

Emergency Night Shelter Rules

Women's Program (rev. 2320)
321 East Walnut Street Evansville, IN 47715
(812) 402-0424
unitedcaringservices.org



The UCS Women's Shelter is an overnight emergency shelter for single women (16 years old and over).

UCS Mission

To provide values-based, low barrier, sustainable, and high-quality homeless shelters, services, and solutions.

UCS Vision

To be a place where individuals, organizations, and agencies collaboratively create a community of caring.

UCS Values

Dignity, Faith, Commitment, Compassion, Integrity, Service, Passion, Unconditional Love

Program Guidelines

Hours of Operation

The Women's Night Shelter, located at Ruth's House, is open to all guests from 6:00 pm – 7:00 am, 7 days a week. Additional week day or weekend hours during the day may also be available.

Schedule

- New intakes: 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm, 7 days a week
- Current guest sign in: 6:00 pm – 9:30 pm; all guests signed in by 9:30 pm
- Quiet hours: 10:00 pm to 6:00 am
- Showers and all details completed: 10:00 pm
- Lights out: 10:00 pm
- Downstairs shut down hours: 10:00 pm to 5:00 am

Once a guest has signed in for the night, she must remain on shelter premises. Guests who decide leave shelter premises will not be allowed back in until the next evening.

Guests with verified employment or school with documented proof of their schedule may seek alternative arrangements to the above schedule with the program coordinator.

Length of Stay

Guests are allowed to stay up to 90 days (3 months) at a time. Positive, documented progress toward overcoming barriers and gaining permanent housing will allow exceptions for longer stays. We value stability and success toward exiting homelessness more than a mandatory length of stay.

Access to Services

In order to access UCS night shelter services, guests must:

- Be able to provide self-care. Guests who are assessed as needing a higher level of assistance than our program provides will be referred to an appropriate agency/refused services.
- Meet the guidelines for being homeless (per HUD Homeless verification form).
- Not be barred from women's night shelter services/UCS properties.

Entry Procedures

At entry, all guests will undergo an infestation check, sign in, change clothes, then shower and wash their hair. There is no exiting the intake area for smoking in the courtyard prior to showers. New guests will return to the intake area to receive their bed/tote assignment, bed sheets, and intake into the program. Hygiene and other personal items will be provided if available.

Note: Bedding, pillows, comforters, blankets, sheets, pillowcases, towels, and wash cloths are property of UCS and must be returned upon program exit/discharge.

Tote Assignment

Upon entry, guests will be assigned a small and a large tote that have been cleaned and wiped down with alcohol. Each tote will have a number on it that coincides with a bed number. One small plastic tote will remain in the intake area at all times to store belongings that are not allowed into the facility.

The small totes might contain items like a purse, backpack, outdoor shoes, along with a pair of flip flops/house shoes for the guest to use to enter Ruth's House.

Outside shoes are not allowed to be worn into Ruth's House. They are to be sprayed down with alcohol and placed in the small tote each day when entering the garage.

The larger room tote is for clothing, personal possessions and hygiene items. Weapons are not allowed on premises and may be confiscated.

Bed Bug Protocol

NO ITEMS/POSESSIONS WILL ENTER RUTH'S HOUSE UNLESS IT CAN BE/HAS BEEN SUBJECT BED BUG PROTOCOLS -- THOROUGHLY WIPED DOWN WITH ALCOHOL AND/OR HEATED IN THE DRYER. ITEMS WITH CASES WILL NEED TO BE REMOVED FROM THE CASES AND WIPED DOWN. ITEMS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR THE DRYER LIKE BAGS AND BACKPACKS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED IN THE LIVING AREA.

Personal Items and Storage

The number of personal items allowed for each guests is limited to the size of the tote(s). The lid on the guest's large tote must be able to close properly. Clothing hanging out of the tote or off the bed/bunk is not acceptable.

Beds must be made every morning and totes properly placed/stacked before guest leaves for the day. Trash and clutter must be cleared. Guests may not re-enter the night shelter area/facility after exiting in the morning. If a guest feels (s)he might need some of his/her belongings during the day, then they need to be taken in the morning at the time of exit.

After program discharge/exit, clothes and belongings will be kept for 48 hours. If the clothes and belongings are not claimed within 48 hours, they will be discarded and/or donated to United Caring Services for program use.

UCS is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Guests are encouraged to ALWAYS safeguard their valuables.

Program Expectations

Detail Assignments

- Toward building life skills and responsibility, everyone staying in the Night Shelter program (especially those without current employment) at UCS are assigned/eligible to be assigned a detail assignment and asked to complete that assignment as instructed. To the best of our ability, case management will ensure assignments meet the guests' capabilities.
- If on an approved pass, it is the guest's responsibility to find someone to complete their detail; however, if assistance is needed in finding coverage, staff will assist.

Guest Passes

- Night shelter guests will be eligible for two (2) overnight passes and one (1) midnight extended curfew pass after staying thirty (30) consecutive days.
- Passes are earned at the beginning of every month. They do **not** accumulate.
- Guests should inform shelter staff (at least 24 hours in advance) that they will be utilizing a pass in order to prevent a NC/NS violation and program discharge.
- Guests may be offered additional passes at various times and holidays.

Program Goals

- Guests should seek out and apply for community assistance to help stabilize their lives end their homelessness - such as food stamps, Medicaid, subsidized housing, etc. UCS case management will assist and support these efforts.
- Guests are to meet with the program coordinator for case management **at least** once a week in order to report progress made toward overcoming barriers, housing search/applications, employment, healthcare, finding appropriate support groups and volunteerism.
- Guests are encouraged to take ownership of their stay and journey toward self-sufficiency and housing by completing their detail assignments, keeping themselves, their rooms, and the facility clean, by washing their own bedding every week, and by encouraging and celebrating other guests' success.
- Guests should seek available community resource information and applications for several local agencies and programs in the night shelter office. Guests should coordinate these applications and efforts with the program coordinator/case manager. Several agencies (i.e. ECHO Health Outreach, ECHO Housing, Aurora, Aids Resource Group, Outreach Ministries, Peace Zone, SWIRCA, Southwestern, Veteran's Affairs, VOAIN, etc.) regularly visit UCS Day Shelter to assist UCS guests **and/or** will meet with guests upon appointment.
- Guests are encouraged to seek and gain employment. Guests who are unemployed are required to do at least three (3) job searches a week. These must be reported to the program coordinator. Guests who successfully gain/have working income or SSI or SSD may now purchase and maintain their own personal and hygiene items.
- House meetings are offered on a quarterly basis (at minimum) to update all guests on opportunities, receive feedback, and/or inform guests of program changes. Posted signs will notify guests in advance (at least 72 hours) of meeting time and topics. Guests are expected to attend (unless otherwise excused) and be attentive. Guests who are unable to attend must consult the program coordinator. Any meetings or offered programming addressing spiritual or religious issues are not mandatory.

Supportive Services

- Clean, safe, stable, and security-monitored facility.
- Access to personal mail, housing planning, and case management.
- Recommendations/referrals to other social service agencies for specific and more intense case management to overcome barriers and gain permanent housing:
 - ECHO Health Outreach (812.421.7489)
 - ECHO Housing (812.423.8422)
 - Aurora (812.428.3246)
 - Aids Resource Group (812.421.0059)
 - Outreach Ministries (812.464.1025)
 - Peace Zone (812. 436.4352)
 - Shouthwestern (812.423.7791)
 - SWIRCA (812.464.7800)
 - Veteran's Affairs (812.473.5993)
 - VOAIN (812.423.1979)
- Clothing and hygiene items provided during stay for guests who are unable to provide for themselves.
- Guests have access to laundry units and are may do two (2) loads of laundry each week. Laundry detergent will be made available.
- Additional services like haircuts, literacy/GED assistance, mobile clinics/flu shots, book clubs, substance abuse counseling, etc. are regularly made available.
- Upon hospital referral, access to a medical respite program and additional services.
- Walking distance (15 minute walk) from the UCS main campus for meals and access to more social service agencies.
- Walking distance (15 minute walk) from the Evansville Public Library downtown location.
- Walking distance (15 minute walk) from the downtown bus terminal.
- Walking distance (5 minute walk) from the Evansville Rescue Mission for meals.

Evansville Promise Zone Mobile App

The Promise Zone mobile app focuses on the needs of those residing in the Evansville Promise Zone and the greater Tri-State area. Whether you're a Veteran looking for an affordable home, a new parent hoping to connect with activities for kids, or a jobseeker looking for a new career, this app can point you in the right direction:



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Medical Respite

Some guests of the night shelter receive additional services during the day through our medical respite program. Guests gain access to the respite program only by/through direct hospital/medical referral. While these guests are subject to the program rules of the night shelter, given their fragile health

condition and need for rest and recuperation, some additional tolerances may be offered on a case by case basis – given respite guests' mobility, medical, and/or behavioral health needs.

What is medical respite care? Medical respite care is for homeless persons who are too ill or frail to recover from a physical illness or injury on the streets but are not ill enough to be in a hospital. It is short-term residential care that allows homeless individuals the opportunity to rest in a safe environment while accessing medical care and other supportive services.

It is expected that all guests of the night shelter, staff, and volunteers follow the values of UCS in the dignified and respectful treatment of one another especially those with challenges who require additional patience and care.

Program Rules

Drugs and Alcohol

Alcohol and/or illegal drugs are not allowed on UCS property.

Upon entering the Emergency Night Shelter, guest will be breathalyzed. Random drug testing may also be administered and are mandatory. Guests who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol may be asked to take a breathalyzer/drug screening test. We do not refuse services to people who show a positive result, however, guests that are unable to care for themselves, are uncooperative, and/or a safety risk to themselves or others will be asked to leave the program/premises for the night. This is not a discharge. Refusal and/or repeated occurrences may result in night shelter program termination and loss of bed.

Guests who show a positive result for alcohol or a positive drug screen result to the extent that they unable to care for themselves, are uncooperative, and/or a safety risk to themselves or others should seek assistance in overcoming this barrier and burden. If program termination occurs due to substance abuse, guests can return to the night shelter in 15 days if/when a bed is available. Receiving a night shelter termination for substance abuse will not automatically result in a termination from all UCS services.

- Boyett Treatment Center: (812) 465-2652, 5401 Vogel Rd #740, Evansville, IN 47715
- NOW Counseling: (812) 602-4022, 629 Ingle Street
- ECHO Health Substance Use: (812) 421-7489, 315 Mulberry Street
- Old Stone: (812) 422-0995, 770 East Walnut Street

UCS reserves the right to employ the random and unannounced use of drug detection dogs in order to sweep the emergency night shelter program during its closed hours.

Smoking

- Smoking is prohibited inside the building. This includes e-cigarettes.
- Smoking is allowed in the courtyard/patio from 5 pm - 10 pm and from 5 am until 6:30 am.
- There is no smoking in front of Ruth's House facing Walnut Street or near the garage along Governor Street.
- Any guest who arrive before the program opens, must wait (and/or smoke) by the back fence near the alley.

Food and Drinks

- Food and drinks are not allowed upstairs in the Night Shelter.

- Guests cannot bring their own food into the facility unless it is needed for dietary reasons supported by a medical need with a doctor's (or appropriate authority's) note.

Snacks and Meals

At Ruth's House, morning and evening snacks are made available to guests each day with some scheduled meals served as well.

A full breakfast, lunch, and dinner may be obtained at the UCS Day Shelter at 324 NW 6th Street at 9 am, 12 pm, and 5 pm. or across the street at the Evansville Rescue Mission [ERM] (500 East Walnut). The times at ERM vary depending on day of the week.

Phone Calls

- Guests are not allowed to use the Emergency Night Shelter phone to make outgoing calls or directly receive incoming calls. (unless by exception and
- If someone calls or comes to the door and inquiries about a guest, shelter staff – as a matter of confidentiality and safety -- will only take a message.
- Shelter staff will never reveal whether or not a person is a guest at the Shelter.
- Cell phones are allowed in the shelter; however, all ringers need to be turned off at entry and their use is not allowed during quiet time 9 pm to 5 am.

Bicycle Access and Storage

Guests who utilize a bicycle for transportation are requested to leave it locked to the bike rack in the fenced in courtyard where it will be secured for the night. Guests will have access to their bicycle at 6 am unless other arrangements are made like for access for employment/appointment purposes. Unclaimed bicycles will be donated to Patchwork.

Automobile

Guests who own and/or operate an automobile while staying with UCS must provide an accurate description of the make, model, and year of the vehicle as well as the plate number and park it in the designated area or risk it being towed.

Arrest and Arraignment

Guests who experience an arrest will not automatically lose their bed until the result of the incident/arraignment has been determined. Guests should be in contact with shelter staff.

Program Termination Policy and Procedures

While UCS seeks to offer opportunities for people to exit street homelessness, utilize the support and stability of the shelter, and overcome barriers to gain housing, the extreme measure of discharging a guest from the night shelter program can occur if guests:

- Pose a danger to staff, volunteers or other guests by exhibiting violent, intimidating, or threatening behavior.
- Destroy or steal property from other guests and/or UCS.
- Retrieve mail from the mailbox.
- Share personal and/or confidential information about other guests with anyone.
- Participate in any criminal activity like selling or trading food stamps to guests or staff.
- Fail a drug test or blow hot on the Breathalyzer.
- Smoke anything inside the building.
- Enter an off-limit room, specifically a bedroom or area (HMRP hallway, rooms, or bathroom) to which they are not assigned.

- Are a No Call/No Show, miss curfew, and/or fail to properly complete assigned details.
- Excessively loiter on UCS or neighbor's property.
- Block, unlock, or tamper with doors in the shelter in any way.
- Intentionally make noise and/or disrupt others after lights are out.
- Refuse to comply or cooperate with staff.

UCS will offer compassionate, corrective encouragement to guests who violate program rules where appropriate like establishing a path for improvement. In all cases, UCS seeks to assist guests in gaining stability, self-sufficiency, and housing not punishing for unruly behavior or escalating small matters and causing greater harm. Guests may or may not receive a warning for program rule violations based on the situation and/or severity of the offense. See violation listing and resulting bar from service below.

Violation	Bar Type	Bar Length	Situation	Alternatives
NC/NS curfew	Service NS	7 days	New Guest, *Hospitalization, Other	1 st /2 nd infraction leniency given circumstance. *Guest responsibility to inform if hospitalized
NC/NS detail	Service NS	7 days	Late, Repeated Violations, No Improvement, Defiant	Path for Improvement, Change Detail, Guidance
Incomplete detail	Service NS	7 days	Repeated Violations, No Improvement, Defiant	Path for Improvement, Change detail assignment
Basic NS Program rules violation	Service NS	7 days	Repeated, No Improvement, Defiant	Reread rules, Path for Improvement, Guidance
Loitering	Property	7 days	Excessive hanging out on sidewalks, alley, street, parking lot	Explain "to keep moving" or be in courtyard/shelter. Warnings
OPWB/Trespassing	Property	7 days	Repeated Violations	Warnings, Police Involvement [IR]
Unruly Behavior [IR] (escalating loud/ongoing disturbance despite efforts to calm/address)	Property	7+ days	Listen. De-escalate the situation. Ask guest to walk away/leave, cool down and come back.	These should be 'rare.' Explain values, Be kind. Beware mental health concerns. Warnings
Restricted Area: Basement/Other	Service DS	15 days+	In area (any off-limits area) w/o permission. New guest?	Warning. Let PC/Bob know
Restricted: 3 rd /4 th Floor	Property	15 days+	On 3 rd /4 th floor w/o permission. Make sure new DS/NS guests know rule.	Warning. Let PC/Bob know
Refuse alcohol/drug testing	Service DS/NS	15 days	This is an option to intervene to help a person seek treatment not punish.	Maintain appropriate behavior. Leave for the day/night, De-escalate
Panhandling (1 mile)	Service DS	30 days	Repeated	Farther Away
Property Destruction [IR]	Property	30 days		
Fighting [IR]	Property	30 days		
Theft [IR]	Property	30 days		
Threats of violence to Staff/Guests [IR]	Property	30 days		De-escalate. Police Involvement
Alcohol/drug use on property or possession [IR]	Property	30 days	Witnessed in person (not from hearsay or camera only)	Warning. Gone for the day/night. Treatment recommendation.
Weapon Possession [IR]	Property	90 days+	On weapon check in NS, brandishing, threatening with.	
Striking Staff [IR]	Property	90 days+	90 per incident, Call 911	
NOTE: [IR] denotes mandatory INCIDENT Report			Document all warnings and bars from service or property on SHIFT REPORTS. Use INCIDENT report when appropriate.	Some 1 st /2 nd /3 rd infraction warnings are acceptable. Our mission is to serve not bar from service.

Grievance Policy

United Caring Services is committed to providing the best possible care and conditions for success and stabilization for its guests so they may exit homelessness. We welcome and encourage an open atmosphere in which any problems, complaints, suggestions or questions receives a timely response in a satisfactory manner from UCS staff.

UCS staff, volunteers, and guests are expected to treat each other with mutual respect. If a guest encounters a situation or condition which they believe affects them unjustly or inequitably, they should speak with the UCS staff person on duty who should properly document the issue and report it to their program coordinator/director of programs.

If the situation or condition cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the care staff person on duty, the guest may contact the program's coordinator. If it is the issue concerns the program coordinator, the guest may directly contact another program coordinator, program director and/or the executive director in writing to schedule an appointment.

Should the program coordinator, program director or executive director and the guest be unable resolve the issue, the guest may contact a USC Board member via writing through administration office. The USC Board should only be contacted when the guest feels they have tried multiple times to resolve an issue and have been unsuccessful.

If the issue is unresolvable, the guest may exit the program without repercussion and seek shelter with another agency like House of Bread and Peace (812.425.6754)

Receipt and Acknowledgement

As a guest of the Emergency Night Shelter program at United Caring Shelters, Inc. d/b/a United Caring Services, I understand and agree to follow these program guidelines and have received/have access to a copy for my own reference.

Guest Printed Name: _____

Guest Signature: _____

Effective Date: _____



As a staff person of the Emergency Night Shelter program at United Caring Shelters, Inc. d/b/a United Caring Services, I have reviewed these program guidelines with the guest and answered, to the best of my ability, any questions.



Staff Printed Name: _____

Staff Signature: _____

Effective Date: _____