

# Higher Ground Recovery House Handbook

*A Sober Living Program of:*



**Main Office:**

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## Higher Ground Recovery House Resident Handbook and Rules

*We are pleased you are considering becoming a resident at a Higher Ground Recovery House! Our hope and prayer is that you utilize this Christian-based sober-living opportunity to pursue and maintain long-term recovery from alcohol and drugs while growing in your walk with God and becoming an active and productive member of society.*

### **Please read the following carefully and thoroughly so you understand the expectations of becoming a High Ground Recovery Resident:**

The vision of Higher Ground Recovery Center is to see people flourish and mature together in relationship with God as they are equipped with the necessary tools to live a healthy and abundant lifestyle and fulfill their God-given purpose. The mission of the Higher Ground Recovery House (HGRH) is to provide a safe and positive living environment from a Christian perspective for those recovery from substance use disorder.

To that end, HGRH is committed to serving those seeking sober housing and other recovery supports who **freely choose** to engage in a program of recovery in a **Biblically-Based** supportive living environment.

We believe that long-term success in recovery can best be achieved by applying the truth of Scripture to established mindsets and strongholds. Therefore, our goal is to assist residents to address their own needs by becoming self-sustaining and sufficient through the use of community-based supports such as the local church, faith-based recovery supports, Christ-centered 12-step groups, Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and other self-help groups and resources.

We believe that recovery is not only freedom from the use of substances, but freedom to become all that God has created us to be. Through Christ we can become good parents, valued employees, loving neighbors, and productive members of the community.

We believe that the freedom found in Christ cannot be kept unless it is “given away,” by carrying The Message to other addicts and by making Biblical principles the determining factor in all our worldly affairs.

We do not necessarily promote any particular religion, but we do require weekly attendance at our affiliated church (Highlife Church). Our goal is to see resident’s grow in a personal relationship with God; therefore, regular church attendance is a requirement of the program.

There is no time commitment for our sober-living program. The primary requirement is a desire and determination to live a drug and alcohol-free recovery lifestyle in a supportive **God centered environment**. Residents can choose to stay as long as they desire. Intended lengths of stay should be discussed with the house manager at intake.

*We believe that every program resident should be treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their social or economic status, race, color, national origin, age or handicap!*

## Higher Ground Recovery House Resident Handbook and Rules

Each new resident will be introduced to the house manager on the day of intake for orientation and processing of all intake paperwork. All residents will be asked to provide a urine sample at time of intake and must be free of all alcohol, THC, non-prescribed, illegal substances, or any prescription that may cause a false positive on a drug test. Medicated Assisted Treatment (MAT) prescribed by a doctor is generally welcome.

Residents will have access to the HGRH house phone, washer, dryer, cable, and internet. Utilities are included in the weekly program fees. The house is located on the city bus route (<https://www.cutransit.net/>). HGRH provides each resident one set of bedding, a towel, & washcloths to use during their stay, if needed. Each resident will be responsible for purchasing their own food; however, some house food may initially be available. Please do not bring a lot of items. Only bring necessities such as clothes, toiletries and small personal items. Some toiletries may be available for those who do not have any. The house is fully furnished, so please do not bring any furniture—it cannot be kept at the house. At time of intake, all personal belongings will be inspected, and all clothes will be required to be washed before they can be moved into a room.

A resident's first week and weekend will be on restriction and limited to a buddy system (only allowed to go places with another person from the house who has proven themselves to be faithful and dependable). Exceptions to this rule must be pre-approved by the House Manager.

### Program Fees

1. An initial *non-refundable* program fee of \$300.00 is required to move in and will pay for a resident's first four weeks in the program.
  - A. If a friend or family member pays for the resident's first month's program fee, and the potential resident does not move in due to uncontrollable circumstances, the friend and/or family *may* be refunded the initial \$300.00 program fee.
  - B. Once a resident moves in, the \$300.00 first month's program fee will not be refunded.
  - C. Evicted residents or those who leave prematurely and/or without notice are not entitled to receive a refund of program fees.
2. After the first four weeks, program fees are \$100.00 per week and are due no later than Sunday night by 10 PM. If program fees are paid late, there will be an additional \$10 weekly charge.
3. Failure to pay weekly program fees will result in discharge from the program.
  - A. Money orders, cashier's checks, credit/debit cards and cash are accepted.
  - B. Fees must be paid at the Higher Ground Recovery Center office complex.
4. One Year Incentive: Although there is not a time commitment for living at HGRH, there is a onetime incentive of \$300.00 to be received at time of discharge for anyone who successfully lives at the house for at least 12 consecutive months and leaves in good standing. Whenever possible the incentive check will be issued on the day of discharge.
5. Refunds: After the first month, any excess fees may be refunded to a resident who leaves the program regardless of circumstances only if all of the following conditions are met:

- A. The resident gives one week notice prior to moving out.
- B. The resident leaves in good standing with the house manager and other residents.
- C. Member's room is cleaned and there are no damages, all furniture is in place and in good working order, all house property has been returned, and all personal belongings are removed from the house.

If all conditions are met, refunds will be paid by check within 10 days of departure. A resident discharged for non-compliance or not meeting the above conditions will not receive any refund.

## Higher Ground Resident Rules

1. **Sober-Living Character Expectations:** This house is a community living together whose goal is to be successful in life and recovery while growing in their faith in God. All residents are expected to go out of their way to help others and to be considerate and respectful of others, **whether at home or out in public**. Everyone is expected to participate in house business **and** activities.

All residents are expected to learn and live by biblical standards to the best of their ability and to:

- A. Be considerate and treat others with dignity and respect.
  - B. Respect boundaries set by others.
  - C. Hold each other accountable in a loving manner and forgive when needed.
  - D. Talk to each other kindly and honestly.
  - E. Encourage each other in a positive manner.
  - F. Ask for help if needed.
  - G. Take turns working together to coordinate in a way that is fair to everyone.
  - H. Practice humility and take responsibility for individual actions without arguing.
2. **Recovery Goals:** Proverbs 29:18 states, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." At the time of intake and throughout the duration of a person's stay at HGRH, residents will develop an individualized recovery plan (with short and long-term goals). These goals will be a guide for each individual and they will continually be developed and discussed in house meetings throughout the duration of their stay.
  3. **Clean and sober living:** Since the use of drugs and/or alcohol places individual's sobriety at risk, it is expected that each resident will remain clean and sober throughout the entirety of their stay. Possession of paraphernalia and/or the use of alcohol or drugs is strictly prohibited. ***Violation of this rule will result in discharge.***
    - A. The resident shall maintain abstinence from all illegal and mood-altering substances. This shall include, but is not limited to, synthetic drugs, the eating of food containing "poppy

seeds”, over the counter medications containing dextromethorphan, ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, such as cold pills, any item containing alcohol, and prescription medications not prescribed to the resident.

#### 4. Length of Stay

##### Is Sober Living Effective?

- A. Sober living environments consistently produce positive outcomes for individuals in recovery. The longer an individual has to adjust to the reality of life in sobriety, the more likely the person is to remain abstinent from drugs or alcohol.
- B. Sober living gives recovering individuals a support network of likeminded individuals who share a commitment to sobriety. When combined with an aftercare or outpatient program that includes therapy, peer support groups, 12-Step meetings, and family counseling, a sober living environment can help to prevent relapse and keep individuals on track with their recovery goals.
- C. We understand that every individual has unique needs and situations. Although there is no required minimum or maximum length of stay, we do encourage residents to maximize their potential to sustain long-term recovery by remaining a resident as long as possible or is therapeutically beneficial.

#### 5. Medication:

- A. Any medication that is prescribed to the resident must be documented and approved by the house manager and/or Higher Ground Directors. Residents should inform their physician that they are engaged in a sober living environment and are subject to drug testing when prescriptions are being written.
- B. All prescribed medication must be contained in the HGRH lockbox and monitored by the house manager (who is not on probation or parole).
  - I. A copy of a pharmacy prescription list shall be kept on file for each resident. Anyone receiving and maintaining medication without informing the house manager **will be discharged**. Any changes in the dosage must be confirmed in writing to the house manager from the issuing doctor.
  - II. A medication log will be required to be filled out by house manager and resident, and a medication count given to confirm the accuracy of dosages taken on a daily basis when medication is prescribed.
  - III. Medication is not to be shared with other residents or left out where they are in the open or unprotected.
  - IV. Any deviation from the prescribed dosage of medication will be considered abuse. Abuse of medications will be considered a relapse and residency will be terminated.
  - V. Any suspicion that another resident is under the influence or has relapsed must be brought to the house manager’s attention. A resident who fails to report another resident’s drug use will be discharged.

VI. Abuse of any over-the-counter or herbal supplements is not allowed and will lead to termination of residency. Please check with house manager to find out if an over-the-counter or herbal supplement needs to be kept in the lock box.

6. **Random Drug Testing** is mandatory and will be required of all residents. Any resident who tests positive for or is determined to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs **will be immediately discharged** and the Resident Agreement terminated.

- A. When a resident is asked by program staff to provide a urine or breathalyzer test, the individual will be expected to provide a supervised urine sample and/or breath test at the time of the request. A refusal is considered the same as a positive.
- B. If a resident cannot immediately produce a specimen, the individual will be required to provide a sample within two hours from the time the request was initially requested.
- C. The resident is *not allowed to leave the house* until the sample is provided.
- D. If the resident is contacted by telephone to submit a UA test, the resident will have one hour from the time of the call to get to the house to provide a sample. Arriving later than one hour (or not at all) shall be considered a positive.

**U/A Procedure:**

- A. Residents shall be required to remove any coats or jackets prior to testing. In addition, any long sleeve shirts, blouses, or sweaters must be pushed or rolled up. Pockets must be emptied.
- B. All residents are required to wash their hands and thoroughly dry them immediately prior to testing.
- C. Collections shall be observed. If there are any signs of tampering, the test will be considered positive.
- D. Program staff shall conduct an on-site drug screen immediately after collection, and in the presence of the resident. The resident shall be told the results before leaving the office.
- E. If staff deems necessary, your room and personal belongings may be searched at any time by the house manager or Higher Ground staff.

7. **Employment:** Employment is required for those not determined to be legally disabled.

- A. Residents who are not yet employed are required to be off the house property between the hours of 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM.
- B. Residents who are not legally disabled must work **a minimum** of 35+ hours a week.
- C. Residents will be required to provide proof they were employment seeking and staying productive with their time if they are unemployed.
- D. Day labor agencies and inconsistent jobs of less than 35 hours are not considered stable full-time employment. However, day labor agencies may initially be used while the resident is looking for stable employment.
- E. For several reasons, we have found that working the nightshift is not conducive to one's recovery, so it is not allowed.
- F. Residents agree to find employment that will work with their treatment schedule.

- G. Any type of employment that may bring your commitment to recovery into question is not allowed.
  - H. Any changes in employment status must be reported to the house manager.
  - I. Free-time is Saturday and Sunday (after church) **unless** a house event is planned.
  - J. **Additional** volunteer work, chores, or recovery support meetings may be required for anyone who is **working less than 40 hours a week**.
- 8. Disability:** Each resident's situation will be assessed and determined at time of intake.
- A. A resident who has legal disability status may be required to complete up to 30 hours of community service (in-house, out of house, or a combination); may be required to attend additional weekly recovery support meetings; and/or may be asked to seek part time employment (if applicable).
  - B. All activities must be documented on a log sheet and signed by house manager on a daily basis.
  - C. A periodic review will be conducted after intake to determine if any changes are needed.
- 9. Sickness:** Residents who are sick will need to seek medical attention. Any sickness requiring a resident to miss work or not engage in their daily activities will be asked to seek medical attention and provide medical documentation to the house manager.
- 10. Sign-in/out Activities:** All residents are required to sign-in and out when leaving and arriving home. The time(s) and reason for leaving must be documented on the log.
- 11. Possession or use of weapons** is strictly prohibited.
- 12. Smoking, vaping, & chewing tobacco** is **NOT** allowed in the house and is only permitted in designated outside areas. There is zero tolerance for in-house use and any violation will result in further consequences including possible discharge.
- A. Tobacco products must be disposed of appropriately and not thrown on the ground.
  - B. Keep all outside doors closed while smoking and vaping to prevent smoke from coming into the house.
  - C. Any tobacco products (E.g. cigars) producing a lingering smell inside the house will need to be disposed of or placed in a place where it cannot be smelled.
  - D. Absolutely no smoking from 12:00 midnight to 4:00 AM.
- 13. Incense, candles or anything flammable** is not allowed anywhere in or near the house at any time.
- 14. Recovery Support Groups:** A *minimum* of 3 weekly groups at HGRC is required. Modifications to this agreement will be determined on an individual basis by the house manager and/or the clinical staff at HGRC.
- A. If an emergency arises and a resident needs to miss group, they must contact the house manager for permission to miss. If a resident is also in outpatient treatment at Higher Ground, they must **also** contact their counselor to find out if they may be excused.

- I. Appropriate documentation will be required to present to house manager and/or Higher Ground staff on an official letterhead that includes date, reason for missing, signature of manager, and their phone #.
- II. Any missed groups will need to be made up within one week.

**15. House Meetings:** Each resident is required to attend the weekly “in-house” meeting.

**16. Church attendance:** All residents must attend weekly church services at HighLife Church on Sunday mornings at 10 AM and Wednesday nights at 6:30 PM.

**17. Curfew:** is 9:00 PM on weeknights (Sunday – Thursday) and 10:00 PM on weekends (Friday & Saturday).

- A. A resident’s first week will be on a buddy system (only allowed to go places with another person from the house who has proven themselves to be faithful and dependable). Exceptions to this rule must be pre-approved by house manager.
- B. The first weekend at the house will be on restriction (on a buddy system and/or restricted to the house unless there is an outside house group activity).
- C. If residents are unable to make it home by curfew due to work or some other legitimate reason they must notify the house manager in advance.
- D. Breaking curfew without prior approval from house manager **will result in discharge**.
- E. If working past curfew, residents must be in 30 minutes after work. If residents are unable to make it home by curfew due to work or some other legitimate reason, they must notify the house manager in advance.
- F. Permission to stay out late may be requested for special events at house manager discretion. At least 24 hours advanced notice is required for request.

**18. Electronical Devices:**

- A. Lights out and cell phones off no later than 12:00 midnight.
- B. **Noise:** Residents should be quiet. No loud noises. Be sensitive of the volume of their voices, TV, computer and other devices.
  - I. Use headphones while listening to music or other things on your phone.
  - II. Be sensitive to your roommates work and sleep schedule. Playing or talking on the phone or other devices in your room while a roommate is sleeping is not allowed.
  - III. No loud music in the bathroom.
  - IV. We are a Christian home. We listen to Christian music.



**19. Passes:**

- A. Overnight passes may be given to residents after 30 days **IF** they have complied with **ALL** HGRH rules and all program fees are paid. 2 overnight passes may be requested monthly.
- B. Residents cannot leave for or during the night without an approved pass from house manager.
- C. Passes are a privilege and may be taken away if abused or if a resident does not meet all house policy requirements.
- D. Passes may be taken consecutively at house managers discretion.

**20. Phone calls:**

- A. Residents may make phone calls on the house phone between 6:00 AM & 10:00 AM (for employment and work purposes only). 15-minute time limit.
- B. Residents can make personal phone calls on the house phone between 4:00 PM-11:00 PM. 15-minute time limit per call. Do not monopolize and be sensitive to other residents who need to use the phone.
- C. Please answer the house phone by saying, "Hello." Do not give out personal information about other residents.
- D. If a resident receives a phone call but is not home, take a message. The message should include the date, time, who the call was for, and the caller's name and phone number.

**21. Chores and House Responsibilities:**

**Chores** will be posted weekly. Each resident is expected to clean up after themselves and to always leave the room clean.

- A. Daily and weekly chores will be checked and signed off by the House Manager or senior resident.
- B. If your chore does not pass inspection and the house manager asks you to redo your chore, you must do it and not argue or give excuses
- C. Failure to complete chores to the house manager's satisfaction could result in additional chores and/or consequences **and may lead to discharge.**
- D. Once a month all residents will participate in a pre-scheduled 2-hour deep cleaning of the residence.
- E. Do not leave personal items laying around the house.**

**22. Kitchen:** Each resident will be assigned a shelf for food storage and will be asked to write their name on their food items. Refrigerator and freezer space will be shared.

- A. Taking someone else's food without permission will lead to discharge.
- B. After preparing food or eating, each resident must clean their mess (kitchen counter, sink, table, stove, etc) and put away all items used.
- C. Residents must **clean and put away their dishes at time of use** and put furniture back in order.
- D. If food falls on the floor, it must be cleaned.

- E. Food must not be left unattended on the stove.
- F. Opened food must have plastic wrap and/or lids on it. No food should be left out or in the fridge without being covered.
- G. **Do not pour cooking oils or grease down the drains.**
- H. Wipe off dining room table after use.

### 23. Bedrooms, Wake-up:

- A. Beds must be made each morning **upon wake-up**. Nothing on the floors but slippers, & nothing on the beds but linens. Night stands and dressers must be clean and tidy.
- B. If a resident is in a room with an empty second and/or third bed, all personal belongings must stay off the second bed and dresser, and the other half of the closet must be clean and presentable for next resident to move into.
- C. **Food is not allowed in the bedrooms or bathrooms** and is only allowed in the dining room area unless permission is given for a special occasion, and only when approved by the house manager. Food found in undesignated spots of the house will lead to discharge.
- D. Going into another residents bedroom without permission is not allowed.
- E. One glass of water may be kept on a coaster in an individual's bedroom at night. No other drinks are permitted in the bedrooms.
- F. Persistent ringing of phone or clock alarms must be kept to a minimum.

### 24. Washer and Dryer: House residents must be mindful of laundry usage and time by keeping wash loads within reason.

**Laundry:** is to be done during the appropriate hours determined by house manager.

*All clothes and trash* are to be completely cleaned out of the laundry area when done. Sweep floor if necessary.

- A. Laundry must not be left in the washer/dryer unattended for any length of time.
- B. After use, clean washer and dryer of all dust, lint, spilled soap, etc.
- C. Clean dryer lint after each use.
- D. Please keep laundry room door closed if washer and/or dryer are running and someone is sleeping.

### 25. Bathrooms & Toilet: Do **NOT** throw any items (E.g. paper towels, hair, etc.) down the toilet. Only toilet paper belongs in the toilet. If a plumber needs to be called due to extra items being thrown down the toilet, rent will be raised to pay for the fee of the plumber.

- A. Each bathroom must be cleaned after each use.
- B. **Hair Dye:** No hair coloring is allowed inside the house.

### 26. Clothing:

- A. Clothing needs to be worn when walking through the house. Neckline to knee length needs to be covered.
- B. Please wear socks or slippers when walking through the house.
- C. Clothing with alcohol, drugs or ungodly symbolism is not allowed

### 27. Guests are allowed on the property during family visiting hours only.

- A. Family visiting hours are held every Sunday after church to 6:00 PM.
  - B. Family is allowed to visit only in the living and dining room area. No guests are allowed in the bedrooms.
  - C. Sitting in parked cars in the driveway is not allowed.
  - D. Visiting hours is a privilege and may be revoked if the privilege is abused.
  - E. Guests need to abide by house rules. This includes not being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
  - F. Children's Division supervision at the house must be pre-approved by the house manager.
- 28. Viewing pornography**, use of sex toys, or any other sexual misconduct is grounds for immediate discharge.
- 29. Intimate and sexual relationships** are highly discouraged. Recovery takes a lot of work. Studies show a high-risk for relapse for those who engage in non-biblical, non-marital sexual relationships during recovery. This is a time for residents to focus on bettering their lives. Please stay focused.
- G. Within the first six months, relationships between residents and clients in treatment at Higher Ground Recovery Center as well as HighLife Church is not allowed and will result in discharge.
- 30. Profanity** is prohibited.
- 31. Lost or stolen property** of a resident is not the responsibility of HGRH.
- H. Any house property that is stolen will be reported to authorities.
  - I. Stealing resident or house property will result in discharge and possibly be reported to authorities.
- 32. Vehicles:** One personal vehicle may be permitted, depending on the availability of spaces, and according to need if the resident has a valid driver's license, valid license plates, tags and insurance. To be determined by house manager.
- J. A copy of valid driver's license must be provided by the resident.
  - K. A copy of proof of insurance must be provided regularly, including copies of renewals.
  - L. Any vehicle on HGRH property that is not legal will be towed at resident's expense.
  - M. Vehicles are not allowed to be stored on HGRH property if not being used on regular basis.
- 33. All maintenance issues or damages to the house** must be reported to the house manager as soon as possible.
- 34. No changes**, improvements, decorating or repairs are to be done to any part of the property without staff approval. This includes appliances, moving and/or adding furniture, moving and/or adding pictures, photos and posters on the walls.
- 35. Save energy** so rent does not get increased. Turn off lights and appliances when leaving a room. Do not leave windows or doors open that will cause heat or air to be wasted.
- 36. Misconduct:** Any misconduct that interferes with the normal flow of the house or creates an atmosphere which is not conducive to recovery and/or hinders another resident's spiritual walk may **result in discharge**. Some examples include:

- A. Behavior that is threatening, violent, and/or aggressive.
- B. Repetitive conflicts or uncooperative behavior.
- C. Lying, stealing, manipulating.
- D. Being in another person's room (or space) without permission.
- E. Eating someone else's food or using their personal items without permission.
- F. Aggression, intimidation, name calling, threats of physical harm or physically striking another resident, etc.
- G. Not doing chores, not attending house meetings, breaking house rules.
- H. Arguing and fighting with each other and/or the house manager.
- I. Not actively participating in recovery and/or house events.

**37. Eviction:** If a resident is found to be under the influence, the resident will be given 60 minutes to pack their belongings, call for a ride, etc. and leave the premises. An individual who is disruptive will be asked to leave immediately and return at a later time to pack or pick up belongings.

In addition:

- A. The house manager will ask for the resident's car keys and will assist in calling a cab if necessary. If the individual attempts to drive while under the influence, or if the house manager feels he might be a danger to himself or others, the house manager is required to notify the police.
- B. Depending on the severity of the individual's intoxication, the house manager may call paramedics for medical evaluation.
- C. The individual's emergency contact person will be notified.
- D. The house manager will provide the individual with a list of contacts for housing, treatment, etc.
- E. Any personal belongings left behind will be kept for 7 days and then disposed of.
- F. If a resident who is in outpatient treatment at HGRC gets discharged from the recovery house, they should stay engaged in outpatient treatment at HGRC. For any questions contact your HGRC counselor.

**In case of emergency:** Inform house manager and call 9-1-1 if needed.



# Recovery Housing Grievance Form

The Missouri Coalition of Recovery Support Providers expects all those with a complaint or grievance with an accredited recovery house or its staff/volunteers should first attempt to resolve the situation at the local level, per the MCRSP/NARR accreditation required grievance process. MCRSP understands that in some instances this may not be possible. In such cases and where local attempts to resolve the situation have not been successful, a grievance may be submitted to MCRSP by completing and submitting this form.

<b>YOUR NAME:</b>		<b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>	
<b>LANDLINE PHONE:</b>		<b>MOBILE PHONE# FOR TEXT OR CALL:</b>	
<b>MAILING ADDRESS:</b>			
<b>CITY:</b>		<b>STATE:</b>	<b>ZIP CODE:</b>
<b>NAME OF MCRSP ACCREDITED RECOVERY HOUSE FOR WHICH GRIEVANCES IS ASSOCIATED:</b>	<b>ADDRESS OF RECOVERY HOME:</b>		<b>CITY, STATE AND ZIP CODE:</b>
	<b>IS THERE A SPECIFIC STAFF OR VOLUNTEER WHO IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS GRIEVANCE?</b>	<b>IF YES, PLEASE PROVIDE THE NAME OF THE INDIVIDUAL:</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
<b>Please provide a full description of the event/circumstances: (Attach additional pages if necessary)</b>			
<b>Please provide what you reasonably believe should be done to resolve this situation to your satisfaction:</b>			

Please email the completed form to: [andy.thomas@mcrsp.org](mailto:andy.thomas@mcrsp.org) or [greg.smith@mcrsp.org](mailto:greg.smith@mcrsp.org); Fax to 573-761-1089  
 Mail to: MCRSP Recovery Housing Grievance  
 1305 Southwest Boulevard, Suite D  
 Jefferson City, MO 65109-2454