provided because operational and emergency situations may require access outside of regular office hours

Rationale:

- Protects guest confidentiality by limiting where data can be accessed
- Reduces risk of data being saved to unauthorized devices
- Ensures case management and counseling work occurs during scheduled shifts in appropriate settings

Consequences for Unauthorized Access

Accessing organizational data applications from unauthorized devices or outside of permitted hours will result in progressive discipline:

- 1st offense: Verbal warning and policy retraining
- 2nd offense: Written warning
- 3rd offense: Final written warning
- 4th offense: Termination

Immediate Termination for Confidentiality Violations:

If unauthorized access involves sharing, disclosing, or misusing guest, staff, or organizational information, the employee will be terminated immediately without progressive discipline.

Data Entry & Quality Standards

Employees using organizational data applications are expected to:

- Enter complete, accurate, and thorough information
- Fill out all required fields
- Do not skip data entry tasks or leave incomplete records
- Use professional, objective language in case notes
- Proofread entries for accuracy before saving
- Report system errors or data issues to the Administrative team immediately

Performance Evaluations:

Data completeness and quality are evaluated as part of annual performance reviews (see Performance Reviews section).

Prohibited Actions

Employees may NOT:

- Access data they are not authorized to view (e.g., snooping on other staff members' records, viewing guests they are not assigned to without a work-related reason)

- Modify, delete, or tamper with data without authorization
- Share login credentials with others
- Export or download large datasets without approval from the Administrative team
- Attempt to bypass security controls or access restricted areas of the system

DONOR DATABASE & FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

Donor Database Access

Access to donor information is highly restricted.

Who Has Access:

- Administrative staff
- Executive staff
 - Executive Board members

Who Does NOT Have Access:

- Case Managers, Night Managers, Counselors, and other staff do not have access to donor information

Why Access is Restricted:

- Donor privacy and confidentiality must be protected
- Donor data includes sensitive financial information and personal details
- Access is limited to those with a legitimate need to know for fundraising, stewardship, or governance purposes

Financial Systems

Access to financial systems (Stripe, Mailchimp, Adobe Sign, etc.) is restricted to Administrative and Executive staff.

Other staff do not need access to these systems. Access decisions are made on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Director.

SOCIAL MEDIA & PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Official Organizational Social Media

Davies Shelters maintains official social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) for public communication, fundraising, and community engagement.

[Who Manages Social Media:](#)

- The Administrative team manages organizational social media accounts and has login credentials
- Only authorized staff may post on behalf of the organization

[Who May NOT Post on Organizational Social Media:](#)

- Staff who are not explicitly authorized may NOT post on Davies Shelters' official social media accounts
- Do not share login credentials for organizational social media accounts

If you have ideas for social media content, submit suggestions to the Administrative team.

Personal Social Media

[See the Code of Conduct section for detailed personal social media policies, including:](#)

- Prohibition on posting photos of the shelter, events, or guests
- Prohibition on connecting with current guests on social media
- One-year waiting period for connecting with former guests
- Confidentiality and professionalism expectations

REMOTE WORK & MOBILE ACCESS

Remote Work Policy

Remote work (working from home or other locations outside the shelter) is available only to Administrative and Executive staff unless the organization provides equipment and authorizes remote work for other roles.

Remote Work Security Requirements:

When working remotely:

- Access organizational systems only through secure internet connections (avoid public Wi-Fi when possible)
- Work in private locations where computer screens cannot be viewed by others
- Do not discuss confidential information in public places or where you can be overheard
- Ensure personal devices used for remote work have strong passwords and up-to-date antivirus software
- Lock your computer when stepping away
- Do not leave printed documents or devices unattended in public

Organizational Data Storage:

- Work within cloud-based systems (Dataverse, SharePoint, OneDrive for Business)
- Do not download organizational data to personal computer hard drives

Mobile Access Security

If accessing organizational systems from mobile devices (phones, tablets):

- Enable device passcode, PIN, or biometric lock

- Keep devices with you at all times - do not leave them in vehicles or unattended in public
- Report lost or stolen devices immediately
- Do not allow others (family, friends) to use your device if it has access to organizational systems
- Do not save or screenshot confidential information

SOFTWARE & APPLICATION MANAGEMENT

Approved Software

Only approved software and applications may be installed on organizational devices.

Pre-Approved Software:

- Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook)
- Microsoft Power Platform (Power Apps, Power Automate, Power BI)
- Web browsers (Edge, Chrome, Firefox)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader
- Antivirus and security software

Software Installation:

- Employees may NOT install software on organizational computers without approval from the Administrative team
- If you need software for work purposes, submit a request to the Administrative team with a description of the software and its purpose
- Unauthorized software installation may compromise security and result in disciplinary action

Software Updates

Keep software up to date.

- Install updates and patches when prompted by organizational devices
- Do not ignore or postpone critical security updates
- Report issues with updates or software functionality to the Administrative team

SECURITY INCIDENTS & REPORTING

What is a Security Incident?

A security incident is any event that compromises the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of organizational data or systems.

Examples of security incidents:

- Lost or stolen organizational devices (computers, phones, tablets)
- Lost or stolen personal devices that have access to organizational systems
- Suspected unauthorized access to systems or data
- Accidental disclosure of confidential information (sent to wrong recipient, left documents in public place, etc.)
- Phishing emails or suspicious messages
- Malware or virus infections
- Unusual system behavior or error messages
- Forgotten or compromised passwords

Reporting Security Incidents

If you experience or suspect a security incident, report it immediately.

Who to Report To:

- ****Administrative team**** (primary contact for all technology and security issues)
- ****Your supervisor**** (who should then notify the Administrative team)

- ****Executive Director**** (if the incident is serious or involves the Administrative team)

How to Report:

- Contact the Administrative team or supervisor immediately by phone, email, or in person
- Provide details: What happened? When? What data or systems were affected?
- Do not attempt to "fix" the issue yourself - report it so the Administrative team can respond appropriately

Timing:

- Report incidents as soon as you become aware of them
- Do not wait or delay - early reporting minimizes damage and allows for faster response

No Retaliation for Good-Faith Reporting

Employees will not be disciplined for reporting security incidents in good faith, even if the incident was caused by employee error (e.g., accidentally sending an email to the wrong person, clicking a phishing link, losing a device).

The organization's priority is to respond to incidents quickly and protect data - not to punish employees for honest mistakes.

However, repeated negligence or intentional violations will result in disciplinary action.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY & COPYRIGHT

Organizational Ownership

All work created by employees in the course of their employment is the property of Davies Shelters.

This includes:

- Documents, reports, presentations, and written materials
- Data, databases, and records
- Procedures, processes, and workflows
- Training materials and guides
- Software, applications, and code developed for organizational use
- Branding materials, logos, and graphics

Upon separation from employment, employees may not:

- Take copies of organizational documents, files, or data
- Use organizational intellectual property for personal or commercial purposes
- Share organizational materials with other employers or organizations

Copyright Compliance

Employees must respect intellectual property and copyright laws.

Do not:

- Copy, download, or share copyrighted materials (software, music, videos, images, documents) without proper licensing or permission
- Use unlicensed software on organizational devices
- Violate software license agreements or terms of service

If you need access to copyrighted materials or licensed software for work purposes, contact the Administrative team to arrange proper licensing or procurement.

SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

Account Deactivation

When an employee separates from Davies Shelters (voluntary resignation, termination, retirement, etc.), all organizational accounts and access are deactivated.

Who Handles Deactivation:

- The Administrative team is responsible for deactivating accounts

Timeline:

- Accounts are deactivated ****within 24 hours**** of the employee's last day of work
- For sensitive roles or terminations, accounts may be deactivated immediately

What Gets Deactivated:

- Email accounts
- Organizational data applications (Dataverse, Power Apps, SharePoint)
- Access to financial systems (Stripe, Mailchimp, Adobe Sign)
- Any other organizational systems or applications

Exception for Email:

- If the departing employee's role involved heavy email communication with external partners, the email account may be:
 - Password-changed (employee loses access)
 - Email forwarding enabled to a supervisor or replacement employee
 - Account kept active temporarily to ensure continuity, then deactivated when safe to do so

Return of Equipment

All organizational equipment must be returned on the employee's last day of work.

Items to Return:

- Desktop computers, laptops, tablets
- Organizational phones
- Keys, access cards, or badges

- Any documents, files, or materials containing organizational or confidential information

Failure to return organizational property may result in:

- Withholding of final paycheck (to the extent permitted by law)
- Legal action to recover property
- Reporting of theft to law enforcement (if applicable)

Data Access After Separation

Former employees may NOT access organizational systems, email, or data after separation.

Attempting to access organizational systems after employment ends is unauthorized access and may result in legal action.

CONSEQUENCES FOR POLICY VIOLATIONS

Violations of the Technology & Information Security Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

Immediate Termination Offenses

The following violations will result in immediate termination without progressive discipline:

- Sharing, disclosing, or misusing confidential guest, donor, or staff information
- Intentionally accessing unauthorized systems or data
- Stealing organizational property, data, or intellectual property
- Installing malware or intentionally damaging organizational systems
- Using organizational systems for illegal activities
- Gross negligence resulting in a serious data breach

Progressive Discipline Offenses

Other violations may be addressed through progressive discipline (verbal warning, written warning, final warning, termination):

- Unauthorized access to organizational data applications from personal devices (when not permitted)
- Excessive personal use of organizational technology
- Failure to follow password or security policies
- Minor policy violations that do not result in data breaches or harm

COMPLIANCE & AUDITS

Davies Shelters reserves the right to monitor, audit, and review use of organizational technology resources to ensure compliance with policies, protect data security, and investigate suspected violations.

This may include:

- Reviewing email accounts, system logs, and access records
- Monitoring internet usage on organizational devices
- Auditing data access and modifications in organizational systems
- Investigating security incidents or policy violations

Employees should not expect privacy when using organizational technology resources. All data created, stored, or transmitted using organizational systems is the property of Davies Shelters.

QUESTIONS & TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Technology Questions

If you have questions about technology policies or procedures:

- Contact the Administrative team
- Ask your supervisor
- Refer to this handbook section

Technical Support

If you experience technical issues or need assistance:

- Contact the Administrative team immediately
- Provide details about the issue (error messages, what you were doing when the problem occurred, etc.)
- Do not attempt to troubleshoot or fix complex issues yourself - let the Administrative team handle it

Common Issues to Report:

- Cannot log in or forgot password
- System errors or unusual behavior
- Slow performance or crashes
- Suspected security issues

SUMMARY

Davies Shelters relies on technology to serve guests, manage operations, and fulfill our mission. All employees share responsibility for protecting organizational data and using technology appropriately.

Key Points:

- Use organizational technology for ****work purposes only****
- Access organizational data applications ****only from authorized devices and during authorized hours****
- ****Never store guest, donor, or organizational data**** on personal devices or personal cloud storage
- Use ****strong passwords**** and never share them
- ****Report security incidents immediately**** to the Administrative team
- ****Administrative staff handles**** account creation, deactivation, and system management
- ****Confidentiality violations result in immediate termination****

Questions about technology or information security should be directed to the Administrative team.

ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES

PURPOSE

This section outlines policies governing organizational operations, external relationships, and compliance requirements. These policies ensure Davies Shelters operates with integrity, maintains its nonprofit status, and fulfills its mission effectively.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Overview

Davies Shelters welcomes volunteers who support our mission by donating time, skills, and services to assist with shelter operations and guest services.

Volunteers play an important role in the organization by:

- Cleaning and maintaining shelter facilities
- Preparing and serving meals
- Organizing donations and supplies
- Assisting with special events and projects
- Providing other services as needed

Types of Volunteers

Individual Volunteers:

- Individuals who volunteer on their own or on a recurring basis
- Subject to background check requirements (see below)

Group Volunteers:

- Groups from churches, businesses, schools, civic organizations, or other community groups
- Typically volunteer for one-time projects or events (meal donations, cleaning days, etc.)
- Not subject to background check requirements

Volunteer Management

Volunteer Information Management:

- The **Administrative team** manages volunteer records, schedules, and information

Volunteer Event Management:

- The **Executive Director, Operations Manager, and Case Managers** manage volunteer activities, provide direction, and coordinate volunteer events

Background Checks for Individual Volunteers

Individual volunteers who will have recurring access to shelter facilities or contact with guests must complete a background check.

How to Obtain a Background Check:

- Volunteers may obtain a background check from the **Rome Police Department**
- **Link:** <https://www.romea.us/191/Police-Department> (Contact the Police Department for instructions on obtaining a criminal background check)
- The volunteer is responsible for the cost of the background check (if any)

Background Check Review:

- The Administrative team or Executive Director will review background checks
 - **Volunteers will be approved unless the background check reveals:**
 - Violent crimes
 - Sex crimes
 - Crimes against children

Other criminal history may be reviewed on a case-by-case basis but does not automatically disqualify a volunteer.

Group Volunteers:

Group volunteers participating in one-time events (meal donations, cleaning projects, etc.) are not required to complete background checks, as they are supervised by staff and do not have unsupervised access to guests or facilities.

Volunteer Training & Orientation

Individual Volunteers:

- Volunteers receive basic instructions and orientation when they arrive for their volunteer shift
- Training is informal and task-specific (e.g., "Here's how to set up the meal," "Here's where cleaning supplies are kept")
- Volunteers are supervised by staff and may ask questions as needed

Group Volunteers:

- Group leaders receive instructions from staff upon arrival
- Groups are supervised throughout their volunteer activity

There is no formal orientation or training program - volunteers learn by doing with staff guidance.

Volunteer Access & Restrictions

Facility Access:

- Volunteers may access the areas of the shelter necessary to complete their assigned tasks (kitchen, dining area, common spaces, storage areas, etc.)
- Volunteers should be accompanied by staff or given clear instructions about which areas they may access

Confidential Information:

- Volunteers do ****not**** have access to guest information (names, case records, personal details)
- Volunteers do ****not**** have access to donor information

- Volunteers do ****not**** have access to organizational data applications (Dataverse, Power Apps, financial systems)

Confidentiality Requirements:

- Volunteers must maintain confidentiality and not share information about guests, staff, or organizational operations outside the shelter
- Volunteers should refer questions about guests or operations to staff rather than answering themselves

Volunteer Code of Conduct

Volunteers are expected to:

- Treat guests, staff, and other volunteers with respect and dignity
- Follow staff instructions and organizational policies
- Maintain confidentiality
- Conduct themselves professionally and appropriately
- Report concerns or incidents to staff immediately

Volunteers may not:

- Provide personal contact information to guests or establish personal relationships with guests outside the shelter
- Give guests money, gifts, or personal items without staff approval
- Discuss their personal political or religious beliefs with guests in a proselytizing manner
- Use organizational resources or volunteer time for personal gain

Volunteers who violate these standards may be removed from the volunteer program.

Volunteer Appreciation

Davies Shelters values and appreciates the contributions of volunteers. The organization may recognize volunteers through:

- Thank-you notes or verbal appreciation
- Volunteer appreciation events
- Public recognition (with volunteer permission)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS RELATIONS

Board Overview

Davies Shelters is governed by a Board of Directors (also referred to as the Executive Board) responsible for:

- Setting organizational strategy and direction
- Ensuring financial sustainability
- Hiring and evaluating the Executive Director
- Overseeing organizational compliance and governance
- Supporting fundraising and community engagement

Board Meetings

Board Meeting Frequency:

- The Board meets **monthly**

Staff Attendance at Board Meetings:

- **Staff attend board meetings only if specifically requested by the Executive Director or the Board**
- **Executive Director and Administrative staff** may attend more frequently to provide reports, updates, or participate in discussions
- Other staff (Case Managers, Night Managers, Counselors) attend only when invited

If you are invited to attend a board meeting:

- Prepare any requested reports or presentations in advance
- Arrive on time and dress professionally
- Be prepared to answer questions about your area of responsibility
- Maintain confidentiality about board discussions

Staff Communication with Board Members

Staff should communicate with Board members through the Executive Director or Administrative team.

Why This Policy Exists:

- Ensures consistent communication and avoids miscommunication
- Protects the Executive Director's role as the liaison between staff and the Board
- Prevents Board members from being overwhelmed with individual staff requests

If you need to communicate with a Board member:

- First, speak with the Executive Director or Administrative team
- The Executive Director or Administrative team will facilitate communication with the Board as appropriate

Exception - Reporting Concerns About the Executive Director:

- If staff have concerns, complaints, or reports about the Executive Director that they are uncomfortable bringing to the Executive Director directly, they may contact the **Administrative team** or a **Board member** (typically the Board President or Vice President)
- This ensures staff have a channel for reporting serious concerns without retaliation

Board Committees

The Board may establish committees (Finance, Fundraising, Programs, etc.) that work on specific organizational areas.

If you are asked to work with a Board committee:

- The Executive Director or Administrative team will coordinate your involvement
- Provide requested information, reports, or data to support the committee's work
- Maintain confidentiality about committee discussions

DONOR RELATIONS

Staff Interaction with Donors

Staff may interact with donors in limited circumstances, but major donor relationships are managed by the Executive Director and Administrative team.

When Staff May Interact with Donors:

Accepting Drop-Off Donations:

- If a donor arrives at the shelter to drop off a donation (food, supplies, monetary gift) while staff are on duty, staff may:
 - Greet the donor warmly and thank them for their support
 - Accept the donation and provide a receipt (if available)
 - Notify the Executive Director or Administrative team about the donation

Answering Basic Questions:

- If a donor asks basic questions about the shelter (hours, services, how to donate), staff may provide general information
- If the donor has detailed questions about programs, finances, or organizational strategy, refer them to the Executive Director or Administrative team

What Staff May NOT Do:

No Solicitation of Donations:

- **Staff may not solicit donations from individuals, businesses, or organizations** on behalf of Davies Shelters
- This includes asking for money, supplies, or in-kind contributions
- Fundraising is managed by the Executive Director and Administrative team

Exception - Social Media Sharing:

- Staff may share posts from Davies Shelters' official social media accounts that request donations

- Example: If the organization posts on Facebook asking for donations, staff may share that post to their personal pages
- Staff may NOT create their own fundraising posts or campaigns

No Independent Fundraising:

- Staff may not organize fundraisers, campaigns, or events for Davies Shelters without approval from the Executive Director

Major Donor Relationships

Major donor relationships are managed by the Executive Director and Administrative team.

Staff should:

- Refer major donors (large financial contributors, corporate partners, foundation representatives) to the Executive Director or Administrative team
- Not make promises or commitments to major donors on behalf of the organization
- Maintain confidentiality about donor identities and giving amounts

Donor Events

Staff are not required to attend donor events (fundraising galas, appreciation dinners, tours, etc.) unless specifically requested by the Executive Director.

If you are invited to a donor event:

- Attendance is voluntary unless the event is during your scheduled work hours
- Dress professionally and represent the organization positively
- Do not discuss confidential organizational matters, guest information, or internal challenges with donors
- Refer detailed questions to the Executive Director or Administrative team

Personal Relationships with Donors

If you have a personal relationship with a donor (friend, family member, church member, etc.), this is acceptable but you should:

- Maintain professionalism and not discuss confidential organizational matters
- Not pressure friends or family to donate
- Disclose the relationship to the Executive Director if the donor's giving could create a conflict of interest

POLITICAL ACTIVITY & 501(C)(3) COMPLIANCE

Overview

Davies Shelters is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which means the organization is tax-exempt and donors can deduct contributions on their taxes.

To maintain 501(c)(3) status, the organization must comply with IRS restrictions on political activity.

Prohibited Political Activities

The organization may NOT:

- Endorse or oppose political candidates for public office
- Make contributions (financial or in-kind) to political campaigns
- Use organizational resources (money, facilities, staff time, email lists, social media) to support or oppose political candidates
- Allow candidates to use the shelter as a campaign venue

These restrictions apply to:

- Federal, state, and local elections
- Primary elections and general elections
- Ballot measures and referendums (in some cases)

What Staff May NOT Do

Staff may not:

1. Advocate for Policy Issues on Behalf of the Organization (Without Authorization)

- Staff may not publicly advocate for or against legislation, policy changes, or political issues while representing Davies Shelters
- Policy advocacy (lobbying) is permitted for 501(c)(3) organizations but must be non-partisan and limited in scope
- **Only the Executive Director or Board may authorize public policy advocacy on behalf of the organization**

2. Wear Political Clothing or Accessories at Work

- Staff may not wear clothing, buttons, hats, or accessories displaying political candidates, campaigns, or partisan messages while on duty
- This includes clothing supporting or opposing specific politicians, political parties, or ballot measures

3. Use Organizational Resources for Political Purposes

- Staff may not use organizational email, social media, phones, computers, or other resources to support or oppose political candidates or campaigns
- Staff may not distribute political materials at the shelter or use the shelter as a venue for political activities

Politics in the Workplace - "Soft No"

Staff should generally avoid discussing politics at work, but the organization recognizes that some political discussion may naturally occur.

Guidelines:

- Keep political discussions with coworkers brief, respectful, and non-disruptive
- Do not engage in heated political debates that create a hostile work environment
- Do not pressure coworkers to adopt your political views

Discussing Politics with Guests:

- Staff should not initiate political discussions with guests

- If a guest brings up politics, staff should listen respectfully but avoid stating their own political opinions or trying to influence the guest's views
- ****The organization serves all individuals regardless of political beliefs**** - staff must not allow political differences to affect the quality of care provided to guests

The organization cannot fully police personal conversations, but political discussions should remain civil, respectful, and not interfere with work duties or create a hostile environment.

Voter Registration

Davies Shelters supports civic engagement and encourages all individuals to participate in elections.

If a guest expresses interest in registering to vote:

- Staff should ****not register the guest themselves****
- Instead, staff can ****arrange for a non-partisan voter registration organization or local election office to come to the shelter**** to provide registration assistance
- This ensures voter registration is conducted in a non-partisan, legally compliant manner

Providing voter registration information (how to register, where to vote, deadlines) is acceptable as long as it is provided in a neutral, non-partisan way.

Personal Political Activity

Staff are free to engage in political activity on their own time, including:

- Voting
- Donating to political campaigns (with personal funds)
- Attending political rallies or events
- Volunteering for political campaigns
- Expressing political opinions on personal social media (not representing Davies Shelters)

However:

- Do not imply you are speaking on behalf of Davies Shelters
- Do not use organizational resources or work time for political activity
- Be mindful that public political activity could affect how the community perceives the organization

Questions About Political Activity

If you are unsure whether an activity violates 501(c)(3) restrictions, consult with the Executive Director before proceeding.

Violations of 501(c)(3) political restrictions can result in:

- Loss of tax-exempt status for the organization
- Penalties and fines from the IRS
- Damage to organizational reputation and donor relationships

GRANT COMPLIANCE

Importance of Grant Compliance

Davies Shelters receives funding from government agencies, foundations, and other grantors to support shelter operations and programs.

Grant funding typically comes with requirements, including:

- Documentation of services provided
- Tracking of outcomes and impact metrics
- Reporting on how funds were used
- Compliance with specific program requirements

Failure to comply with grant requirements can result in:

- Loss of funding (current and future)

- Requirement to return grant funds
- Damage to organizational reputation
- Inability to secure future grants

Who Handles Grant Reporting

The Administrative team is responsible for grant reporting, including:

- Writing grant applications
- Submitting required reports to funders
- Tracking grant spending and compliance
- Communicating with grantors

The Executive Director oversees grant compliance and ensures the organization meets all grant requirements.

Staff Responsibilities for Grant Compliance

All staff must support grant compliance by documenting services and tracking data as requested by the Administrative team and Executive Director.

Common Documentation Requirements:

Impact Metrics (Tracked by Most Homeless Shelters):

- Number of guests served (nightly, monthly, annually)
- Length of stay for each guest
- Guest demographics (age, gender, race/ethnicity, household composition)
- Discharge outcomes (where guests went after leaving the shelter - housed, transitional housing, other shelter, etc.)
- Services provided (case management sessions, referrals, goal setting, etc.)

These metrics are typically tracked in organizational data applications (Dataverse/Power Apps).

Additional Requirements:

- Some grants may require additional documentation or tracking

- The Administrative team and Executive Director will inform staff of any additional requirements and provide instructions for compliance

If you are asked to track or document specific information for grant purposes:

- Follow the instructions provided
- Enter data accurately and completely
- Meet deadlines for data entry or reporting
- Ask questions if you are unsure how to document something

Consequences for Poor Documentation

Poor documentation or failure to comply with grant requirements may result in:

- Verbal warning and retraining on documentation standards
- Written warning
- Final written warning
- Termination (for repeated or severe failures)

Documentation quality is evaluated as part of annual performance reviews (see Compensation & Performance Reviews section).

Grant compliance affects the entire organization, so all staff must take documentation responsibilities seriously.

Audits & Site Visits

Grantors may conduct audits or site visits to verify that grant funds are being used appropriately and that program requirements are being met.

If a grantor schedules an audit or site visit:

- The Executive Director or Administrative team will notify staff
- Staff should cooperate fully with auditors or site visitors
- Provide requested documentation or information
- Answer questions honestly and professionally

- Refer complex questions to the Executive Director or Administrative team

PROGRAM EVALUATION & QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Purpose of Program Evaluation

Davies Shelters is committed to continuous improvement and regularly evaluates programs to ensure they are effective, efficient, and aligned with the organization's mission.

Program evaluation helps us:

- Understand whether our services are meeting guest needs
- Identify areas for improvement
- Demonstrate impact to donors, grantors, and the community
- Make data-informed decisions about program design and resource allocation

Data Collection for Program Evaluation

The Administrative team and Executive Director are responsible for collecting and analyzing data for program evaluation.

Primary Data Source:

- Most data for program evaluation comes from **organizational data applications (Dataverse/Power Apps)***, where staff enter guest records, case notes, goals, outcomes, and other program data

Staff Responsibilities:

- Enter complete, accurate, and thorough data into organizational systems
- Document services, interactions, and outcomes as part of regular job duties
- Follow data entry standards and procedures

Additional Data Collection:

- If additional data tracking is needed for program evaluation (surveys, assessments, new metrics), the **Administrative team and Executive Director** will inform staff and provide instructions
- Staff will be given adequate notice and training before new data collection requirements take effect
- The organization will create accountability systems (tracking, monitoring, feedback) to ensure compliance before new requirements are enforced

Program Quality Review

Program quality is reviewed by:

- **Executive Director**
- **Administrative team**
- **Operations Manager** (may be included in quality review processes)

Quality reviews may include:

- Analyzing data from organizational systems
- Reviewing case notes and documentation
- Observing staff interactions and service delivery
- Gathering feedback from guests, staff, and community partners
- Comparing outcomes to goals and benchmarks

Staff Participation in Program Evaluation

Staff may be asked to:

- Participate in surveys or feedback sessions about program effectiveness
- Provide input on program improvements
- Implement changes to program design or procedures based on evaluation findings
- Attend training or professional development to improve service quality

Staff participation in program evaluation is expected and contributes to organizational growth.

SUMMARY

Organizational policies ensure Davies Shelters operates with integrity, complies with legal requirements, and maintains strong relationships with stakeholders.

Key Points:

- **Volunteers** are welcome and must complete background checks (individual volunteers only)
- **Board relations:** Communicate through ED or Admin; staff attend board meetings only if requested
- **Donor relations:** ED and Admin manage donor relationships; staff may not solicit donations
- **Political activity:** No candidate endorsements, no political clothing at work, no policy advocacy without authorization
- **Grant compliance:** Staff must document services and track data as requested; poor documentation = progressive discipline
- **Program evaluation:** Data collected primarily from Dataverse; staff informed of new tracking requirements in advance

Questions about organizational policies should be directed to the Executive Director or Administrative team.

UNPAID LEAVE

OVERVIEW

Davies Shelters recognizes that employees may occasionally need extended time away from work for medical reasons, family care, military service, or personal matters. This section outlines the types of unpaid leave available and the procedures for requesting leave.

All leave described in this section is unpaid unless otherwise noted. Employees taking unpaid leave will not receive wages for time not worked.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

FMLA Does Not Apply

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a federal law that requires employers with 50 or more employees to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for qualifying family and medical reasons.

Davies Shelters currently has fewer than 50 employees and is therefore not required to provide FMLA leave.

However, employees who need extended time off for medical or family reasons may request a Personal Leave of Absence (see below), which will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

If Davies Shelters Reaches 50 Employees

If the organization grows to 50 or more employees within a 75-mile radius, Davies Shelters will implement FMLA policies in compliance with federal law. Employees will be notified of their FMLA rights at that time.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) ACCOMMODATIONS

Policy Statement

Davies Shelters is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and providing reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities.

A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job, work environment, or employment practice that enables a qualified individual with a disability to:

- Enjoy equal employment opportunities
- Perform the essential functions of their job
- Access benefits and privileges of employment

Requesting an Accommodation

Employees who need an accommodation due to a disability should:

Step 1: Notify the Executive Director

- Inform the Executive Director (verbally or in writing) that you need an accommodation
- You do not need to use the word "accommodation" or mention the ADA specifically
- You do not need to disclose your specific medical diagnosis, but you should explain what work-related limitations you are experiencing

Step 2: Interactive Process

- The Executive Director will engage in an "interactive process" with you to:
 - Understand your limitations and needs
 - Identify potential accommodations
 - Evaluate the feasibility of accommodations
- This may involve requesting medical documentation from your healthcare provider to verify the disability and need for accommodation

Step 3: Implementation

- If a reasonable accommodation is identified and approved, it will be implemented as soon as operationally feasible
- The accommodation will be documented and reviewed periodically to ensure it remains effective

Types of Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations may include (but are not limited to):

- Modified work schedules or shift assignments
- Assistive devices or equipment
- Adjustments to workspace or facility
- Modified job duties (if essential functions can still be performed)
- Temporary or permanent reassignment to a different position (if available and appropriate)
- Unpaid leave as a last resort (if no other accommodation allows the employee to perform essential job functions)

Limitations on Accommodations

Davies Shelters is not required to provide an accommodation if it would:

- Create an **undue hardship** (significant difficulty or expense) for the organization
- Fundamentally alter the nature of the job or organization's operations
- Pose a **direct threat** to the health or safety of the employee or others

The Executive Director will evaluate each accommodation request individually and work in good faith to find a solution that meets the employee's needs while maintaining operational effectiveness.

Confidentiality

All medical information related to disability accommodations is kept strictly confidential and stored separately from general personnel files. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis with supervisors or staff involved in implementing the accommodation.

No Retaliation

Employees will not be retaliated against or discriminated against for requesting an accommodation or for having a disability. Any concerns about discrimination or retaliation should be reported to the Executive Director immediately.

MILITARY LEAVE

Federal Law (USERRA)

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment to perform military service in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Davies Shelters complies with USERRA and provides unpaid leave for military service, training, and related obligations.

Eligibility

USERRA applies to employees who serve in:

- U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, or Space Force
 - Army National Guard or Air National Guard
 - Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service
- Any other uniformed service designated by the President during a time of war or emergency

This includes active duty, active duty for training, initial active duty for training, inactive duty training (such as drills), full-time National Guard duty, and absences for fitness-for-duty examinations.

Leave Duration

Employees may take up to five years of cumulative military leave (with some exceptions for situations beyond the employee's control).

Notification Requirements

Employees must provide advance written or verbal notice of upcoming military service to their supervisor or the Executive Director, unless military necessity prevents such notice or it is otherwise impossible or unreasonable.

Provide as much notice as possible, including:

- Dates of service
- Expected duration of absence
- Copy of military orders (if available)

Reemployment Rights

Upon completion of military service, employees are entitled to reemployment if they:

- Provide advance notice of military service (unless precluded by military necessity)
- Have not exceeded the five-year cumulative service limit
 - Report back to work or apply for reemployment within the required timeframe:

- Less than 31 days of service: Report by the first regularly scheduled work period after service ends (plus travel time and 8-hour rest period)
- 31-180 days of service: Apply for reemployment within 14 days of service completion
- 181+ days of service: Apply for reemployment within 90 days of service completion
- Were not discharged from service under dishonorable or other punitive conditions

Upon reemployment:

- Employees will be returned to the position they would have attained if continuously employed (with the same seniority, status, and pay)
- Employees will receive any pay increases, promotions, or benefits they would have received during military service

Benefits During Military Leave

Employees on military leave:

- Do not accrue paid time off or other benefits during the leave period
- May continue health insurance coverage (if applicable) at their own expense for up to 24 months, similar to COBRA continuation

Questions About Military Leave

Employees with questions about military leave or reemployment rights should contact the Executive Director or consult the U.S. Department of Labor's USERRA resources.

PERSONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Purpose

A Personal Leave of Absence is an extended period of unpaid time away from work for reasons not covered by other leave policies (such as military leave or ADA accommodations).

Common reasons for personal leave include:

- Extended medical treatment or recovery (surgery, serious illness)
- Family care responsibilities (caring for a seriously ill family member, adoption, childbirth beyond standard recovery)
- Personal matters (educational opportunities, relocation, personal crisis)
- Any other significant life circumstance requiring extended time away from work

Eligibility

All employees may request a personal leave of absence. The request will be evaluated based on:

- The reason for the leave
- The expected duration of the leave
- Operational needs and ability to cover the employee's responsibilities
- The employee's length of service and performance record

There is no guarantee that a personal leave request will be approved. Approval is at the discretion of the Executive Director.

Requesting a Personal Leave of Absence

Step 1: Notify the Executive Director as Soon as Possible

- Inform the Executive Director that you need an extended leave of absence
- Provide as much advance notice as you can - **preferably at least 2 weeks' notice** before the leave is needed
- Understand that in emergency situations (sudden illness, family crisis), advance notice may not be possible

Step 2: Submit a Written Request

- Provide a written request for leave that includes:
 - The reason for the leave (general explanation - you do not need to disclose private medical details unless required for ADA accommodation)

- The expected start date
- The expected duration or return date (if known)
- If the leave is for medical reasons, you may be asked to provide medical documentation verifying the need for leave

Step 3: Executive Director Reviews Request

- The Executive Director will evaluate the request based on:
 - Operational impact and ability to cover the employee's responsibilities with current or temporary staff
 - The length of the requested leave
 - The employee's role, tenure, and performance
 - Organizational needs and circumstances
- The Executive Director may meet with you to discuss the request and explore alternatives (such as a reduced schedule or temporary reassignment)

Step 4: Approval or Denial

- The Executive Director will notify you (in writing) whether the leave is approved or denied
 - If approved, the notification will include:
 - Approved leave dates
 - Expected return date
 - Any conditions or requirements (such as staying in contact during leave)
 - Information about job protection and return-to-work process
- If denied, the Executive Director will explain the reason and may suggest alternative solutions

Duration of Personal Leave

There is no specific time limit for personal leave. Each request is handled on a case-by-case basis.

However, the duration of leave affects job protection and return-to-work rights (see below).

Job Protection and Return-to-Work Rights

The length of your leave determines whether your position will be held open:

****Leaves Up to 30 Days****

Your position will be held open.

- Your job is guaranteed upon your return
- You will return to the same position, same pay, and same responsibilities
- You must notify the Executive Director at least ****one week before your planned return date**** to coordinate your return to the schedule

Example: Employee takes 3 weeks off for surgery and recovery. Upon return, they resume their regular position and schedule.

****Leaves of 31-90 Days****

Your position will be held open if operationally feasible.

- The Executive Director will evaluate whether Davies Shelters can continue to operate effectively with temporary coverage or reduced staffing during your absence
- ****Factors considered:****
 - Your role and responsibilities
 - Availability of temporary coverage or redistribution of duties
 - Length of absence
 - Organizational budget and staffing levels
 - Impact on guest services and operations

If approved for 31-90 day leave:

- You must ****stay in contact**** with the Executive Director during your leave
- Provide updates on your status and expected return date ****every 2-4 weeks****
- If your circumstances change (leave needs to be extended or you are ready to return earlier), notify the Executive Director immediately

Upon return (if leave was 31-90 days):

- If your position was held open, you will return to the same or a comparable role
- If operational changes occurred during your leave (reorganization, budget cuts, etc.), the Executive Director will work with you to find an appropriate placement, but your exact position may not be available

Example: Employee takes 60 days off to care for a seriously ill parent. Executive Director approves the leave and hires a temporary replacement. Employee returns to their same position after 60 days.

Leaves Over 90 Days

Leaves exceeding 90 days are considered voluntary resignation.

- Your position will not be held open
- Davies Shelters will need to fill your position permanently to maintain operations
- **However, you will receive priority consideration for rehire** if you wish to return and a suitable position is available

If you need more than 90 days of leave:

- The Executive Director will explain that this constitutes a resignation
- You will complete the standard separation process (return organizational property, final pay, etc.)
- When you are ready to return to work, you may contact the Executive Director to inquire about available positions
- If a position is available that matches your skills and experience, you will be given **priority over external candidates**
- You will need to complete the standard hiring process (application, interview, background check if required)

Example: Employee needs 6 months off to relocate and care for an aging family member. This exceeds 90 days, so it is treated as a resignation. Employee returns 6 months later, reapplies, and is rehired for an available position.

Unpaid Status

All personal leaves of absence are unpaid.

- You will not receive wages or salary for time not worked
- You will not accrue paid time off or other benefits during the leave period
- If Davies Shelters offers health insurance or other benefits in the future, you may lose eligibility or be required to pay the full premium during your leave (similar to COBRA)

Plan your finances accordingly before taking an extended unpaid leave.

Return to Work

When you are ready to return to work:

Step 1: Notify the Executive Director

- Contact the Executive Director at least ****one week before**** your planned return date
- Confirm you are ready and able to return to work

Step 2: Provide Medical Clearance (If Required)

- If your leave was for a medical condition, you may be required to provide a ****return-to-work clearance from your healthcare provider**** stating that you are medically able to perform your job duties
- This protects both you and the organization by ensuring you are physically and mentally ready to return

Step 3: Coordinate Schedule and Transition

- Work with the Executive Director and your supervisor to coordinate your return to the schedule
- If you are returning from a 31-90 day leave and operational changes occurred, discuss your placement and role

Step 4: Resume Work

- Return to work on the agreed-upon date

- Participate in any necessary reorientation or retraining

Communication During Leave

Employees on personal leave are expected to stay in contact with the Executive Director, particularly for leaves of 31-90 days.

Communication expectations:

- Provide updates on your status and expected return date every ****2-4 weeks****
- Notify the Executive Director immediately if your circumstances change (need to extend leave, ready to return early, etc.)
- Respond to messages from the Executive Director within a reasonable timeframe (3-5 business days)

Failure to maintain communication during leave may result in:

- Assumption that you have voluntarily resigned
- Loss of job protection
- Termination of employment

Denial of Personal Leave Requests

The Executive Director may deny a personal leave request if:

- The organization cannot operate effectively without the employee for the requested duration
- Staffing levels are critically low and no coverage is available
- The request does not provide adequate advance notice (except in true emergencies)
- The employee has a pattern of excessive absences or unreliable attendance
- The reason for the leave does not meet the threshold for extended time away (e.g., requesting 60 days for a vacation rather than a legitimate need)

If your leave request is denied:

- The Executive Director will explain the reason for the denial

- You may be offered alternative solutions (reduced schedule, temporary reassignment, shorter leave period, etc.)
- You may choose to resign if you need to take the time off regardless of approval

BENEFITS DURING UNPAID LEAVE

No Accrual of Benefits

Employees on unpaid leave (military leave, personal leave, etc.) do not accrue:

- Paid time off
- Seniority or tenure (for purposes of benefits or pay increases)
- Any other employment benefits tied to active employment

Health Insurance (If Applicable)

If Davies Shelters offers health insurance in the future, employees on unpaid leave may be required to pay the full cost of premiums to continue coverage during the leave period (similar to COBRA continuation).

Return to Active Status

Upon return from unpaid leave, employees resume accruing benefits and seniority as if continuously employed (except for the period of leave itself).

SUMMARY

Davies Shelters provides unpaid leave for a variety of circumstances while balancing operational needs with employee needs.

Key Points:

- **FMLA does not apply** (fewer than 50 employees), but personal leave is available
- **ADA accommodations** are available for employees with disabilities
- **Military leave** is provided in compliance with USERRA
 - **Personal leave** is evaluated case-by-case:
 - Up to 30 days: Position held, job guaranteed
 - 31-90 days: Position held if feasible, stay in contact
 - Over 90 days: Voluntary resignation, priority rehire
- All personal leave is **unpaid**
- Advance notice preferred (**2 weeks** when possible)
- **Executive Director approves** all personal leave requests

Questions about unpaid leave should be directed to the Executive Director.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

Compensation structure and benefits information is provided separately during onboarding and updated as organizational capacity allows.

PAID TIME OFF

PTO policies are communicated during onboarding and updated as organizational capacity allows.