



## **Congregation Training Material**

### **What is Family Promise?**

Family Promise, was founded in New Jersey in 1986 in response to the growing need to provide shelter, meals, and comprehensive support to families without homes. Family Promise programs are now in most states across the country with over 146 networks and with more than 120,000 volunteers contributing their time and talent.

Family Promise brings religious congregations of all faiths together to assist situationally homeless families, providing shelter, meals, and counseling for up to 4 families or 14 people.

### **Why Family Promise in Beaufort County?**

There are no Homeless Shelters in Beaufort County—yet in 2007 there were 125 documented school age homeless children. The average age of the homeless in our area is age 6. Family Promise believes “one homeless child is one too many.” We are committed to helping low-income families achieve lasting independence.

### **Who are our Guests in the Family Promise Program?**

Our Guests in the Family Promise Program are the situationally homeless. They are people just like you and me but who have had an unexpected financial set-back or other crisis that has caused them to lose their home.

Social Service Agencies and Congregations in our Community assess homeless families and then refer them to Family Promise. Our Executive Director, Emily Bugay, and Case Manager, Phyllis Atkins, will screen and do the intake on each family to determine that they are appropriate and will benefit from participating in the program. The families also agree to strict guidelines of the program including criminal background checks, drug testing and a no violence/drugs/alcohol policy.

### **How does Family Promise Work?**

Family Promise is based on a network of Religious organizations and their members working together. We believe that the citizens of Beaufort County are compassionate people who want to make a difference. As the 131<sup>st</sup> Family Promise affiliate in the nation, our mission is to link those in need with those who want to help.

**Host Congregations** are the congregations that provide the actual physical place that serves as the temporary home for our guests. Usually these are the Sunday School rooms that are cleared out for the week and beds are brought in for the families and hosts to sleep on. Tidal Creek Fellowship is acting as the Host congregation while using the facilities of Waters Edge UMC.

**Support Congregations** are the congregations that assist the Host Congregation by helping with meals, visiting with the families, and spending the night. They do everything a Host Congregation does—they just do it in the Host's facility.

Guests are housed for one week at a time at a Host Congregation, arriving on Sunday afternoon around 5:30. This Congregation becomes their home for that week with participating congregations providing sleeping quarters and a hospitality room where the guests can relax, socialize, watch TV and the children can play and do their homework. Earlier in the day on Sunday a setup crew has prepared the rooms in the congregation for the guests.

On a daily basis, as volunteers it is our job to provide the evening meal, breakfast, and food for the guests to make a bag lunch for the next day. At 7:00 in the morning, the guests will be picked up by the Family Promise Van and taken to the Day Center or work (or leave in their own vehicle). They will return to the Congregation between 6 and 6:30 that evening.

The Day Center, which is located at 164 Bluffton Road (SC 46 – near the Bluffton Post Office), provides a homelike atmosphere for the guests during the day, and offers an address and phone number while they are in the program. Guests go from there to work, school or appointments, or work with the director and Case Manager to find jobs and housing. Of note is the fact that 80% of families involved in Family Promise nationwide find *permanent* housing and guests without jobs either find one, enter job training, or enroll in school.

## **What do Volunteers need to Know?**

### *Meal Logistics—*

- Evening meals should be cooked at home and brought to the congregation. The congregation has a warming oven and microwave to keep food warm, but does not have a full Kitchen. Plates, flatware, glasses, table cloths etc. are all available at the Congregation as are basic condiments and drinks. Information about the families will be available before they arrive so that we know of any dietary restrictions.
- Breakfast items should be quick—on the run—kinds of things during the week—bagels, pop tarts, fruit, cereal bars or boxes, juice and milk.
- Lunches will be packed by the guests in the evening for the next day--simple sandwich makings, chips, fruit, packaged treats, juice boxes, etc.

### *Sensitivities—The Hospitality Code*

In talking about sensitivities, the most important thing to remember is to take the word “homeless” out of your vocabulary. The families in this program are our guests—to be treated with all the trust, respect and kindness of Christian Love.

A few specific things to remember:

- Small acts of kindness can make all the difference in someone's life.
- Look beyond the stereotypes of the homeless.
- Understand that our guests are going through a very traumatic time.
- Overcome the tendency to judge or criticize. Guests may have very different life-styles and values.
- Be a good listener. Some people will have a need to talk.
- Respect Privacy—do not pry, ‘hover’ or ask a lot of questions. Guests who want to talk will. Remember that their rooms are their homes this week. Respect that privacy.
- Parenting—Some guests will have better parenting skills than others. It is not our job to correct children or in anyway to interfere with the parents' authority.

## Family Promise Hospitality Code

Please review the Hospitality Code attachment for more information on the sensitivities of inter-acting with our guests.

### Daily Volunteer Procedures –

- **Log Book**-Overnight hosts are required to fill out a log concerning their experiences with the guests that evening. A sample log sheet is included in your training materials. Overnight hosts should complete the log-sheet every morning, even if no major incidents occurred. If you are a Meal Provider or Evening Host and feel that there are things you need to report, please fill out this report and also share your experiences with the evening shift. This report should be placed in the envelope provided and remain confidential. If there are real issues such as medical emergencies or security concerns, please call the contact people provided on the emergency forms.
- **Sign-In Sheet**- All volunteers and guests must sign in and out on the Volunteer and Guest Sign-In sheet.
- **Emergency Procedures**- Emergency Numbers and Procedures are posted in both the Fellowship Hall and in the Living Quarters.
- **In case of Emergency** – The phone is in the Kitchen.
- **Clean Up** – Family Promise guests will share in daily chores including kitchen clean up, vacuuming the Fellowship Hall, and bathroom clean-up. Evening and Overnight Hosts should see that these areas are generally clean each night before bed.
- **Bed time and Wake-up calls** – Once the guests arrive between 6:00 and 6:30pm, they should not leave the campus again until the next morning. 'Curfew' is 10:00pm. This means all guests must be inside the building for the night. Lights out is no later than 11:00pm. In the morning, guests should be ready to leave the building no later than 7:00am. Some guests will leave earlier due to employment schedules. The last volunteer to leave the church in the morning should check to ensure that all rooms are empty. Doors should be locked and alarm armed if no one else is in the church building.

### Guest Guidelines-

A copy of the Guest Guidelines is included and will be posted in the Fellowship Hall. All Guests will have signed these Guidelines before joining the Family Promise Program. Guests are given an orientation to the facilities and procedures when they arrive at our Church.

### FLEXIBILITY –

Please remember that there is not always a schedule to homelessness and we may be asked to welcome a family mid week. Some volunteers and guests have different eating habits and tastes. We are all unique and have different backgrounds that make us who we are. Please be patient and flexible as we come together to help those in need.

Also, please don't hesitate to gracefully share suggestions as we are all learning together what Family Promise will look like in Beaufort County and how we can best serve our neighbors.

**Thank you for living out your faith!**

## Sample Schedule

### Weekdays

5:30pm	Volunteers arrive at Church to prepare or warm dinner meal
6:00pm	Evening Hosts arrive at Church
6:00-6:30pm	Guests arrive at Church
6:30pm	Dinner is served
7:00-10:00pm	Dinner hosts depart Prepare bag lunches for following day Time for homework, chores, recreational activities, fellowship, etc.
8:00pm	Overnight Hosts arrive Evening Hosts depart
10:00pm	Curfew – no one should exit the building for any reason other than emergency
10:00-11:00pm	Quiet time to get ready for bed
11:00pm	Lights Out
6:00am	Wake up – Guests have alarm clocks in the bedroom and should wake themselves up.
6:30am eat.	Put out breakfast foods for guests and host to ‘grab-n-go’ or sit and eat.
7:00am	Guests depart for work, school, and/or FP Family Center
7:00am-8:00am	Overnight Hosts complete log forms, secure building before leaving.

### Saturdays and Holidays when Family Center is Closed

8:00am	Morning Hosts arrive Overnight Hosts depart Volunteers to provide breakfast arrive (when applicable)
8:30am	Breakfast is served
9:00am-11:00am	Activities with Morning Hosts
11:00am-2:00pm	Activities with Mid-day Hosts Lunch at Church – sandwiches, chips, leftovers from week, etc.
2:00pm-5:00pm	Activities with Afternoon Hosts
5:00pm	Afternoon Hosts depart

Evening Hosts arrive

5:00-6:30pm

Activities with Evening Hosts

6:30pm

Dinner is served

7:00-10:00pm

Dinner hosts depart

Prepare bag lunches for following day

Time for homework, chores, recreational activities, fellowship, etc.

10:00pm

Curfew – no one should exit the building for any reason other than emergency

10:00-11:00pm

Quiet time to get ready for bed

11:00pm

Lights Out



### Volunteer Log

This log is to be completed by each overnight host upon leaving in the morning. This log may also be completed by other volunteers if there is a perceived need for concern or documentation of an incident. This log is to be CONFIDENTIAL and ONLY viewed by the Congregation Coordinator and the Network Director. The completed log should be turned in to a secure location in the congregation's facility and given to the Network Director at the close of the host week by way of the Congregation Coordinator.

Volunteer:

Name: Suzzie Jones Number: 555-1234

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Host Congregation: Tidal Creek Fellowship

Time Volunteered:

Date: 1/26/09 Time: 8:00pm - 8:00am Overnight Host? yes

Service Provided: (meal, activity, etc) overnight host

Were there any incidents or issues that need to be brought to the attention of the Congregation Coordinator, Network Director or the next Host Congregation? If so, what were they? we had difficulty last night completing dinner, homework, lunch preparation, and chores before bedtime. Is there a better way to divide activities to ensure that everything is finished with time to spare?

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_





## Emergency Procedures

### In a Medical Emergency

1. **Call 911.**
2. If necessary to drive to the hospital, one host should accompany the guest to the hospital while the other host should stay at the congregation. If a sufficient number of hosts are not present to permit one to go to the hospital, call the backup volunteer or volunteer coordinator to accompany the guest (or meet at the hospital).
  - a. If there is not a 2<sup>nd</sup> parent to stay at the church with the children, the entire family must go to the hospital.
3. Report the emergency to the volunteer coordinator and Network Director.
4. The accompanying host or backup volunteer must report back as soon as possible concerning medical status and arrangements.
5. Record and date all information in the Hospitality Log Sheets.

### In an emergency call 911 FIRST!

#### Phone Numbers

On-Call Physician or Nurse:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital Emergency Room: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Congregation Coordinator:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Backup Volunteer:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Network Director:

Name: Emily Bugay Number: (c) 843-816-4673 (h) 864-430-7783

#### In Case of Fire or Extreme Weather

**Fire:** All occupants should exit the building through the nearest door. After evacuating, everyone should gather near the Waters Edge Church Sign at the front of the building near the road.

**Tornado:** All occupants should gather in the Day School hall way leading from the Fellowship Hall toward the Sanctuary. Fire doors on both ends of this hallway should remain closed.

#### Health Safety Reminders

1. Wear plastic gloves when bandaging cuts, changing diapers, changing wet beds, cleaning up bodily fluids, etc.
2. Use a cup of bleach in the washer when laundering sheets, towels, and other program laundry.
3. Use disinfectant when cleaning bathrooms. Use a solution of one part bleach to nine parts water to disinfect diaper changing areas and any areas where blood or other bodily fluid has spilled.
4. Wash hands with soap and water after performing any of the above tasks.



## Guest Guidelines

We welcome you to Family Promise of Beaufort County. For the comfort and safety of all of our guests, the following guidelines have been established. Please read this agreement, list family members, and sign below.

1. I will seek housing, financial assistance, and / or employment on a daily basis while staying with the network. I will regularly meet with the Network Director to discuss my progress.
2. I will remain drug-free and alcohol-free while in the program. I understand that using drugs or alcohol can result in my being asked to leave the program.
3. NO WEAPONS or things that can be used as weapons are permitted on the Day Center property or at any Host Congregation. Bringing in a gun or any other weapon will result in my being asked to leave the program.
4. There is NO SMOKING in any Network building. I will smoke only in specified areas outside the buildings.
5. I understand that for the safety of the children and other guests, some medications must be given to the Director/Coordinator. I understand that I am responsible for seeing to it that I take needed medication.
6. I will treat staff, volunteers, and other guests with RESPECT and COURTESY. Stealing, fighting, or abusive/foul language will not be tolerated.
7. I will provide a nurturing environment for my children. I understand that I am responsible for the care and safety of my children and will not leave them unattended at any time. I will discipline my children with patience and gentleness. I understand that abusive or neglectful behavior will be reported to Child Protective Services.
8. I will keep all areas clean by picking up after my family and assisting with housekeeping chores at the Day Center as well as at the Host Congregations. I will eat only in the kitchen and dining areas unless otherwise specified by the Host Congregation.
9. To ensure the safety of all, I will sign in and out of the Host Congregations. I will notify the Director (Emily, 843-816-4673) if I am late or will miss dinner. I understand that my bed cannot be guaranteed if I choose not to return. I also understand that I am expected to remain at the Congregation after dinner unless prior arrangements are made or my absence is due to work schedules.
10. I understand that it is my responsibility to arrive at the Host Congregation between 6pm and 6:30pm and leave the Host Congregation by 7am unless previously discussed with the Director and the Congregation Coordinator. I also understand that being consistently LATE will result in my being asked to leave the program. If I miss the FPBC van, I must find alternative transportation to the Host Congregation.
11. I understand that the Network and Hosts are not responsible for lost or stolen items.
12. I understand that Guests are advised not to loan money amongst themselves and not to request money or other goods from volunteers. If there is a need I will speak with my Case Manager or Director.
13. I understand that anyone with a contagious illness must leave the Network until the period of contagiousness is over. The Network Director will make other housing arrangements for these Guests.
14. I understand that NO VISITORS are allowed at any Network facilities. Only those persons listed on my Intake Form may stay with me.
15. I agree to meet with a Case Manager/Life Coach on a WEEKLY basis to set and achieve personal goals.
16. I understand that the Network provides short-term housing. The maximum length of stay in the Network is 60 days, which is renewable as long as I am working on my goals. This will be decided by the Network Director.
17. Each month guest families must apply 30% of their income for housing expenses, after thirty days in the program. Families should give priority to paying off old debts, especially those that otherwise would prevent them from occupying housing (i.e., utilities). The Case Manager will monitor progress and receipts are required in ALL cases. Once old debts are paid in full, families should set up a savings account for housing expenses/deposits.
18. After Guests leave the Network, they are not to return to the Day Center, except during normal business hours when Staff is present, nor should they return to any of the Host Congregations unless prior arrangements are made. Guests are not to return to Host Congregations after leaving the program to request financial assistance. Any items that you need to pick up from the Congregation should be packed in your own bags. No Network containers or storage bins should be removed from either the Host Congregation or the Day Center. A Change of Address form should be submitted to the US Post Office to route your mail to your new address.

All guests have read and understand the rules and policies above. Guests have agreed to abide by them while staying with Family Promise of Beaufort County.