



# TRANSITIONAL HOUSING COOPERATIVE LIVING HANDBOOK

*Interim Handbook, revised June 5, 2017*



## MISSION STATEMENT

*Navajo United Methodist Center is a nonprofit agency providing direct services and transitional living shelter for survivors of domestic violence and their children throughout the Four Corners area and the Navajo Nation.*





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## WELCOME

Dear Participant,

Welcome to New Beginnings, Navajo United Methodist Center. We are a long-term transitional housing program in Farmington, New Mexico, offering long-term temporary housing and support services to domestic violence survivors and their families. We serve the Four Corners region, including the Navajo Nation, and remain the only transitional housing program for domestic violence survivors in San Juan County. We welcome men, women, children, and those who do not fit neatly into gender identities.

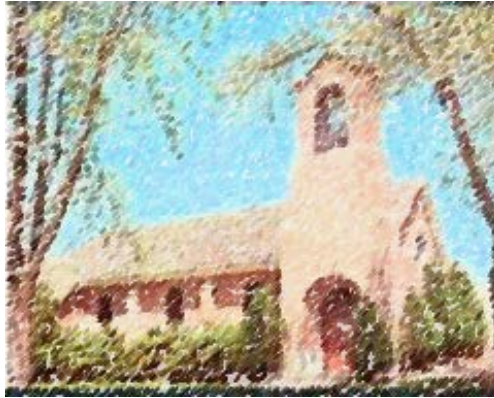
We offer you and your family a safe, long term and community-based alternative to the abusive environment you have left behind. We believe that if someone is fleeing domestic violence, you are also fleeing community you have known. A stable cooperative living program provides a ready community in an environment where a survivor/participant may achieve trauma awareness, grow more aware of potential trauma triggers and rebuild control through choice and the power of sharing.

We at New Beginnings welcome you very warmly. We hope our services and community will help you set and achieve life goals that will ultimately enable you to not only exist free from violence, but achieve a lasting sense of community and joy in your path forward.

This Handbook has been developed to provide you with a guide to our services, eligibility criteria and guidelines for all programs/services. Please familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook. It will serve as an important reference for most questions concerning accessing services and also your personal responsibility regarding guidelines, policies, procedures and practices during your time with us.

All the Staff  
Navajo United Methodist Center,  
New Beginnings Program

## **A. OUR PROGRAM**



### **A Brief History**

New Beginnings is a program of the Navajo United Methodist Center in Farmington, New Mexico. We have been offering extended stay shelter to survivors of domestic violence in San Juan County, the Navajo Nation, and the Four Corners since 1994. It was preceded by the Navajo Methodist Mission, established in 1891 on 160 acres at Hogback on the Navajo Nation. When the Mission was flooded out in 1911, it moved to its present location in 1913, establishing a school, chapel, chicken house, vegetable cellar, barn, wagon house, ranch and fruit farm. We have operated continuously since 1994, serving individuals and families fleeing domestic violence and seeking support and a fresh start in a culturally sensitive, community setting.

### **Our Approach**

We embrace a Domestic Violence Housing First (DVHF) approach with emphasis on cooperative living. DVHF prioritizes the unique safety needs of domestic violence survivors and their children. Safety, self-determination, and healing from trauma are the driving factors, rather than the shortest possible timeline to permanent housing. We offer participation in cooperatives, including our organic garden collective, culturally-specific service, housing outreach, and other support.

### **Homes & Facilities**

We are an old campus with historic buildings. Two historic homes, two trailers, and a studio apartment are set aside for participant shared living, providing up to 31 beds. The houses are shared with other individuals and families. A fifth house is occupied by staff, who perform nightly care checks and arrange evening and weekend community activities. The houses and studio are equipped with kitchen and laundry facilities. All bedrooms have a locked door.

There is a chapel, administrative offices, organic garden, and a community center with internet and cable tv. Personal lockers in the community center are available for storage of valuables, medicines and important documents. Shopping and a bus route are nearby, and the property has walks with shady old trees. A traditional Navajo Hogan is regularly used for Navajo wellness and peacemaking and Diné cultural teaching. Faith-based services are held at the chapel.

### **Support Services**

Group sessions are held weekly at designated times and locations. Individual sessions are by appointment. Participation in group and individual domestic and/or sexual violence education, life skills, mindfulness and faith-based or cultural teachings activities is encouraged. Entrepreneurial teaching sessions are also provided. Additional educational, parenting, drug and alcohol recovery support, and other sessions are provided by our partner agencies.

### **Employment & Housing Outreach**

The program performs outreach to a growing network of employment and housing options throughout the Four Corners. Advocates work with participants, employers and landlords to grow these options and tailor them to our changing participant population.

### **Native American Cultural Life**

More than 75% of our participants are Native American who come largely from the Northern Agency of the Navajo Nation. The program has a staff traditional cultural teacher, and offers traditional Navajo teachings and dispute resolution through peacemaking. Resolution through mediation, peacemaking, and group discussions are program priorities.

### **Faith-Based Services**

The program has a historic chapel and offers multi and non-denominational faith-based support, conducted in our chapel or community center, to our diverse participants.

### **Safety & Independence Planning**

Advocates work with participants in safety and permanency planning.

### **Transportation**

Transportation is available from Monday thru Thursday work hours for scheduled appointments, including medical appointments, and errands. Participants are encouraged to use your own vehicles as you progress.

## **Meals**

Participants are primarily responsible to purchase your own groceries and cook your own meals. To meet residents' basic needs, the program supplements groceries free of charge through programs and outlets including the ECHO Food Bank.

## **Organic Garden Collective**

The program runs an organic garden with production field and fruit trees. The produce feeds the program. Residents and staff also run a collective whose profits are shared among participants. The success of the organic garden truly depends on you. Acceptance into the program automatically enrolls you in the organic garden collective enterprise.

## **Cooperatives & Businesses**

The program is in the process of preparing an old Mission dormitory for use as cooperative work spaces for participants. We are work spaces that may be used for art & crafts, sewing, writing, and business. We also provide legal services to help participants set up businesses and cooperatives of their own.

## **Legal Advocacy**

Through legal service partners and subject to the availability of funds, the program provides legal help to participants in resolving protection order and custody-related issues in the San Juan County and Navajo Nation civil courts.

## **Savings Bank Account**

Participants with income sufficient to save money are required to save money toward a deposit on permanent housing. To this end, we maintain a trust account for participants and provide each with a statement each month.

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## B. PROGRAM AMENITIES

<b>Community Center</b>	Participants have unlimited access to the program community center.
<b>Lockers</b>	Residents each will have a 12x12x12 locker for their valuables/medicines.
<b>Chapel</b>	A historic chapel is used for faith-based services, teachings, and events.
<b>Hogan</b>	Participants have use of a Hogan a very short walk from campus for pre-scheduled Native American cultural teachings.
<b>Internet</b>	An internet-connected computer with printer is available for community use. Otherwise, wireless internet is provided for participant use on their own devices in the community center.
<b>Cable TV</b>	Cable tv and a DVD player is provided in the community center.
<b>Child Care</b>	The program does not presently have communal childcare facilities meeting State of New Mexico childcare facility standards. However, we are partnering with Family Crisis Center and Bright Horizons to convert a portion of the community center for cooperative childcare. In the meantime, participants may make babysitting arrangements privately between yourselves. We ask that you document your babysitting arrangements on a Babysitting Form that your advocate will provide you.
<b>Unit Amenities</b>	Each unit has a full kitchen, bath, and laundry facilities.
<b>Groceries &amp; Meals</b>	The program may supplement groceries free of charge through the ECHO Food Bank and other grocery and meal agency outlets.
<b>Transport</b>	Transport is available during work hours Monday – Thursday. To reserve the program van, participants must turn in their transportation schedules every Thursday for the following week. If that is not possible, you must give staff 24 hours notice for a transportation need. Prior to transport, participants are required to sign a <u>Vehicle Travel Waiver</u> form. Eating and drinking are not allowed in the van. Participants are required to clean up after yourselves and your children. Children must always wear seat belts, or be placed in car seats.



## C. ADMISSION POLICIES



### **Eligibility**

All survivors and their children fleeing domestic abuse or sexual assault, with no other temporary or permanent housing options, who are able to engage in collective living, and who wish to participate in a program of growth towards self-independence are eligible for our services.<sup>1</sup>

### **Adults & Families**

The program accepts adult participant survivors who may be individuals without families, or parents with children.

### **Equal Opportunity**

No applicant seeking services will be denied services based on age, height, weight, national origin, marital status, sexual preference, physical or mental handicap, gender, religion or race.

### **Screening**

Survivors are screened at intake in order to ensure that the incoming survivor's medical, substance abuse or mental health challenges are within the program and program community's ability to sufficiently support.

### **Availability**

Admission is subject to availability of both beds and the particular configuration of transitional housing that an individual or family needs.

### **Program Fee**

Participants are required to pay \$30/adult and \$10/child program fee per month on a sliding scale basis. Beginning in June 2017, a refundable cleaning deposit will also be required. For participants with pets, a separate cleaning deposit and pet boarding fee are required on an individual case basis. These fees

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<sup>1</sup> "Domestic abuse" is a pattern of coercive, controlling behavior to gain power and control over another by in a familial or intimate relationship. It can include physical abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, sexual abuse or financial abuse.

are due no later than the 10th day following the end of the month. Your advocate is required to provide you with a receipt. A participant who is able to but willfully fails to pay the program fees may be asked to leave the program.

Participants will be asked if they are on Medicaid, SALUD! Or TANF and if not, advocates will assist them in obtaining assistance through those programs, if eligible. Indigent participants who are unable to pay program fees will be provided program fee waivers once their indigency is verified.

### **Community Service**

Beginning June 2017, adult participants must complete 25 hours of community service per month, which includes working in the organic garden collective. These hours may be scaled down if a participant is employed. You may creatively design your community service with your advocate. Teenage children of participants between ages 12 – 17 should complete 10 hours of community service per month and are also expected to attend school. Helping other participants may count as community service (please consult your advocate).

Community life and community service are vital communal program components. Please suggest to your advocate ways in which you are able to contribute to community life through a unique talent or ability, such as teaching a skill, or creating art that can be sold, either to earn money for yourself, or for the program. Your contributions may be counted as community service hours.

### **Income**

The program will not look into a participant's income unless the participant is seeking a sliding scale or waiver of the program fee on the basis of need, at which the program will need to verify the participant's indigency. The program uses the indigency guidelines long used by probation and parole services of the Navajo Nation.

### **Accessibility**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), those with disabilities shall be provided reasonable accommodations in order to access services. The program will comply with all applicable statutes guiding accessibility requirements for facilities, programs, and services.

## D. PROGRAM CALENDAR



- Goals** Program and participant goals are met when you achieve safety, clarity, self-sufficiency, and/or permanent housing. Participants accepted into the program should be committed to work toward these goals throughout their stay here with our advocate staff and use support services to help achieve them.
- Length of Stay** Lengths of stay vary between 6 months to 1 year. A participant’s length of stay depends on your individualized safety and independence plan, which is reviewed monthly.
- Restriction Period** During the first 15-days of residence, you are restricted to the program campus in order to plan your safety and get you used to the campus. The “restriction” just means that you may leave for work, school, health and other agency appointments, but are to otherwise remain on campus. If you need to be away during this 15-day period for any other reason, please consult your advocate. During this time, you become settled into the program and will meet with your advocate to work towards your individualized safety and independence plan.
- Individual Plans** During your 15-day restriction period, your advocate will begin working with you on an individualized safety and independence plan, which should be in place before the end of the 15-day period. This plan is a vital document and will serve as the template for your safety and program participation. The plan will be driven by you and your needs.
- Growth & Safety** Your advocate will work with you to maintain your safety, grow skills you will need for independence, help you search for jobs, and begin looking at housing options according to your plan.
- Program Exit** A participant’ stay ends with the achievement of goals. A stay may also end for non-compliance with program rules following warnings. Egregious violations of program health and safety rules may result in immediate exit.

## E. PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES



**Confidentiality** Our program location is not publicized. Each participant in our program is escaping violence and seeking safety. Confidentiality is extremely important! Information about the program location and other participants must not be shared outside of the program.

Each participant's information is confidential unless a participant signs a release. The release will state the type of information to be shared along with the person(s) with whom it may be shared. It is important that you respect the privacy rights of other participants, both within the program and with those outside the program. Our confidentiality code of conduct for residents includes the need to respect each other's confidences and a prohibition against gossiping negatively about one another to anyone.

**"15-day Restriction Period"** During the first 15-days of residence, you are restricted to the program campus in order to plan your safety and get you used to the campus. The "restriction" just means that you may leave for work, school, health and other agency appointments, but are to otherwise remain on campus. If you need to be away during this 15-day period for any other reason, please consult your advocate.

**Overnight/Wkend Passes** Participants may receive overnight/weekend passes after the first 15 days. Passes must be approved by the advocate working with the participant.

**Guardhouse Stops** All participants and visitors entering the campus are required to come to a full stop at the guardhouse stop sign and proceed only when the guard flags you on. This is necessary as a matter of general campus safety. Repeated violation will result in being asked to exit the program.

**Vehicle Registry** The make, model and license plate of your vehicle and visitors' vehicles are to be updated and given to your advocate to be provided regularly to the guard.

<b>Visitors</b>	Due to the abusive environments that participants have left behind, security is paramount. For the safety and confidentiality of other participants, visitors are not allowed inside our collective housing units. Visitors may check in at our office and may visit with you at our office , in the community center, or on designated grounds e.g. our community farm and garden. Otherwise, all visitors are to pick up and visit with participants off-campus.
<b>Sign In/Out</b>	Participants are required to log in and out using the SIGN-IN SHEET. You need to be specific about where you are going and include an estimated return time.
<b>Check In Regularly</b>	Participants are to check in every 4 hours on the advocate cell phone when they are away from campus for extended periods of time in order for staff to determine that you are safe.
<b>Personal Belongings</b>	Each participant is provided with individual or shared bedrooms with a lockable door and also a personal locker. It is your responsibility to securely maintain medications and possessions. The program does not assume responsibility for personal injury or for the loss or damage of your personal possessions.
<b>Shared Living</b>	Participants are responsible for harmony within your units and between one another in our community. The rule against gossiping is strictly maintained. You are also responsible for cleanliness, and energy conservation within the shared units. If there are issues with one another, the program has a dispute resolution process described later in this handbook.
<b>Proper Condition of Unit &amp; Appliances</b>	Each participant and/or household is given a chore list that must be followed as a health and safety measure, especially in shared units. Unit appliances must also be responsibility used, e.g. lint cleaned and no overloads on washer/drier. Appliances that break due to misuse will be charged to the responsible resident.
<b>Groceries &amp; Meals</b>	Participants are primarily responsible for their own, and their families' groceries and meals. The program will supplement basic resident unmet food needs.
<b>Save Money</b>	Participants are required to save money towards deposits for their permanent housing. Residents unable to save on their own will be required to save in the program's trust account maintained for participants savings.
<b>Proper Parenting</b>	Participants are responsible for seeing their children attend school and receive necessary immunizations, and to ensure their children are well-behaved.

**Children's Curfew & Quiet Time**

Participants are expected to enforce a children's curfew, beginning at 8:00 p.m. on nights before school days and 9:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday nights and before or on holidays. Children are to be in their bedrooms following curfew. The curfew is important both for the children and adults. It can allow adults in shared family units some necessary "quiet time". We ask that this quiet time be observed.

**Energy Conservation**

Each shared household is separately metered for utilities. You should not excessively use gas or electricity. We ask that you stay within energy use limits. Each unit has a pre-determined normal usage range. If this range is exceeded, you will be asked to pay or otherwise make up for your excess usage.

**Pets**

Beginning June 2017, the program will receive pets who are non-aggressive and non-nuisances subject to a cleaning deposit and monthly boarding fee. Pets are normally required to be kept outside but may be brought inside in inclement weather. Any pens or kennels are the pet owner's responsibility to erect and maintain. Dogs must be leashed on the grounds unless rules otherwise permit. Pet owners are responsible to be up to date on all pet vaccines and are absolutely responsible for the pet's control and good behavior. Failure to control pets may result in the pet's immediate expulsion. The program is not liable for injury or damage to anyone caused by the pets.

**Appointments & Sessions**

Participants must attend all scheduled group sessions that they have made a commitment with their advocate to attend, and all individual appointments.

**Missed Appointments**

If you have to miss an appointment that involves a peacemaker or counselor traveling in to campus whom the program pays for their time, you must cancel at least three (3) hours before the scheduled time, otherwise you will be charged the cost of the session.

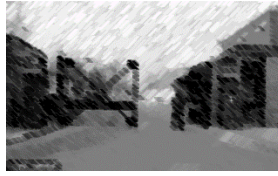
**Cleaning Prior to Exit**

Residents receive their cleaning deposit upon exit after cleaning your bedroom and after unit items are checked by an advocate. All personal belongings are to be removed. All unclaimed personal belongings will be disposed of 10 calendar days from date of exit.

**Compliance**

Participants are required to comply with guidelines set forth in this handbook. Non-compliance will trigger disciplinary action. When non-compliance involves health and safety of everyone, the participant will be asked to leave.

## F. CAMPUS HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES



### **After Hours Advocate & Hotline**

An advocate is available after hours for emergencies. The advocate may be reached through the 24/7 residents' crisis hotline. An advocate is also on hand after hours on campus at House of Joy for emergencies only.

### **Alcohol & Drugs**

Drug and alcohol use is strictly prohibited. This includes the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of controlled substances or alcohol on program property or as part of any program activities by any member of the community—whether staff, volunteers, or participants. It also includes having in your possession prescription medication that is not in your name or the names of your children. It is also against this policy to use someone else's prescription drugs. There is zero tolerance for violations that impact the health and safety of everyone in the program and will result in your being asked to exit the program.

### **Smoking**

All program buildings, facilities, and on-campus premises are non-smoking due to proximity with school children.

### **Weapons & Violence**

Weapons or acts of violence are not tolerated. While you and your children have a right to experience feelings of anger and disagreement, it is not okay to hit, bite, kick, call names, throw things, bang things around, yell, or otherwise act in ways that make staff, volunteers, other participants or your children fearful for their safety and well-being. Sometimes, giving others the silent treatment may also arise to emotional violence.

Our staff and our peacemaker are available to help and give support to you and other participants in working with others or in properly disciplining children. If staff or participants and children continue to be fearful of their safety because of abusive behavior, you will be asked to leave the program.

### **Child Protection Law**

New Mexico Child Protection laws require staff to report all instances of child abuse and or neglect to the NM Children, Youth and Families Department.

## Safety Practices

Doors are to be secured and locked between 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

Teach your children how to go to the administrative offices, to call staff on the crisis hotline, or to call 911 when there is danger.

**If you do not have a cell phone, our staff will give you a free Hopeline, which is a pre-programmed 911 cell phone.** Make sure the cell phone is always charged. Be very clear with your children where they are allowed to go--and with whom. Be sure to give your children's school information regarding who may or may not pick them up.

If you see your abuser lurking on or around campus and if you are in your car, drive to the campus guardhouse or police, or come to our administrative offices if the office is open. If your abuser comes to your home and tries to enter, do not open the door. Call 911. And make sure our staff has current and accurate information and a description of your abuser.

If you do not have a protection order and you feel you are at risk of further injury by your abuser(s), ask our staff to assist you in obtaining a protection order.

## Safety Drills

The program may randomly conduct fire and severe weather drills. If you are on campus when a drill occurs, you are expected to follow staff direction and act as if the drill were real.

## Trespassing

The program occupies a specific campus area. Your advocate will point out our boundaries to you, beyond which you will be trespassing unless attending sessions at the Hogan or other activities to which you have been invited or which are open to the public.



## G. PROGRAM FUNCTIONS

<b>After Hours Advocate &amp; Hotline</b>	The Program provides an advocate after hours for emergencies through the 24/7 residents' crisis hotline and also physically on campus at House of Joy.
<b>Morning House Checks</b>	Advocates conduct morning house checks at around 8:30 a.m. to look in on the condition of your bedrooms and common areas and see if you are in compliance with program rules. Please make sure your unit is clean, with pathways clear, and otherwise in compliance.
<b>Evening Care Checks</b>	An advocate conducts care checks at around 8:00 p.m. every night to check on you and your family's well-being.
<b>Outreach</b>	Program staff will perform outreach with employers, landlords, and housing authorities throughout San Juan County on a regular basis and maintain a database of employment and housing options.
<b>Support Services</b>	Our advocates, peacemaker, counselor, volunteers and partner agencies are responsible to regularly hold group sessions and individual appointments in diverse areas of need including domestic violence counseling, Native American cultural teaching, faith-based teaching, life skills, employment readiness, entrepreneurial information, and so on.
<b>Case Management</b>	Advocates have a duty to work with participants in the design and implementation of your safety and independence plan.
<b>Response to Needs</b>	Program staff care deeply about the welfare of our collective community that includes participants, advocates, counselors, gardeners, our peacemaker, and program staff. Needs are responded to as sensitively as possible.
<b>Openness</b>	The program strives to maintain openness and approachability. Participants should feel at ease speaking with staff on a walk-in basis.
<b>Team Meetings</b>	Advocates, teachers and counselors may discuss participant progress and needs at weekly program meetings. Participants may be invited to attend these meetings for matters concerning them, such as a dispute with another participant, or a program-related recommendation or complaint. When invited, participants should attend in order to have maximum input.

**Confidentiality** The program will respect and protect the confidentiality of each participant’s medical and/or health histories/conditions. No information will be included in case files that would identify the participant as either having or not having medical and/or health conditions. When a participant is referred to health care agencies, referral information will be contained in strict compliance with the program’s confidentiality policy.

**Holding Belongings Upon Abandonment** After seven (7) consecutive nights (bednights) of no contact or prior arrangements with program staff, you will be deemed as having abandoned the program. All personal belongings will be packed up and held for a further ten (10) calendar days. Disposal of belongings may then follow.

**Working with Non-Compliant Participants** In cases of resident non-compliance that do not impact health and safety, staff may work with you to become compliant. A first written warning may describe steps that must now be taken by the non-compliant participant. Subsequent warnings may include a statement that a future violation will result in your needing to exit the program. The participant will then need to leave the program upon further violations.

**Non-Discriminatory Reasons** If you are asked to leave, the reasons must be non-discriminatory and will be provided to you in writing. If your stay is ended before achievement of permanent housing, program staff may find you alternative shelter.

**Access to Files** Participants have the right to review your case file. To review or obtain documentation from your case file, submit a written request to your advocate, who will convey it to the Executive Director, as only the Executive Director has the authority to approve the request.

Your file will be made available for review within 3 business days of receipt of the request and may be reviewed in an area of the program specified by the advocate. No documentation may be removed from the case file.

Should you need copies of documentation from your file, a copy will be made and provided to you within 2 business days of receipt of your request.

## H. COMMUNAL HOUSEHOLD & PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES



New Beginnings is for the use of all individuals and families who need a safe place to stay for an extended period. While getting ready for permanent housing, participants are encouraged to build community with other participants. You may be neighbors for many months, sharing chores and often helping in other ways including babysitting. We ask that you be especially mindful of this as you care for your shared housing unit.

### 1. Communal Household Responsibilities

#### **Borrowing Items**

Borrowing money or personal items from participants is strongly discouraged. Survivors often have difficulty saying no. Please remain aware that each participant is here because they have experienced violence in their home or other abuse. It is important that we treat each other with dignity and respect. This includes refraining from asking others to do things, or to loan or give items to others. Persistence in attempting to recruit items, money or acts of favor is reflective of power and control, the very root of domestic violence.

#### **Confidentiality**

As a matter of community safety, Information about the program location and other participants must not be shared outside of the program. Gossiping about each other is also strictly prohibited.

#### **Children's Curfew & Quiet Time**

For household harmony, we ask that children's curfew and adult quiet time be strictly observed. Quiet time may be set aside on certain nights if the household mutually agrees otherwise.

#### **Meals**

The program encourages shared cooking, including inter-unit potlucks. Whenever you need, please ask program staff for assistance in planning such events. Remember: you are primarily responsible for your meals, but the program may supplement both meals and groceries free of charge.

<b>Chores</b>	All participants are responsible for keeping their bedroom and common areas clean and pathways free of clutter. It is your responsibility to launder your bed linens as needed. Participants should consider working together to ensure housekeeping chores and meal preparations occur on a daily basis.
<b>Clear Pathways</b>	Clear pathways must be present at all times. It is important that your personal belongings are stored in closets and out of walkways. Soiled diapers must be disposed of in the outside trash receptacle on a daily basis.
<b>Laundry Machines</b>	Advocates will work out a convenient schedule for using laundry facilities. Laundry facilities are not to be used after 9:00 p.m. Bedding is to be washed every week and more often if necessary. Participants must wipe machines and clean dryer lint traps after each use.
<b>Care of Appliances</b>	Residents must take care of and properly use their unit appliances. Breakages due to your negligent use will be charged to you.
<b>Care of Unit Items</b>	Residents must take care of unit furniture, cookware, tableware, bedding, appliances, etc. Losses or damage of items caused by you or your children will be charged to you.
<b>Storage of Medication</b>	Prescription medication must be kept out of the reach of children and must be locked up. New Beginnings is not liable for injuries caused by participants' negligently stored medication.
<b>Pest Control</b>	For reasons of pest control, all eating and drinking are to be confined to the kitchen and dining areas. An exception may be made for events held in the livingroom, but please clean it up swiftly. Eating and drinking are strictly not allowed in bedrooms.
<b>Care of Common Areas</b>	The kitchen, living room, dining room, breezeways, and bathrooms are common areas. Be respectful of the homes and furnishings.
<b>Privacy of Bedrooms</b>	Bedrooms are private areas. Participants and your children may enter another participant's room only if invited.
<b>Care &amp; Security of Premises</b>	Keep the gate closed in the backyard and remind children to pick up any garbage after they play.

## 2. Parental Responsibilities

Creating and maintaining some level of consistency for children residing in the program can be helpful in lessening the effects of trauma caused by domestic and/or sexual violence. To help you and your children develop family relationships/roles free from violent words and actions, the following guidelines apply:

### **Parents' Responsibility**

Parents are responsible for the care and discipline of their children. Ask for help when feeling overwhelmed. But remember, other participants may be experiencing similar stress and may have a hard time saying no when asked to help. Childcare duties should not become the responsibility of older children or other adult participants.

### **Mandatory School**

Children are required to attend school. Parents are responsible for arranging school transportation. When children cannot attend due to safety/health issues, children may be home schooled. Please consult your advocate for options.

### **Babysitting**

Childcare is the responsibility of parents. Advocates may attend to children while the participant is attending group or individual sessions, but if the participant attends school or is employed, child care arrangements must be made by the participant. If babysitting arrangements are made between participants, please document the arrangement on a Babysitting Form that our advocates will provide you. Non-participants are not allowed to babysit on program premises.

Note that, in partnership with the Family Crisis Center, the program is working hard towards establishing a cooperative childcare facility on campus.

### **Child Supervision**

Children generally cannot be left alone at home without their parent. Small children must be accompanied by an adult when in the kitchen and bathrooms. Do not leave young children alone in the bath tub. Children with disabilities may require a greater level of help and supervision. Consult staff.

### **Immunizations**

It is the responsibility of participants to have their children current on all standard immunizations.

### **Destructive Behavior**

There is to be no hitting, biting, yelling or throwing of objects on the property and NO jumping on furniture will be allowed.

## I. DISPUTE RESOLUTION



It is the intent of our program that all participants are treated with dignity and respect. We are committed to each participant benefitting from the program and from a safe and cooperative community. However, we realize that disputes do arise, and there must be a procedure to address them swiftly and fairly.

**Disputes between participants** should be brought to the attention of an advocate, who will try to resolve the issue through talking it through. If this is not useful, the advocate will schedule a peacemaking. If the peacemaking is successful, both sides may be asked to sign a peacemaking agreement. If unsuccessful, the dispute will be discussed at a team meeting for further measures. The team's recommendation will be acted on by the Executive Director, whose decision is final.

**Disputes with staff or volunteers.** Please follow these steps:

STEP 1: First, discuss the matter with the particular staff member or volunteer, who will raise the matter at a team meeting. You may be asked to join the team meeting. Otherwise, you should receive a written response from the advocate or volunteer within five working days.

STEP 2: If unable to discuss your issue with the staff member or volunteer, you should submit your issue in writing to the Executive Director. The Executive Director may take a number of actions, including investigation, a personal discussion with you and the staff member or volunteer, or other resolution. You should receive a written response within five working days.

STEP 3: If you still feel you have not resolved the problem, you may submit a written copy of your complaint to the Board of Directors of New Beginnings, who will respond within 30 calendar days.

## J. ORGANIC GARDEN COLLECTIVE

The New Beginnings organic garden collective enterprise is an initiative of many years standing.

The gardening initiative supplies healthy organic vegetables to our participants, who also sell them at local farmers markets and to local restaurants. Profits from this venture are put in a trust account for participants as part of their savings toward permanent housing when they leave the program.



In Diné (Navajo) culture, the land, waters, five-fingered beings and all creatures are one. The growth of the three sisters, beans, corn and squash and other plants follow the seasons and both the growers and plants are in balance with the natural path of the sun, Sa'ah Naaghéi Bik'eh. This is the foundation of iiná dóó á'ál'í', Diné life. Growing our own food helps gain and maintain the balance, Sa'ah Naaghéi Bik'eh Hózhóón Niidlj.

The original Navajo Methodist Mission and school, which preceded New Beginnings, kept a fruit and vegetable garden and raised animals as they had no grocery store to buy foods for the staff and children. There has always been a treasured garden here.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Case ID

\_\_\_\_\_  
Intake Date

**PARTICIPANT'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT/ACCEPTANCE FORM RELEASE OF LIABILITY**  
(PARTICIPANT'S COPY)

I have received a New Beginnings Handbook. Policies and practices regarding program fees, community service, cooperative living, commitment to safety, independence and self-sufficiency, leadership and empowerment, confidentiality, responsible parenting, civil rights, dispute resolution, accessibility, drug and smoke free facilities, child protection laws and health and safety rules have been reviewed with me during my intake interview. I understand and agree to adhere to the policies and practices of New Beginnings as presented in the New Beginnings Handbook. I understand it is my responsibility to review all of the information presented in the handbook and not just the summary. I also understand that it is my responsibility to request New Beginnings staff to provide me with clarification and any additional help/information I may require to fully understand the policies and practices of New Beginnings.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff/Witness Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



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Participant's Name

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Case ID

---

Intake Date

**PARTICIPANT'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT/ACCEPTANCE FORM RELEASE OF LIABILITY**  
(PARTICIPANT'S FILE)

I have received a New Beginnings Handbook. Policies and practices regarding program fees, community service, cooperative living, commitment to safety, independence and self-sufficiency, leadership and empowerment, confidentiality, responsible parenting, civil rights, dispute resolution, accessibility, drug and smoke free facilities, child protection laws and health and safety rules have been reviewed with me during my intake interview. I understand and agree to adhere to the policies and practices of New Beginnings as presented in the New Beginnings Handbook. I understand it is my responsibility to review all of the information presented in the handbook and not just the summary. I also understand that it is my responsibility to request New Beginnings staff to provide me with clarification and any additional help/information I may require to fully understand the policies and practices of New Beginnings.

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Participant's Signature

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Date

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Staff/Witness Signature

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Date