

## **NORTH HERTS SANCTUARY LTD ADMISSIONS POLICY**

North Herts Sanctuary strives for equal opportunities for both its actual and potential service users. In practice, this means providing a non-judgemental environment which protects the dignity, confidentiality and safety of all residents and staff. The criteria for admission, therefore, *should only* be dependent on the levels of staffing in the project and the size and layout of the building.

<b>NORTH HERTS SANCTUARY</b>
<b>The Sanctuary offers a safe and welcoming place to stay to all adults who find themselves without a home.</b>

### **Referral Access**

In practice there are a number of constraints. Staff and building resources will limit the open access criteria, particularly in relation to the following issues.

- Any person under the age of 18 years.
- Sleeping areas for those who use wheelchairs or have limited mobility.
- Accommodation for couples.
- The degree of challenging behaviour or additional support needs which can be accommodated. A Risk Assessment can be performed to identify any particular high risk problem(s) and an appropriate Action plan placed. All staff must follow the Action plan and the Resident must agree to it. In the event of non compliance, the resident will not be accommodated.

### **Referrals**

Referrals may be made by any outside agency or statutory organisation, residents can also self refer by presenting at the Project between 9am -4pm Monday to Friday. In the first instance a comprehensive written referral must be made, this includes any risk assessments that have been performed. If a client has a current or previous history of behaviour that could cause potential health and safety issues, a risk assessment may need to be done, along with an appropriate action plan prior to admission. All referrals from probation or prison must be accompanied with a recent OASy's report. Any client referred will be given an interview/assessment appointment, which they must attend prior to admission.

Clients will be assessed on an individual basis, but caution is taken with the following clients.

- Recent conviction of rape or similar offence.
- Recent conviction of arson.
- Extensive history of extreme violence or unmanageable behaviour.

Clients who need risk assessing will be given the opportunity to attend for an initial interview. Every effort will be made to put a functional action plan into place.

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If, however the client is too high risk the referring agency and/or the client will be informed by telephone, and in writing if requested. The Sanctuary will clearly outline the reason(s) for refusal and attempt to offer advice and support where appropriate.

We are able to offer clients a bail address if required, however the bail conditions set must include that the client abide by the North Herts Sanctuary House Rules whilst bailed to our address. The client must show the bail sheet to the admitting staff. If the client does not have their bail conditions, they will be refused entry until they can produce them.

### **Immediate Refusals**

To gain admission to the Sanctuary the prospective resident must be able and willing to be interviewed. Initial screening will occur through a Needs Assessment Form (R2), which is, in essence, a safety procedure to protect workers. Some people, at very first contact, will be refused. These are:

- Those previously excluded from the Sanctuary for violent or other behaviour whilst the period of exclusion is not spent.
- Inability to provide proof of Identification
- Those presenting unmanageable behaviour: they are an immediate danger to themselves or others in terms of ability to control their physical movements, either because of physical debility or extreme distress, whether through misuse of substances or severe mental health problems.
- Clients who are an immediate relative to an employee i.e. Parent/Sibling. Other family members i.e. Uncle/ Cousin cannot be considered.
- Refusal to produce or inability to produce a copy of Bail Conditions.

### **Returning after a Exclusion**

Clients that have received an exclusion of one month or more will in the first instance lose their bed. Following completion of the ban the client will need to be interviewed and assessed prior to returning to the service. The client must be able to demonstrate that they are addressing the behaviour that initially caused the ban. Depending on the seriousness of the ban, a client may also need to be risk assessed. The client must agree to any action plan put in place and conform to this; otherwise the client will be refused re admission.

Any client who has been refused entry after referral or assessment will be informed by telephone or in person if requested, this is providing the staff are not put at risk by doing so. If a contact address is made available then correspondence will be made by letter.

In cases where admission is refused, including where the project is full, every attempt would be made to make a referral to another project or provide details of alternative.

### **General**

There may be times when it is necessary to offer protection to a person who has higher support needs (e.g.: physical or mental health problems or complex needs) than the project can generally cater for. At such times, it maybe appropriate to temporarily admit the vulnerable person and complete a Risk Assessment that will support the person referral whilst contacting relevant health, homelessness or social services departments, for more appropriate accommodation.

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