



350 Merrydale Road Interim Shelter: Participant Code of Conduct and Good Neighbor Policy

Introduction

The 350 Merrydale Road Interim Shelter provides interim housing, onsite services, and supportive programming in a structured and managed environment. The Interim Shelter Program is intended to support participants while also ensuring safety, accountability, and respectful integration with the surrounding neighborhood.

This document establishes the expectations, responsibilities, and accountability framework for participation in the Interim Shelter Program. It applies to all program participants and describes how the program operates both within the shelter site and in relation to the surrounding community.

To provide clarity and transparency, this document is organized into two distinct but connected parts:

Part I: Program Participant Code of Conduct

Governs participant behavior, safety, and operations within the shelter site and in connection with shelter-related activities.

Part II: Good Neighbor Policy

Establishes expectations for how program participants, staff, and the shelter operator interact with the surrounding neighborhood and how the City of San Rafael and County of Marin engage with community members.

COMPLIANCE WITH BOTH PARTS IS A CONDITION OF PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERIM SHELTER PROGRAM.

Violations of the Program Participant Code of Conduct or the Good Neighbor Policy are addressed through the unified enforcement framework described in this document. This approach ensures that expectations related to both on-site conduct and neighborhood impacts are handled consistently, fairly, and with appropriate due process.

Day-to-day enforcement of participant behavior is carried out by the shelter operator. City staff provide oversight and coordination, including review of reported concerns and involvement when issues require escalation or interagency response.

Part I - Program Participant Code of Conduct

Purpose: The Program Participant Code of Conduct establishes clear expectations to maintain safety, dignity, and respect within the shelter site and surrounding environment connected to shelter operations.

1. Core Expectations

All participants are expected to:

- Treat fellow program participants, staff, service providers, neighbors, and members of the public with respect and dignity.
- Follow directions from program staff related to safety, program operations, and site management.
- Conduct themselves in a manner that does not disrupt the safety, stability, or functioning of the shelter community.

2. Zero Tolerance: Safety, Violence, and Weapons

The following behaviors are strictly prohibited and may result in immediate removal from the program:

- Violence, attempted violence, or threats of violence toward any person.
- Harassment, intimidation, or aggressive behavior that creates a safety risk.
- Possession, use, or display of weapons of any kind.
- Criminal activity which occurs on or near the Interim Shelter site. Law enforcement will be contacted when appropriate.

3. Assigned Units and Residency Rules

Each participant is assigned a specific interim shelter unit.

- Units may not be shared, transferred, or occupied by anyone not approved to participate in the program.
- Participants may not maintain tents or encampments in San Rafael while enrolled in the Interim Shelter Program.
- Personal belongings must be stored inside the assigned unit or designated storage areas only.
- Items stored outside these permitted areas may be removed 48 hours after the first notice.

4. Entry, Exit, and Site Access Protocols

- Participants must follow site check-in and check-out procedures.
- No public drop-in access is permitted.
- Visitors are allowed only with prior site operator staff approval, within designed hours, and must follow all program rules.
- Loitering outside the property, along the SMART pathway, or in neighboring residential areas is not permitted.

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5. Cleanliness and Property Care

Participants are responsible for:

- Keeping their assigned unit clean, orderly, and sanitary.
- Respecting shared spaces and common areas.
- Properly disposing of trash and personal waste.
- Damage to property or repeated failure to maintain basic cleanliness may result in corrective action.

6. Quiet Hours

Quiet hours are in effect between 10:00 PM and 7:00 AM. During quiet hours:

- Noise must be kept to a minimum.
- Music, phone use, and conversations must not disturb others

7. Fire Safety and Prohibited Items

For safety reasons, the following are not permitted:

- Open flames or candles.
- Smoking outside designated areas.
- Gasoline, propane, butane, torches, or flammable chemicals.
- Unauthorized heaters, generators, or cooking equipment.

8. Smoking, Alcohol, and Substances

- Smoking is permitted only in designated outdoor areas.
- Alcohol and illegal substances are **strictly prohibited** in common areas.
- Drug distribution, use that creates safety risks, or related criminal activity is strictly prohibited and will be reported to the San Rafael Police Department.

9. Pets and Service Animals

- Approved pets must remain under the owner's control at all times.
- Pets must be leashed outside the unit, and waste must be cleaned and disposed of immediately.
- Aggressive animals will not be permitted to remain onsite.

10. Health and Wellness Requirements

Participants may be required to:

- Participate in health or wellness screenings.
- Follow public health guidance during outbreaks or emergencies.

Refusal to comply may affect continued participation.

11. Relationship to the Good Neighbor Policy

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In addition to the expectations set forth in this Program Participant Code of Conduct, participants are required to comply with the Good Neighbor Policy contained in Part II of this document.

Compliance with both Part I and Part II is a condition of participation in the Interim Shelter Program. Violations of either may result in corrective action, up to and including removal from the program, consistent with the Program Enforcement Framework described later in this document.

Part II – Good Neighbor Policy

1. Purpose, Intent and Goals

The City of San Rafael and County of Marin are committed to ensuring that the Interim Shelter at 350 Merrydale Road operates safely, respectfully, and in a manner that positively integrates with the surrounding neighborhood.

This Good Neighbor Policy establishes shared expectations for program participants, staff, the shelter operator, and community members. It focuses on how the Interim Shelter Program interacts with the surrounding community and how concerns are addressed in a transparent, coordinated, and accountable manner.

The goals of the Good Neighbor Policy are to:

1. Support and encourage high-quality services that are well integrated into, and supported by, the community.
2. Maintain peaceful, safe, clean, and crime-free neighborhoods for both program participants and surrounding residents and businesses.
3. Facilitate direct, honest communication among community partners, including the City's Police and Fire Departments, County of Marin Health and Human Services, transit agencies, and other service providers.
4. Ensure clear, accessible points of contact and resolution for addressing community concerns or disputes.
5. Foster mutual respect for all community members and protection of public and private property.
6. Encourage active participation of shelter operators in sustaining the neighborhood's cleanliness, safety, and vitality.
7. Ensure adherence to property maintenance standards that preserve community character and quality of life.
8. Provide accountability for criminal or disruptive behavior, including cooperation with law enforcement when necessary.
9. Maintain accessible, publicized contact information—available 24/7—for community inquiries or concerns.
10. Convene regular meetings with community partners, including engagement with nearby residents or businesses, to review operations and address emerging issues.
11. Notify neighbors of significant program or facility changes in advance and seek community input where appropriate.

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12. Document and review concerns or complaints to ensure timely and effective follow-up and corrective action.

2. Guiding Values

The Good Neighbor Policy is guided by the following values:

- **Responsiveness:** Maintain open communication with neighbors and adjust operations based on feedback.
- **Collaboration:** Partner with residents, community organizations, and public agencies to foster shared understanding.
- **Accountability:** Measure and report outcomes such as housing placements and reductions in unsheltered homelessness and ensure the County of Marin, City of San Rafael and its service provider remain accountable to the community.
- **Coordination:** Align program operations with Marin County's Coordinated Entry System, outreach teams, and public safety partners. Services offered at the site are reserved exclusively for participants in the Interim Shelter Program.

3. Safety and Security Practices

To support neighborhood safety and program accountability:

1. Onsite staff are present 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days per year.
2. Entry and exit are monitored through check-in and check-out procedures.
3. No public drop-in access is allowed
4. Loitering outside the property, along the SMART pathway, or in neighboring residential areas is not permitted.
5. Site operator staff to conduct regular site walks and neighborhood walks to maintain cleanliness and identify issues.
6. Lighting and security systems are maintained to ensure visibility and safety.
7. Contracted staff members follow their agency's standard emergency protocol, requiring immediate contact with Police, Fire, or SAFE when necessary.
8. Regular property inspections and maintenance are conducted in compliance with City standards.
9. The shelter follows health and safety rules required by the City and the County, such as fire safety and public health standards.
10. Concerns raised by residents, neighbors, or community partners are addressed promptly by City staff.
11. Safety and security practices are implemented by the shelter operator as part of day-to-day operations. City staff work closely with the operator to support consistent application of safety protocols, including coordination, review of reported concerns, and involvement when issues require escalation or interagency response.

4. Community Engagement and Complaint Resolution Practices

A designated City contact (email and phone) is available during business hours to address neighborhood concerns.

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- i. Email: endhomelessness@cityofsanrafael.org. This email is monitored by Community Services Staff during normal business hours.
 - ii. Phone: 415-256-5565 (Daniel Cooperman, Community Services Division Director Direct Line)
2. A 24-hour contact number is maintained for urgent matters. Outside of normal business hours, calls are directed to SAFE or law enforcement as appropriate. All complaints are documented, investigated, and resolved with timely follow-up, consistent with confidentiality requirements.
 - a. SRPD Non-Emergency Line: 415-485-3000.
 - b. In case of emergency call 9-1-1.
3. The City maintains an updated webpage with program information, performance data, and meeting schedules.
4. At least one community meeting per year is held to review operations, outcomes, and neighborhood input.
5. The City and County encourage coordination with neighborhood watch programs and community associations to enhance safety and communication.
6. The City maintains a Community Contact & Response Guide ("Who Do I Call?") outlining reporting pathways and appropriate points of contact.

Accountability and Enforcement Framework

Parts I and II of this document establish expectations for participation in the Interim Shelter Program and for interaction with the surrounding neighborhood. When violations of these expectations occur, they are addressed through a single, unified enforcement framework. This framework applies to all violations of the Program Participant Code of Conduct and the Good Neighbor Policy and is designed to promote safety, accountability, consistency, and due process.

Violations of the Program Participant Code of Conduct (Part I) or the Good Neighbor Policy (Part II) are addressed through the enforcement framework described below. The nature, severity, and frequency of the behavior are considered when determining the appropriate response.

Day-to-day enforcement of participant behavior is carried out by the shelter operator. City staff provide oversight and coordination, including review of reported concerns, consultation with the operator and County partners, and involvement when issues require escalation or interagency response.

All enforcement actions will be documented.

Minor Infractions

Minor infractions are behaviors that do not pose an immediate safety risk but disrupt shelter operations or negatively impact the surrounding community. Examples may include noise disturbances, disrespectful communication, failure to follow site rules, or other low-level behaviors.

Minor infractions are addressed through a progressive response, which may include:

Step 1: Verbal Warning

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- Staff documents the incident internally.
- Staff explains the concern, the expected change in behavior, and next steps.
- The participant is given an opportunity to share their perspective.

Step 2: Written Warning

- Staff issues a written notice summarizing the concern or repeated behavior.
- The participant signs acknowledgment of receipt (not agreement).
- Staff may implement corrective actions such as increased check-ins with site operators, security members, and case managers.

Step 3: Final Warning or Loss of Privileges

- The participant is informed that continued violation will result in removal.
- Staff work with the participant to develop a clear plan for compliance.

Step 4: Removal from the Program

- If violations continue despite progressive steps, staff may initiate dismissal.
- When feasible, staff provide notice and coordinate a transition or warm handoff to outreach or service partners.
- The full progression of warnings and rationale for removal is documented.

Major Infractions

Major infractions are behaviors that pose a safety risk or involve serious violations, including but not limited to violence or threats of violence, possession or use of weapons, serious criminal activity, destruction of property, harassment, or behavior creating an immediate safety concern.

Major infractions may result in immediate action, including:

Step 1: Immediate Safety Intervention

- Staff take steps to ensure the safety of participants and staff.
- Security or law enforcement may be contacted when appropriate.
- The participant may be temporarily separated or placed on suspension from the site.
 - A suspension would only occur if program staff deemed the incident required a “cool down” period. In these situations, program participants are referred to other short-term services or admitted to an institution such as a hospital, mental health facility, etc.

Step 2: Incident Documentation

- Staff completes an incident report describing the behavior, individuals involved, and any witnesses.
- Relevant information or evidence is collected when permitted.

Step 3: Management Review

- Shelter leadership, in coordination with City staff, reviews the incident as soon as possible.
- A determination is made regarding suspension, removal, or conditional return.

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Step 4: Immediate Removal (if warranted)

- For serious safety-related incidents, the participant may be removed from the program without prior warnings.
- When appropriate and safe, staff provide information about alternative service connections.

Step 5: Re-Entry Consideration (Case-by-Case)

- In limited circumstances, and at the discretion of program leadership, a participant may request future consideration for re-entry.
- Decisions are based on behavior change, service engagement, and risk assessment.

Throughout the enforcement process, staff work with participants to address concerns, support positive behavior change, and encourage continued participation in the program. Exiting participants to unsheltered homelessness is not the goal of this program. In most cases where a program exit is necessary, the site operator will make reasonable efforts to coordinate a warm handoff to appropriate service providers or work with City and County partners to identify alternative shelter or placement options, based on availability and individual circumstances.

Acknowledgment and Agreement

By signing below, I acknowledge that:

I have received and reviewed the Interim Shelter Program Participant Code of Conduct and Good Neighbor Policy for the 350 Merrydale Road Interim Shelter.

The expectations and requirements set forth in Part I (Program Participant Code of Conduct) and Part II (Good Neighbor Policy) have been explained to me.

I understand that compliance with both parts of this document is required to remain in the Interim Shelter Program.

I understand that violations of the Code of Conduct or the Good Neighbor Policy may result in corrective action, up to and including removal from the Interim Shelter Program, consistent with the Program Enforcement Framework described in this document.

Participant Name (Printed): _____

Signature: _____

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Date: _____