

**RESIDENT
POLICIES & PROCEDURES
FOR
NORTH HAVEN
*A Tiny Home Community***



**HomesNOW
1441 St. Paul St.
Bellingham, WA 98229**

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

The Policies and Procedures handbook is intended to be a written set of guidelines for the safe and effective functioning of North Haven, a tiny home community for homeless individuals in Bellingham and Whatcom County.

North Haven is a drug and alcohol-free community. North Haven is intended to provide a safe and stable place for homeless individuals to live while they actively seek permanent housing. North Haven residents consist of people of various backgrounds, skills and circumstances who are actively seeking permanent housing. North Haven residents are selected based on their ability to succeed in a **community living** setting.

This Handbook includes general policies for residents, a code of conduct, and a description of services that HomesNOW provides to residents. The policies and guidelines in this Handbook are reviewed regularly by HomesNOW and are changed as necessary based on input from the residents and the general public.

1.2. Village Positions

Site Manager:

The site manager is a resident who is acting as an organizer for the site and acts as a resident liaison to both the public and other residents. They are responsible for leading by example to ensure smooth operation of the site.

Assistant Site Managers:

The assistant site managers are residents who assist the **Site Manager** in acting as an organizer for the site and acts as a resident liaison to both the public and other residents. They are responsible for leading by example to ensure smooth operation of the site.

Security Officer:

The security officer is responsible for the security of the site. This includes monitoring the camera system, checking for any suspicious activity inside and outside the site, and works with other residents to ensure a safe situation.

Grounds Keeper:

The Grounds Keeper is responsible for making sure the site is maintained, this includes emptying the garbage, working with other residents to dispose of waste, and other related duties.

Kitchen Manager:

The Kitchen Manager is a rotating position responsible for making sure the kitchen is maintained and community food is organized. The kitchen manager works with other residents to maintain a sanitary and pleasant kitchen experience.

Donation Manager:

The Donation Manager is a rotating position that handles the intake of donations to the site and keeps and inventory of donations coming in and going out of the site.

Bathroom and Sanitation Manager:

The Bathroom and Sanitation Manager works to maintain a clean and sanitary bathroom experience for the site. This includes basic cleaning of the bathrooms/porta-potties and other common areas. The position is on a rotating basis based on sign-up.

Front Desk:

Residents who work at the front desk greet volunteers, staff, visitors and donors at the front gate and provides a warm welcome to the general public.

2. GENERAL POLICIES

2.1. Single or Double Occupancy

Residents are assigned a single or double occupancy tiny home upon move-in. Double occupancy units have a maximum of two individuals. If a resident wishes to change from single occupancy to double occupancy, they must gain approval from a Board member. A new application form must be filed to update records. If a resident wishes to change from double occupancy to single occupancy, they may do so upon notifying HomesNOW who will update the record.

If a problem arises between residents living in the same unit where they cannot remain as a double-occupancy home, residents must mutually agree upon who will stay and who will move out. If an agreement cannot be made, HomesNOW will intervene to assist with peaceful resolution.

2.2. Personal Property/Personal Space

Residents are responsible for securing their personal property. If personal property is stolen or damaged, HomesNOW must be notified promptly to access and review security camera footage to account for the incident. If proven, ask for the item to be returned to its rightful owner. If the item is not returned, then it's considered theft. If personal or HomesNOW property is stolen or damaged, it's grounds for self-removal from North Haven.

Residents must keep their personal property within the boundary of their designated tiny home/tent site and not encroach on the neighboring site. Hoarding of excess property is not tolerated. **Theft** of any kind is not tolerated. **Proof of theft is grounds for removal from North Haven.**

2.3. Parking

Residents that require a parking space must notify HomesNOW so that arrangements can be made for parking. If an existing resident requires a parking space, they should notify a HomesNOW representative to determine if there are any spaces available. No parking in areas where there are no-parking signs. If there is no parking available on-site then vehicles must be parked off-site in authorized parking areas.

2.5. Bicycles

One bike is allowed per resident.

2.6. Pet Policy

Pets are permitted under the following conditions:

1. Preliminary Screening by a Humane Society Technician for disease control is required.
2. If necessary, a temporary on-site quarantine is provided by technician for a minimal time needed to confirm pet health and hygiene.
3. Proof of vaccinations must be provided within 30 days and updated as needed.
4. Pets must be clean, well fed, and not have fleas or other parasites such as tapeworm.

5. No animal abuse is tolerated. Any act of violence towards an animal from a person or another animal or from an animal to human is **grounds for removal** from North Haven.
6. Residents must clean-up after their pet both inside and outside of the site (chewed up or shredded items, spilled food, poo, water, food dishes, etc.)
7. Pet noise must be kept to a minimum at all times.
8. Denial of medical care for animals is not tolerated.
9. Pet must be spayed or neutered.
10. Only 1 pet is allowed per person.
11. Pet waste must be managed and disposed of appropriately.
12. Residents need to provide an alternate contact number of a person who can care for their pet. In cases of abandonment, pets are placed in the care of a no-kill city shelter.

CATS

- Not cleaning litter box is a form of abuse and is not tolerated.
- Cats should be checked on at least once a day while residing indoors in absence of pet owner.

DOGS

- Dogs are required to follow public leash laws at all times.
- Dogs must be supervised at all times.

Pet mismanagement may be *grounds for self-Removal from North Haven*.

2.7. Inspections

If HomesNOW receives verbal or written complaints regarding a resident with evidence, HomesNOW may enter the premises to inspect the tiny home/tent as directed by the Board. If the complaint is credible and serious (ex: fire hazard, unsanitary conditions, theft, or possession or distribution of drugs, alcohol, or weapons), an inspection may be conducted immediately. If evidence is found during the inspection (ex: candles, stolen items, drugs, alcohol, or weapons), ***this is grounds for self-Removal from North Haven***.

Regular maintenance inspections will happen every 60 days, with a 7-day notice. Residents must be present for all inspections unless there's a risk of imminent danger or risk to the North Haven Community.

2.8. Fire Safety

Cooking is only permitted in designated cooking or kitchen spaces. Grills, toasters, and microwaves must not be left unattended when in use. The only type of heating devices authorized inside tiny homes are portable oil-filled heaters or infrared radiant heaters that will be supplied with the unit.

Fireworks and candles are not allowed to be lit on site. **Smoking is not allowed inside tiny homes** or structures; smoking is only allowed in the designated smoking area. Fire extinguishers are placed throughout the site in accordance with state law. In the event of a fire, residents must call 911 immediately and evacuate to a safe location.

2.9. Emergencies

In the event of an emergency (police, fire, ambulance required), residents should immediately call 911. Residents must notify HomesNOW as soon as realistically and safely possible.

After any incident requiring police, fire, or EMT dispatch, the HomesNOW Board will meet to evaluate the cause of the incident and determine if further action is necessary to ensure the safety of all residents. This may include updating policies, updating resident medical information, issuing warnings, and/or removal of a resident, if necessary.

2.10. Violence/Abuse/Discrimination

Violence, physical abuse, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, and intentional damage to others' property are not tolerated, and ***are grounds for immediate removal from North Haven.***

Prejudiced, racist, sexist, degrading, or discriminatory remarks are not tolerated. Harassment of any kind is not tolerated. Bullying is not tolerated. Residents spreading rumors about other residents is not tolerated. *These are all grounds for removal from North Haven.*

HomesNOW adheres to fair housing practices and prohibits residents and staff from harassing, intimidating, threatening or coercing other residents because of their race, religion, national origin, disability, or other protected class.

Depending on the severity of the incident and at HomesNOW's discretion, we may ask the resident to leave immediately or implement appropriate consequences. **Any concerns of misconduct or any illegal activity must be reported to HomesNOW immediately.**

2.11. Weapons

Knives longer than 3.5-inches and all firearms are strictly prohibited from the site; possession of these items at North Haven is ***grounds for immediate removal from North Haven.***

Items deemed as weapons (other than those that are prohibited) will be stored in a safe location. Use of any item as a weapon to injure, threaten, or harass others is not tolerated and **will result *immediate removal*** from North Haven Tiny Home Community.

2.12. Quiet Hours

Quiet hours on the site are from 9pm to 9am, every day. **During quiet hours, residents are expected to minimize noise so that it cannot be heard outside of their tiny home/tent and does not disturb their neighbors. Any time a resident reasonably requests another resident to lower their volume,** the neighboring resident is expected to respectfully do so. Residents are encouraged to directly speak to each other to resolve issues. Residents are asked to bring any recurring complaints to discussion at meetings to find peaceful conflict resolution. Residents are expected to behave respectfully and cooperatively and **consider the impact of their behavior on the rest of the community.**

2.13. Guest Policies

Visitors/guests must be **checked in and checked out** by the resident. **The resident must be present on-site at all times while visitors or guests are present.** The resident is responsible for the behavior of their visitors/guests. Visitors are permitted to visit for 4 hours a day. **Visitors/guests are not permitted to stay overnight.** Visitors must consent to a background check upon the request of HomesNOW. **Refusal will result in the guest being asked to leave North Haven.**

Food is available to guests if prepared by a resident or if the food belongs to the specific resident giving the food. Even though there's no overnight guests, if Residents need provisions for hotel rooms for loved ones during specific circumstances, HomesNOW is open to helping with that depending on the circumstances.

2.14. Cleanliness & Sanitation

Residents must maintain cleanliness (inside and outside their unit) and clean up their own waste and mess **in common areas.** Residents are expected to minimize offensive odors and scents that may disturb their neighbors. Any time a resident reasonably requests another resident to address sensitive odors, the neighboring resident is expected to respectfully do so. Residents are asked to bring any recurring complaints to

discussion at meetings to find peaceful conflict resolution. Residents are also encouraged to approach each other directly about any mess or problems related to cleanliness or sanitation.

2.15. Substance Use

North Haven is a drug and alcohol-free community. Residents are not allowed to possess or consume alcohol on the site. Illegal drugs are not permitted on or offsite. Furthermore, residents are not allowed to be present on site while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. However, prescription medications, tobacco, and cannabis are permitted. All smoking must be done in the designated smoking areas.

No smoking is allowed in tiny homes, tents, or other structures. Smoking is allowed in designated smoking areas only. **If evidence of smoke contamination of the structure is found, that resident must restore the tiny home to its uncontaminated condition, either through cleaning or replacement of contaminated parts.**

If a resident appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on-site (based on their behavior, smell of alcohol, etc.), they will be asked to take either a drug test or breathalyzer test (as appropriate). **Behaviors that may warrant a drug/alcohol test may include:** erratic behavior, mood swings, increase in mental instability, anger management issues, etc. If the resident takes the drug/breathalyzer test and fails, ***appropriate consequences will be implemented depending on the situation. This may be grounds for removal from North Haven.*** Health information voluntarily shared with HomesNOW by guests may be used in part to confirm reported health conditions that may account for unusual behavior unrelated to substance abuse.

HomesNOW and professional outreach team(s) coordinate to direct residents to services related to any health needs that become apparent while residing at North Haven. Unresolved and reoccurring concerns will be evaluated by HomesNOW and appropriate actions will be taken. Residents in rehabilitation are required to work closely with their case worker.

2.16. Resident Remaining On-Site

Unless given proper notification, each resident may only leave site for 72 hours before returning. If residents need to leave North Haven for longer than 72 hours (EX: family reunion, wedding, employment, etc.). They need to provide contact information for who they will be staying with, and for how long. For new residents in the first 2 weeks, it is 24 hours. This is so that in the first few weeks, new residents can get to know the current residents. ***This may be grounds for removal from North Haven if these terms are not honored.***

2.17. False Information and Rumors

Sharing false information and spreading rumors is not permitted at North Haven. These activities can hurt trust between residents, staff and volunteers. This can also lead to incorrect actions being taken to rectify a false situation, which harms everyone involved. Residents who violate this policy might be subject to increased scrutiny with future claims. If a resident has reasonable suspicion that false information is being perpetuated, they should contact a staff member to work together to find a solution.

2.18. Direct & Indirect Antagonization

Direct or Indirect intentional antagonization is not permitted at North Haven. Some examples may include writing passive-aggressive notes, egging on/pushing the buttons of other residents or trying to trigger people in various ways. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary measures. Residents are also encouraged to approach each other directly about any personal problems or issues related to getting along. If the situation cannot be rectified, residents should let a staff member know about the incident so that the staff can take further action to rectify the situation.

2.19. Stable Community

Rules and policies are enforced in order to maintain stable and mutually beneficial results for the community and enforcement will be fact specific.

2.20. Intake Process & Orientation Period

Intake Process:

Once an applicant has been approved after the admissions and screening process, and if there's an opening at a HomesNOW location, the applicant will be interviewed. During the interview, the basic protocols and expectations of living at the village will be explained. If the applicant agrees to the terms of residency, they will be invited to the village for a formal "meet and greet" meeting. This meeting is for current residents to get to know the applicant and ask questions.

Following the "meet and greet," residents of the village will vote on whether the applicant will be granted residency based on the following objective criteria:

1. Completion of the screening process, including background checks and warrant checks.
2. Agreement to participate in regular household chores and follow basic house rules.
3. Commitment to actively seeking permanent housing.
4. Willingness to participate in weekly meetings, with reasonable accommodations for scheduling conflicts.

The vote is anonymous and must be based solely on these objective criteria. Each resident is given a slip of paper to vote yes/no/abstain. The counting of votes is done in full view of those in the meeting to ensure transparency and prevent tampering. Any deviation from fair housing practices during the voting process will be addressed by the designated fair housing officer, Sandra Felix. If a valid claim of discrimination is made, the applicant will be granted a hearing by the board, which will decide based on objective criteria.

Orientation Period:

When new residents become part of the village, there is an orientation period of one week.

During this period:

1. No guests are permitted, allowing residents to acclimate and get to know each other.
2. New residents must be onsite and home by 10 PM for the first week.

2.21. Removal Procedure

Removals at villages managed by HomesNOW are a last resort. Residents and staff should do as much as reasonably possible to resolve disputes amicably. Removal decisions must be based on fact-based criteria, not subjective opinions, and in compliance with fair housing practices.

Conditions which warrant an immediate removal:

1. Violence, abuse, discrimination, or threats thereof.
2. Destruction of personal, public, or HomesNOW property.
3. Illegal activities.

Removal Procedure – Board/Executive Decision:

1. Evidence for the need for removal is presented to the board/executive, including resident testimony.
2. The board/executive decides on removal based on objective evidence.
3. If removal is decided, the resident is given written notice with a timeline to vacate (24/48/72 hours or longer, depending on the severity and circumstances).

Removal Procedure – Resident Decision:

1. Evidence for removal is presented to residents and staff.
2. The resident facing removal is given at least a 3-day notice of a potential removal meeting.
3. A meeting with all residents and a non-resident staff member is held. Each resident, including the one facing removal, can present their evidence and testimony.
4. The village votes on removal by majority, based on objective criteria.
5. The vote is anonymous. Each resident votes yes/no/abstain, and votes are counted in full view and may be recorded on video.

6. If removal is decided, the resident is given written notice with a timeline to vacate (24/48/72 hours or longer, depending on the severity and circumstances).

Conditions and Restrictions:

1. In case of a tie vote, removal will not occur.
2. Immediate removal cases (violence, property destruction, illegal activities) require only a board/executive decision.
3. Less serious cases (e.g., disruptive behavior, not performing chores) require multiple complaints (typically at least 5) to trigger a removal procedure.
4. Any removal procedure must be based on sufficient evidence of rule violations. If insufficient evidence exists, the board/executive can prevent a vote, and the decision may be appealed to the board for review based on available evidence.

2.22. Vehicle Use Policy

The insured village vehicles are used for village business for the purpose of the shared benefit of the residents of the village. This includes refilling propane and water, getting groceries, supplies for the village, food bank, attending important appointments related to housing, medical appointments, emergencies, etc.

Driver's must have a valid driver's license, must ask for permission from a staff member and they must use the check-in/check-out sheet in order to drive the vehicle. All drivers also need to have a working cell phone number and maintain communications as needed while driving the vehicle. Unless it's an emergency or a specific situation arranged ahead of time (EX: A resident getting off on night shift when buses don't run), the vehicle should not leave the premises during afterhours (10PM – 8AM).

3. Services

3.1. Food

The community kitchen is open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week for the convenience of the residents. Residents will prepare their own food and will be responsible for properly storing and disposing of their food and maintaining a clean kitchen and dining area. Residents who wish to prepare meals for themselves and other residents are welcome to do so.

Residents must label all food with their name. Residents must put the date on any leftovers or other food that has been taken out of its package. Any food that is left in the fridge after 3 days past that date will be thrown away. HomesNOW will coordinate with the Bellingham Food Bank to provide food for the residents. The Sikh community may provide a community meal once per week. If other volunteers or businesses would like to provide food donations, all public health regulations on food handling and storage will be followed. Any volunteer that prepares food will be required to have a WA State Food Workers card.

3.2. Supplies

Supplies such as hygiene products, blankets, furniture, and other donated items are provided to ensure all residents have access to necessary resources. These supplies are distributed by HomesNOW, the Resident Assistant, or the Donations Lead.

To maintain a safe and organized living environment, and in compliance with city permit conditions, it is important that we manage our inventory effectively. Therefore, we ask that residents only keep items that they regularly use and avoid storing unused or unwanted items. This helps us ensure that donations are available for those who need them most and that our community spaces remain clutter-free and welcoming.

If there are any specific inventory needs or requests, the Donations Lead will notify HomesNOW, and we will make every effort to fulfill these needs promptly.

3.3. Transportation

Bus passes are available as needed. Other modes of public transportation may be available to residents based on specific personal need.

3.4. Support Services

North Haven will serve as a central location for service providers to meet with residents to determine their individual needs. HomesNOW will coordinate with other service providers and providers of shelters for homeless persons within the County and will inquire about the availability of existing resources with these providers. It is recommended that any chronic health and/or mental health conditions be assessed as a prerequisite for residency. Case worker(s) will identify which support services are needed (if any) based on a preliminary evaluation.

Examples of support services may include:

- Job training accessibility
- Mental health assessment
- Counseling for drug/alcohol recovery
- DSHS follow-ups and reviews

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) may provide additional services to the residents of North Haven. DSHS may host mobile community services at North Haven once per month. DSHS may assist residents with determining eligibility for cash and food assistance programs, child care benefits, Medicare, and Medicaid. Applications for aid are available at the on-site office.

3.5. Security Services

The site is monitored by 24/7 video surveillance. 1080P 60HZ HD security cameras are placed around the perimeter of the property to monitor all activity occurring on and surrounding the perimeter of the site.

- Camera use on the site is necessary to protect rights of all residents as well as neighbors in the area from any potential problems or unlawful activity.
- Site location is monitored remotely by HomesNOW through an application on the phone and/or PC to ensure stability at the site.
- Security cameras are **not** installed inside tiny homes or bathrooms; this measure is to preserve the privacy and rights of the site residents.

3.6. Waste Management

Residents are expected to adhere to all state laws and county health regulations. Every resident must practice responsible self-care and proper waste disposal to avoid cross contamination, illness, and/or disease. A dumpster, recycling bin, food waste bin, and trash cans are provided on the site for use by residents. Residents are responsible for disposal of their trash and/or recycling and maintaining a clean and orderly environment on the premises and surrounding areas. Every resident is responsible for trash detail, recycling, and waste management. Portable toilets are located throughout the site and are equipped with hand sanitizer. A sink with running water is available in the kitchen for hand washing.

3.7. Repairs and Maintenance

Repairs and maintenance are handled by HomesNOW. Residents must notify either the HomesNOW of any needed repairs or maintenance promptly. If an emergency repair is required, residents must contact HomesNOW as soon as possible.

4. NEW RESIDENT MOVE-IN PROCEDURES

The following describes the move-in process for new residents:

1. New residents are greeted with a **warm welcome and treated with respect.**
2. General policies and procedures are explained to all new residents.
3. HomesNOW has new residents sign the City of Bellingham's Liability Release Form and the North Haven Resident Agreement.
4. Within 48 hours, HomesNOW will have the resident complete the Confidential Intake Form, which contains emergency contact information, documents physical and mental health status, health insurance, medications, allergies, etc.).
5. An existing resident or HomesNOW volunteer will give the new resident a tour of the site.
6. New residents are assigned their designated tiny home and shown to their tiny home.
7. HomesNOW or existing residents provide the new resident with any supplies needed for the initial move-in. A unit number is located on each unit for ease of identification. A list of assigned tiny homes/tents and residents is maintained by HomesNOW.
8. HomesNOW provides the city with a bi-weekly update of new residents, residents that have left, etc.

HomesNOW will maintain the following forms and documents for each resident:

- City's Liability Release Form
- North Haven Resident Agreement
- Confidential Intake Form
- Copy of issued identification card – or – Form for ID is filled out and signed
- Social worker documents

5. ACCEPTANCE OF THE RULES

By signing this handbook, you are agreeing to abide by these rules and standards. If you can't follow these rules, and basic corrective steps are not achievable, you agree to leave the premises.

NAME:

CASE MANAGER:

DATE (MM/DD/YYYY):

SIGNATURE
