



Everyone needs a home

HFS Shelters' Admissions Policy

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Homes First is committed to meeting, and exceeding when possible and appropriate, the admissions' guidelines as set out in the Toronto Shelter Standards.

This policy is designed to support Homes First Society shelters' mandates to provide shelter to homeless individuals by providing flexibility while protecting the rights of others.

During admission, staff will follow the Intake Procedures and Admissions Procedures.

Policy:

All individuals who identify as a member of the particular resident group served by the shelter will be admitted to the shelter provided that:

- there is a bed available;
- the resident does not require immediate medical or psychiatric attention;
- the resident does not have an active service restriction;
- the residents' behaviour will not compromise the health and safety of the resident or other individuals within the shelter.

If the shelter is unable to meet the needs of the resident, shelter staff will make every attempt to assist them in finding a more appropriate shelter (i.e., when the shelter is not wheelchair accessible).

- Individuals seeking a shelter bed but do not meet the criteria of that shelter will be assisted by staff in finding a bed at an appropriate site.
- All denials of admission will be recorded in the referral notes in SMIS in real-time and documented in the Communication Logbook.
- If an individual seeking a shelter bed has an active service restriction, admission will be refused unless there are special circumstances. Staff will refer them to a shelter with an available bed.

Admission decisions will not be based on a resident's substance use; reasons for non-admission are solely based on behaviour. Individuals with violent behaviour will not be admitted.

All residents will be required to provide the information and signatures required by Hostel Services for SMIS intake and admission procedures.

Staff will record all admissions in SMIS in real-time.

During admission, staff are to provide new residents with an overview of their rights and responsibilities, as well as information about shelter services and staff positions. Staff are to review the Complaint Process and the HFS Consent Form with residents. In addition, staff will explain the instructions and rules for accessing shelter resources and amenities.

HFS Shelter Resident Rights and Resident Responsibilities are explained during intake as well as posted in a conspicuous area of the shelter. Key policies and rules are also posted in relevant locations.

Residents are required to complete a shower and all laundry before admission.

HFS Shelters are 24-hour shelters and are staffed accordingly. There are curfews at all HFS Shelters, excluding Strachan House. Overnight passes may be granted in cases of emergencies or in instances where it applies to the resident's case management goals. This information is explained at time of admission.

Length of Stay:

There is no prescribed limit to the length of time a resident may stay in an emergency shelter. Lengths of stay will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Shelter staff will use the benchmark of ninety days as a trigger for initiating a reassessment of a resident's service plan.

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- As per Toronto Shelter Standards, 2016: Sections 8.3(a)(i).
 - Created on February 24, 2017.
 - Approved by HFS Governance and Nominating Committee on April 12, 2017; to be reviewed in 2022.
 - Approved by HFS Board of Directors on April 26, 2017.
 - This Policy applies to all Homes First Shelters.