

# FSM Transitional Living Guidelines

## Section 1: Overview

Freedom Seekers was established in January of 2005. We are now ministering to over 300 people each week. We have witnessed thousands making a commitment to Jesus Christ. During this time we have housed and assisted over 500 individuals coming out of the department of corrections, local jails, and off the streets. Our ministry focuses on outreach to our communities for individuals and families in need of recovery from drug and alcohol abuse, addictions, poverty, and hopelessness.

In 2016 we opened David's House of Hope. In 2017 we opened up BEVS House. These are sober living homes that provides long-term support and structure for men and women recovering from addiction and trauma related disorders. Because recovering from addiction and trauma is an inherently difficult, often painful process, we strive to provide our clients with comfortable, safe and supportive environment. We assist men, women, and their families as they discover the joy, power and rewards that await them in a relationship with Jesus Christ and His plan for healing and recovery.

Our long-term approach provides the tools and the time necessary for new patterns of behaviors to become solidly embedded in a foundation that propagates success in all areas of life. Our program includes becoming an active member of the body of Christ with accountability, group support, and case-management, insuring the best possible outcome. We are located in Carroll County in North West Arkansas.

Our mission is to promote a community of spiritual healing in our region by empowering and reaching out to people suffering from substance abuse, addiction and related problems through awareness, education and dynamic support services to include Discipleship Training and Transitional Living with a 90-day minimum commitment, up to one year.

Services provided:

1. Accountability
2. Discipleship Training/Pastoral Care

3. Counseling/Individual/Family
4. Recovery Support
5. Transportation/Employment Assistance
6. Emergency, Food, and Clothing
7. Clean, Safe, and Comfortable Living

All clients in need of services are required to submit an application for entry. When approved, the entry fee is \$190.00 with valid State ID and Social Security Card. If the client does not have these documents, the entry fee is \$250.

Our normal office hours are Monday-Friday 9AM -5PM. Our office phone number is (870) 929-6148. We have a 24/7 hotline at (417) 527-3216

## **Section 2: Equal Opportunity**

Freedom Seekers, David's House of Hope, and BEVS House are in compliance with all Civil Rights Laws, and American Disability Act Law. We provide services without regard to race, gender, religion, age, national origin, genetic information, disability or bias prohibited by state or federal law. Our facilities are handicap accessible however our transitional housing is not at this time.

Our clients have the same legal rights as anyone else. We are not an institution or a medical inpatient facility, however upon approval you agree to the ACC guidelines and will be held accountable for your actions. Any grievances of clients will be recorded, considered and dealt with in a timely manner and with all parties involved.

## **Section 3: Confidentiality**

Freedom Seekers, David's House of Hope, and BEVS House are in compliance with all laws governing confidentiality.

1. All records are kept confidential in locked office and locked file cabinets in our administrative office.
2. No disclosure is made without written and signed notification and consent from clients.
3. We reserve the right to release information in a medical emergency or an incident involving legal authorities such as probation and parole or law enforcement agencies.
4. In all such medical or legal incidents, only the relevant information will be released.

## **Section 4: General Guidelines**

Profanity, theft, disrespectfulness, anger, temper, threats, inappropriate outburst and disruptive behaviors will not be tolerated.

We reserve the right to evict anyone without notice for any of these rules being violated.

We reserve the right to do random drug and alcohol testing.

We reserve the right to evict anyone for any illegal unlawful activities inside or outside of the house. We can and will notify legal authorities for any and all offenses, as we see fit. No firearms are allowed on our properties.

There is no contact allowed between men's house clients and ladies house clients. Freedom Seekers is not a dating service or a matchmaker. We require and encourage you to focus on God and your sobriety while in this ministry. We will not honor any ungodly relationships or any sexual immorality and have a zero-tolerance policy in this regard.

For the first 90 days you are required to surrender your cell phone and are not allowed to use any form of social media. If you need to contact someone of importance or communicate with family, our leadership will allow calls at the FSM Center, within reason and at our discretion and approval.

For the first 60 days there will be no overnight or weekend passes. You must be meeting all financial obligations before any passes are approved. You are

to communicate your schedule and whereabouts daily. After 60 days you may submit a written request to include contact numbers, addresses and all details of travel and whereabouts. We reserve the right to not approve any pass if we determine or do not feel the conditions are safe. We strongly recommend that you separate yourself from all unhealthy, relationships, and temptations.

Our properties are tobacco free. If you use tobacco, please do so in designated areas.

Individuals are required to do chores, upkeep, and maintain, with excellence, the inside and outside of the houses. Not fulfilling your part can and will lead to personal fines.

We have a disciplinary 3 strike rule. The first offense is a verbal warning, the second and third are written warnings. Any offense after the last written warning will result in immediate eviction.

If anyone is aware of these rules being violated and does not report them, you are guilty by association. This affects the safety and success of everyone involved, it can and will lead to eviction.

In the event of eviction, we will hold belongings for up to one week. If the belongings are not collected after one week from the day of eviction, we will dispose of them.

We are interested in your success and will hold you accountable. We do monthly progress reports that include short term goals, long term goals, financial accountability, one-on-one counseling, and group counseling.

NOTE: The following is what we highly recommend and encourage for success. These principles have proven to be successful for clients in our housing and individuals in our ministry.

A. Commit to prayer individually and/or with spouse 7 days a week. In the morning first thing and in evening before bed time. Set your alarm, write yourself a note, whatever you need to remember.

B. Commit to bible reading and our curriculum five days a week at whatever time works for you (be consistent and schedule that time).

C. Be accountable, transparent, teachable and honest with your counselors, friends, and family members who are willing to help. They are giving up their time to pray, encourage and work with you. Remember they are not perfect, we all need Jesus and all of us are a work in progress.

D. Work a day shift job only with Sundays off. This is your life and your freedom at stake here. You may have to change jobs depending on the circumstances. Be accountable with all of your money. The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Become a giver and a tither. Become consistent and faithful in this. God will supply all your needs. No job or money is worth bondage, death, and destruction.

E. Disconnect and separate yourself with anyone who is not clean, sober and does not have an active relationship with God. Be aware of triggers and any old thought patterns that could cause temptation. Recognize, be on guard and shut down unhealthy phone contacts. This could mean shutting down your phone temporarily. Avoid or shut down all social media, ungodly music, and television. Avoid ungodly chatter, war stories, etc. that could promote negativity. Avoid idle time and stay busy in the Lord. Always be slow to speak and slow to anger.

Learn who you are, be honest, speak the truth, and forgive yourself. Learn how to rest in him, forgive others, be willing to fight and make up your mind that you are not quitting. Make this an adventure, this can and will be a life changing adventure full of joy, if you allow it. Serving the living God is a privilege not a job or a chore.

He loves you and the joy of The Lord is your strength. You can have fun and be happy in this process. Learn how to laugh. Don't be too serious or critical of every step in following JESUS. Let him show you the way. No one is perfect, the only way you lose is if you give up. NEVER GIVE UP. All things are possible and God is on your side. He will make you a success. Remember, it's about a love relationship with JESUS. He is alive and is inviting you to follow Him. He has plans for you now and into eternity.

We wish you nothing but success! - Pastor Ron Hutchins

## **Section 5: 90 Day Commitment Guidelines**

1. Individuals will be interviewed before accepted into our Transitional Living Programs. We require a 90-day minimum commitment up to one year.

2. Individuals are required to work a full-time job, **Monday through Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> shift only** and be accountable for all income.

3. Individuals are required to attend all meetings, Church services and special events.

4. Financial Requirements:

Rent is \$90.00 per week to include room and board, utilities, laundry, and food (staples), transportation to and from work, and transportation to and from all FSM meetings. If FSM is transporting you to and from work, we will require \$30 per week for gas expenses. (Note: If you are Court ordered by A.C.C. all policies and guidelines regarding financial assistance will be enforced according to their recommendations.)

A. Until employment is obtained you will be expected to volunteer your time for various ministry jobs and community services as needed. We will help you find employment but it is your responsibility to do all you can to seek and find gainful employment.

B. When employment is obtained all income is to be accounted for and surrendered to Freedom Seekers Ministry. Your funds will be set up on an account until you fulfill your commitment and obligations to Freedom Seekers. The entry fee is non-refundable.

C. All additional saved funds acquired after fulfilling financial obligations, and after weekly expenses and ten percent tithe will be returned by check within 30 days, following completion of the 90-day commitment. There are no refunds for any reason. If you decide to leave or you are dismissed before the 90-day commitment is complete, you agree to forfeit any remaining funds in your savings account to Freedom Seekers Ministry. (No Refunds)

D. Affective on your first check or as soon as you have funds available in your account, you will be allotted \$50.00 per week for personal expenses. When you are fulfilling your financial obligations to FSM, you will be allotted additional grocery expenses and any legal expenses such as fines, child support and miscellaneous fees.

E. After completing the 90-day commitment, you have the opportunity to transition into our 90-to-9 Discipleship Program. You have 30 days to either commit to our 90-to-9 Discipleship Program or to leave the Transitional Living

Program. Please refer to the 90-to-9 section of these guidelines for further details.

## **Section 6: 90-to-9 Commitment Guidelines**

During the first 90 days of the transitional living program, the focus will be on foundations and the 12 step recovery principles. Understanding the basics of a Christ centered life. Discovery of spiritual gifts and passions will be part of this process to find what place a person is meant for in the body of Christ.

After the completion of this 90-day period, an individual has the choice to continue with the program and commit to 9 months of discipleship or to leave the transitional living program. We still encourage those who choose to leave transitional living to be involved with the ministry.

The 9-month discipleship program will include responsibilities and expectations. This period will include setting and achieving short and long-term goals, budgeting, spiritual growth studies, mentorship, and more involvement in our ministry teams and meetings.

- A. Short term goals will be goals that can be achieved in one month
  
- B. Long term goals will be goals achieved in 3- 9 months.
  
- C. Spiritual growth studies will include in depth study of the Word, consistent personal devotion time, preparation of sermons, and journaling.
  
- D. Mentorship will involve taking on a few people to mentor through prayer, spending time with them, staying in communication, finding out their needs and shortcomings to help them grow strong in Christ.
  
- E. Leading ministry meetings on a rotation will be expected. Taking an active role in a ministry team and helping to further develop it, whether by leading or by fulfilling critical needs of a team, will be expected.
  
- F. All leadership is expected to show up 45 minutes early on Sunday nights.

## **Section 7: Record Keeping**

All records are uniform and kept secured and double locked in bound form and chronically ordered, signed and dated. All are clearly marked confidential.

All records are only accessible by approved staff members of FSM.

All records will be kept up to 5 years upon discharge and will then be destroyed and discarded.

## **Section 8: Law Enforcement Partnership**

1. ACC will be notified immediately on all offenders who abscond and or drop out of the FSM program.
2. FSM will submit progress reports to Probation office on a monthly basis no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month.
3. In an emergency, law enforcement will be notified and then ACC and pre-approved family members.
4. We will not accept any ACC offenders without prior authorization from ACC, Courts, or the Parole board.
5. Any and all out of county or state passes must be approved by ACC.
6. Any unlawful verbal abuse, physical violence, sexual assault, substance use, destruction of property, etc. are grounds for dismissal and possible prosecution.
7. Any and all contraband such as porn related, profanity, any demonic paraphernalia, clothing, reading material, DVDs, games etc. is considered contraband and will not be allowed.

## **Section 9: Staff**

1. All staff must fill out and submit an application and/or resume.
2. All staff will be interviewed and all background and references will be checked before interviewing.
3. To qualify an individual must have a proven track record in some capacity of one or more of the following fields: Christian ministry, drug and alcohol



counseling, healthcare, or law enforcement. They must also be willing to volunteer and serve in this ministry prior to becoming a volunteer staff member or a paid staff member.

4. We also hire within the ministry based on personal experience, faithfulness and servanthood.

5. We honor all legal employee rights and believe there is no greater benefit than helping and being a part of restoring humanity and families.

6. We are engaged in several facets of ministry with ongoing training, discipleship and community outreach. We are active in substance abuse training, jail and prison ministry. We strive to be part of the solution and the link between church and state in recovery success.

7. We have a 3-strike policy on disciplinary actions and/or termination for any and all staff positions with the exception of immediate termination for any and all of our zero-tolerance policies.

## **Section 10: Property Maintenance**

1. David's House of Hope is located in Oak Grove, Arkansas. BEVS House is located in Berryville, Arkansas.

2. We have two 15-passenger vans registered and insured for ministry transportation.

3. We have 2 fire extinguishers and a first aid kit for each house, available for all clients.

4. We have insurance for property and housing.

5. Only approved licensed staff will be transporting clients.

6. All electrical, plumbing, propane, etc. has been replaced or inspected and is in good working condition.

## **Section 11: Emergency Disaster Plan**

1. In the event of fire all clients must exit the houses in one of the three exits depending on which is closest. Everyone will meet by road for a head count by our house coordinator.
2. In the event of tornado all must meet in the center of the houses together for a head count.
3. We will conduct emergency drills at random per quarter of each year. Records of drills will be kept with client records.
4. Emergency training once a year will be mandatory for all staff members.
5. We have preapproval for alternative housing in case of emergency at two different locations, Freedom Seekers Ministry in Berryville, Arkansas and Harvest Assembly in Oak Grove, Arkansas.