

Good Neighbor Protocol for Short-term Family Housing The Brooks – 3320 Idaho Avenue, NW



Background

As part of the District of Columbia (“District”) government’s plan to close DC General, which has served as a shelter for families experiencing homelessness, and open shelters in all eight wards, the District is opening a short-term family housing program at 3320 Idaho Avenue, NW to accommodate up to 50 families. Because every neighborhood has a stake in preventing homelessness and supporting people who experience homelessness, the city is providing smaller, more dignified emergency housing for families across the District. In addition to providing temporary shelter, the Ward 3 site will provide wrap-around services including permanent housing search assistance, early childhood screening and liaisons to schools, connection to education, training and employment services, connection to health care and behavioral health care, and financial and budget management counseling.

Purpose

The purpose of this Good Neighbor Protocol is to outline the commitment and shared responsibilities of the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Department of General Services (DGS), the District’s contractor that will operate the program, and neighbors in establishing and maintaining positive relationships. All parties in this protocol share common goals including: 1) maintaining a peaceful, safe, and clean neighborhood; 2) sharing open and honest communication; 3) helping each other address concerns and solve problems; and 4) offering a public service for the benefit of the neighborhood and community.

Roles and Responsibilities/Definitions

- **The Department of Human Services (DHS)**, through contracts with providers, offers emergency shelter for families experiencing a housing crisis. DHS is responsible for oversight of these providers and works closely with the Contracted Provider to monitor program performance.
- **The Department of General Services (DGS)** is the real estate arm of the District government responsible for managing the construction on site and providing building management services for facilities owned or operated by the District.
- **Friendship Place or its successor** is the organization or company that operates the STFH program for families experiencing homelessness through a contract with the Department of Human Services. DHS works closely with the Contracted Provider to monitor program performance.
- **Advisory Team** is made up of community and ANC representatives and is responsible for ensuring the community’s voice is represented as the building is developed and the program becomes operational.
- **Client** means the individual members of families receiving services through DHS at the Short-term Family Housing program.
- **Neighbor** means an individual who lives in the community surrounding the Short-term Family Housing program. The neighbors of this program include residents who live in the Cleveland Park and Cathedral Heights neighborhoods, as well as surrounding businesses.

1. Maintenance of Property

Clean, well-kept neighborhoods attract residents and give the impression that people care about their community. Just as homeowners and neighbors of the Ward 3 STFH will keep their property well-maintained,



presentable, and within the design standards of the community, so shall the District keep the STFH facility presentable and in good condition. To maintain the property,

Friendship Place:

- Keeps the property – including sidewalks, tree boxes, curbs and alleys adjacent to the property – free of vermin, litter and other debris.
- Acknowledges, in writing, within one business day any neighborhood concerns related to the facility directed to the provider in writing, and respond within three business days to the person reporting the concern as to how the concern will be remedied, outlining a plan and timetable for addressing it.
- Makes any necessary nonstructural repairs to the building as quickly as possible.

DGS:

- Maintains building management systems.
- Makes any necessary structural repairs to the building as quickly as possible.
- Remediates public health or safety related property issues within 24 hours, when possible.
- Develops a schedule and plan for pest control that includes onsite inspections by licensed inspectors and make that schedule and plan available to the community.
- Maintains plants and other foliage.
- Develops a schedule for trash removal that meets the needs of the building and starts at three times per week, ensuring that pickups do not take place before or after hours permitted by the city.
- Ensures that sufficient non-glare lighting is placed around the building and that lighting does not point toward residential buildings. Flood lights on the deck or playground will be prohibited.
- Clears sidewalks of snow and ice within the first eight hours after a storm ends, as required by the city.
- Performs daytime testing of the emergency generator for noise control.

2. Safety and Security

All residents want to feel safe and secure in their homes. Property owners and residents are encouraged to work together to create a safe and secure community. For emergencies, neighbors, staff and onsite security should call 911. To promote safety and security,

Friendship Place:

- Requires residents of the Short-term Family Housing (STFH) program to abide by Program Rules approved by the DC Department of Human Services (see Appendix 1).
- Has contracted security on-site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and ensure security officers walk the perimeter of the building on the property line frequently enough to ensure the facility is secure.
- Secures criminal background checks for unsupervised volunteers, employees, and applicants for employment in compliance with the contract with DHS. (Clients have a right to confidential treatment by DHS and its providers of personal, social, legal, financial, educational, and medical records and information related to a client or any member of a client’s family, whether obtained from the client or from any other source, in a manner consistent with the confidentiality requirements of District, including the Homeless Services Reform Act, and federal law. These include: Child Protection Registry (CFSA), FBI fingerprint check, Local police clearance, National Sex Offender Registry, and Drug & Alcohol Screening.



- Investigates and responds within three business days to any client-related concerns reported by neighbors when possible without breaking client confidentiality.

DGS:

- Ensures sufficient lighting on the grounds of the property (see Maintenance of Property). Flood lights on the deck or playground will be prohibited.
- Installs exterior cameras and maintain them in good working order.

3. Conduct and Behavior

Respectful behavior contributes to the quality of life in a community. Neighborhood residents will strive not to disrupt neighbors and will comply with D.C. regulations. The city also shall promote good conduct and respectful behavior. To do so,

Friendship Place:

- Enforces program rules that encourage respect inside short-term family housing and in the surrounding neighborhood, and quickly addresses rule violations. The program rules should be shared with the Advisory Team.
- Prohibits loud music, threatening language and behavior, and weapons in and on the property.
- Ensures amplified or unreasonably loud music from any device played outside the proposed shelter building be prohibited. “Unreasonably loud” means sounds that is above 60 decibels, which is the level established by the DC Parks & Recreation Permit Policies and Regulations.
- Enforces leash laws and ensure pet waste is disposed of appropriately when clients have service or support animals.
- Ensures the hours during which the deck and playground can be used be limited to 7:00am to 9:00pm.
- Establishes program rules for visitation that shall include hours and days for visitation.

4. Communication and Mutual Respect

Communication between neighbors is extremely important in communities. In the spirit of mutual respect, if a concern arises, neighbors will let the provider know promptly and directly. Neighbors will welcome clients as they would any other neighbor and understand the need for privacy and confidentiality with personal information.

Friendship Place:

- Keeps the lines of communication open.
- Provides a clear point of contact, with contact information easily accessible both online and in the building.
- Acknowledges, in writing, within one business day any neighborhood concerns related to the program (building or client conduct) directed to the provider in writing, and respond within three business days to the person reporting the concern as to how the concern will be remedied (if determined necessary based on this document’s basic stipulations) outlining a plan and timetable for addressing it, while preserving client confidentiality.
- Takes an active role in the community by participating in ANC, Civic Associations or other formal and informal neighborhood groups when the planned agenda includes the STFH program.



- Provides notification to neighbors when programming might have an impact on the surrounding neighborhood (for instance, if there is a block party that involves street closures). Notification should be via fliers, the Advisory Neighborhood Commission and emails to the Cleveland Park and McLean Gardens Yahoo listservs.
- Provides opportunities for neighbors to volunteer.

Process for Amending the Protocol & Frequency of Additional Meetings

- The Advisory Team meets in-person as needed, but at least twice annually after the program opens. The selected service provider takes over the co-chair responsibilities on behalf of the District. The ANC designates a community co-chair.
- The Advisory Team includes representation from: the immediate neighborhood, ANC3C, Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh’s office, the Cleveland Park Citizens Association, John Eaton Elementary School, homeless service providers, the Department of Human Services, the Department of General Services and the Metropolitan Police Department.
- This protocol may be reviewed and updated annually by the Advisory Team.

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