



# Resident Handbook

Updated February 2026

## **1. Introduction to Dismas House**

Dismas House is committed to providing a family-like community where individuals returning from incarceration are supported with dignity, belonging, and the opportunity to rebuild their lives. This handbook outlines the rules, phases, and support systems we offer to help you achieve success and independence.

## **2. House Rules and Guidelines**

Our rules are designed to create a safe and respectful environment for all residents. Violations of these rules can lead to consequences, which may include meetings with staff, restrictions, or program discharge, depending on the severity.

### **1. Respect for Others**

All residents are expected to treat one another with respect, maintaining a peaceful and supportive atmosphere. Harassment, violence, or threats of any kind will not be tolerated.

### **2. Commitment to Sobriety**

Dismas House is a sober living environment. Alcohol, illegal drugs, and prescription misuse are strictly prohibited. Regular drug and alcohol testing will be conducted to ensure compliance.

### **3. Healthy Boundaries**

Romantic or sexual relationships between residents, staff, or volunteers are not allowed. Residents, staff, guests, and volunteers must be appropriately dressed at all times in common spaces. Additionally, pornography or sexually explicit materials are not permitted on the premises.

### **4. Privacy and Personal Space**

Respect your fellow residents' privacy. Guests are only allowed in common areas, and overnight guests are prohibited. Staff has the discretion to periodically conduct room checks to ensure safety and cleanliness. Furniture in rooms and common areas must be kept as is. No new furniture may be introduced or removed without prior approval from staff.

### **5. Curfew**

Curfews are established based on your phase in the program. Curfew extensions may be granted based on work or programming needs but must be approved by staff in advance. Curfews are strictly enforced and residents who do not comply may be placed on probation. If there is continued noncompliance, residents may face termination.

### **6. Participation in Programming**

Active participation in Dismas House programs is a key part of your recovery and personal growth. You are required to attend family dinners Monday to Thursday and participate in structured programming as per your phase requirement. Regardless of a

resident's phase, at least two (2) hours are required to take place at the Hub. Programming includes case management with Dismas Case Management Coordinator, family dinners, in-house programs, external programs, volunteer opportunities, etc. Time spent towards employment does not count towards program hours. Any questions in regards to what may be included in program hours may be directed to the Case Management Coordinator.

#### **7. Smoking/Vaping**

Smoking and vaping is only allowed in designated outdoor areas. Please respect the shared environment and dispose of cigarette butts properly.

### **3. Code of Conduct**

At Dismas House, we expect all residents to adhere to a code of conduct that fosters respect, safety, and accountability within the community. The Code of Conduct outlines behavior that supports a healthy living environment for everyone.

#### **Respect for Others**

- All residents must treat fellow residents, staff, and visitors with respect and kindness. Dismas House is a space for healing, and respect is essential for creating a safe and supportive environment. Disrespect, harassment, or abusive language will not be tolerated.

#### **Respect for Property**

- Residents are responsible for treating the house and its property with care. Intentional damage to property may result in consequences, including financial liability for repairs or dismissal from the program.

#### **Honesty and Integrity**

- Honest communication with staff and residents is a key part of recovery. If you're struggling with any aspect of the program, we encourage you to speak openly with your case manager or a staff member.

#### **Community Participation**

- Residents are expected to participate in the communal aspects of life at Dismas House, including attending family dinners, house meetings, and programming events. Engagement helps build trust, accountability, and connections within the community.

#### **Room Inspections**

- While Dismas House respects your privacy, staff reserves the right to conduct room checks if concerns are raised about safety, cleanliness, or compliance with house rules. These checks are done to ensure a safe living environment for everyone.

Refusal to comply with any part of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action and may lead to removal from the program.

#### 4. Program Fees

A Dismas House, each resident is required to contribute \$30 per day in program fees. These contributions are essential to maintaining a supportive, community-centered environment where all residents can access the resources needed to succeed. Program fees directly support a variety of vital services, including structured programming, individualized case management, family-style meals, career and educational guidance, and ongoing recovery support.

Participation in the program fee system emphasizes the importance of shared responsibility and financial accountability, key elements in preparing residents for independent living. Dismas House is committed to transparency; any adjustments to fees will be communicated at least 30 days in advance. Recognizing that financial stability is an evolving process, residents facing temporary financial challenges are encouraged to reach out to their case manager. Together, we can explore flexible options, ensuring that financial circumstances do not hinder anyone's journey to personal growth and independence. Any questions regarding fees and payments may be directed to the Policy and Compliance Manager.

#### 5. Phased Program Overview

The program at Dismas House is designed to help you progress through various phases, each with specific goals to guide your recovery and reintegration into society.

##### **Orientation (Getting Acclimated)**

- **Objective:** Focus on basic needs, adjustment, and building initial relationships within the house.
- **Key Actions**
  - **Case Management:** Meeting with the Case Management coordinator **once per week** to discuss needs and progress. Residents must also meet with the Policy and Compliance Manager to form a Case Plan.
  - **Needs Assessment:** Meet with staff to assess needs, including recovery goals, legal obligations, family connections, health care, and any parole/probation requirements.
  - **Basic Necessities:** Assist residents in obtaining identification, clothing, and hygiene products.
  - **Community Building:** Encourage residents to build supportive connections with staff and peers.

- **Family Reconnection:** Assist with family reconnection, if appropriate and conducive to recovery and safety.
- **Program Participation:** Residents must complete a **minimum of 13 hours per week** of structured programming or community events as listed above. At least two (2) hours of programming must be completed each week at the Dismas Hub.
- **Mandatory Family Dinners:** Residents must attend family dinners Mon-Thur from 5:30pm-6:15pm unless excused for external programming or extenuating circumstances and must be approved by staff.
- **House Participation:** Residents are encouraged to assist with light duties (e.g. cleaning up after dinner) but are not assigned formal chores during this phase.
- **Curfew:** 8:00pm, with extensions provided for necessity only (work, treatment, external programming, etc.)
- **Career/Education Planning:** Initial meetings with staff to explore job and education opportunities.
- **Drug and Alcohol Testing:** Regular testing will be conducted to ensure compliance with house rules.
- **Phase Completion:** After two weeks, residents will automatically move to Phase 1 upon passing a readiness review by staff. Residents will be notified of confirmed phase transitions.

### **Phase 1 (Getting Engaged)**

- **Objective:** Secure employment and begin structured participation in house life and recovery programming.
- **Key Actions**
  - **Case Management:** Meeting with the case manager **once per week** to discuss needs and progress.
  - **Employment Focus:** Residents are required to actively seek first-shift employment. Full-time work is expected unless participating in an approved growth opportunity, such as education or volunteerism. Third-shift jobs must be approved by case management and programming requirements stay in place.
  - **Program Participation:** Residents who are employed must complete a **minimum of 8 hours per week** of structured programming or community events as listed above. Residents who are not employed must complete a **minimum of 13 hours per week** of structured programming or community events. Regardless of employment or education status, residents are required to attend at least two (2) hours of programming each week at the Dismas Hub.
  - **Mandatory Family Dinners:** Residents must attend family dinners Mon-Thur from 5:30pm-6:15pm unless excused for external programming or extenuating circumstances and must be approved by staff.

- **Weekend Programming:** Participation in weekend activities is optional but encouraged.
- **Curfew:** Curfew extends to 9:00pm, with further extensions allowed by staff for work or other commitments.
- **Chore Integration:** Residents are added to the house chore list. Residents are expected to complete chores in a timely manner. Chores may be subject to checks and sign off approval by the Director of Residents staff member.
- **Drug and Alcohol Testing:** Regular drug and alcohol screenings will continue.
- **Weekly Work Schedule:** Residents must submit their weekly schedules to staff for review.
- **Career/Education Support:** Staff will assist with employment and education goals.
- **Phase Completion:** Residents will be eligible to move to Phase 2 upon securing employment, making their first fee payment, passing all drug and alcohol screens, and living in the house for at least 30 days. Once criteria is met, residents must request a phase application form from the Case Management Coordinator to be reviewed. Residents will be notified within one calendar week of application being submitted if phase movement has been confirmed or denied.

### Phase 2 (Getting Stabilized)

- **Objective:** Maintain employment while balancing growth and community engagement.
- **Key Actions**
  - **Case Management:** Meeting with the case manager **once per week** to discuss needs and progress.
  - **Employment/Education Flexibility:** Residents may work full-time or part-time. If part-time, they must engage in approved education or volunteer work. Third-shift is available but requires case management approval. Second-shift is permitted only with preapproval from the executive director or director of operations and continued house participation. Residents are still expected to attend all necessary house dinners, meetings, and programs in accordance with this phase.
  - **Program Participation:** Residents must complete a **minimum of 8 hours per week** of structured programming or community events as listed above. At least two (2) hours of programming must be completed each week at the Dismas Hub. Programming will be tailored to individual needs and adjusted as needed.
  - **Mandatory Family Dinners:** Continue attendance Mon-Thu unless excused.
  - **Curfew:** Curfew extends to 10:00pm, with further extensions allowed by staff for work or other commitments.
  - **Overnight Passes:** Residents in Phase 2 are eligible for up to 4 overnight passes per month. These passes allow residents to spend time with family or other

supportive networks outside the house, with prior staff approval to ensure alignment with recovery goals.

- **Chore Participation:** Continue involvement in chores.
- **Drug and Alcohol Testing:** Regular drug and alcohol screenings will continue.
- **Weekly Work Schedule:** Residents must submit their weekly schedules to staff for review.
- **Career/Education Support:** Ongoing support for long-term employment and education.
- **Phase Completion:** After three months of successful participation and clean screenings, residents may apply for Phase 3. Once criteria is met, residents must request a phase application form from the Case Management Coordinator to be reviewed. Residents will be notified within one calendar week of application being submitted if phase movement has been confirmed or denied.

### Phase 3 (Independence & Transition to Graduation)

- **Objective:** Prepare for independent living, focusing on leadership, career-planning, and community integration.
- **Key Actions**
  - **Case Management:** Meeting with the case manager **biweekly** to assess progress and goals. Case managers have the discretion to request more frequent meetings based on needs.
  - **Employment/Education Flexibility:** Residents may work full-time or part-time while pursuing education or vocational training. Second-shift is allowed during this phase but only with approval of the Executive Director. Residents are still expected to attend necessary house dinners, meetings, and programs in accordance with this phase.
  - **Program Participation:** Residents must complete a **minimum of 6 hours per week** of structured programming or community events as listed above. At least two (2) hours of programming must be completed each week at the Dismas Hub. They are also expected to seek out additional opportunities to lead and mentor throughout the week. This may include one-on-ones with newer residents, leading group sessions as a Certified Peer Recovery Coach, or supporting in-house volunteer days.
  - **Mandatory Family Dinners:** Continue attendance Mon-Thu unless excused.
  - **Curfew:** Curfew extends to 11:00pm, with further extensions allowed by staff for work or other commitments.
  - **Overnight Passes:** Residents in Phase 3 continue to be eligible for up to 4 overnight passes per month with approval. These passes allow residents to reconnect with family or supportive networks, contributing to their transition and reintegration.

- **Chore Participation:** Residents must continue contributing to household chores.
- **Drug and Alcohol Testing:** Regular drug and alcohol screenings will continue.
- **Leadership Development:** Focus on long-term financial literacy, career advancement, and building external support systems. During this phase, residents may be appointed as senior residents. In this role, senior residents aim to give back to the house and community by leading events, supporting peers, and guiding new residents during their transition.
- **Weekly Work Schedule:** Residents must submit their weekly schedules to staff.
- **Graduation Planning:** Staff will help develop a plan for independent living, including stable housing and long-term employment.
- **Phase Completion:** 30 Day notice to vacate and graduation is contingent upon meeting all requirements, including employment, clean drug and alcohol tests, and community participation.

## **6. Leaving the Dismas House Program**

There are various ways a resident may leave the program. These methods, excluding graduation, may take place at any time or phase through the program. Residents are expected and encouraged to have clear communication with staff with any intentions on leaving the program.

- **Temporary Leave:** In unique circumstances, residents may be requested to leave the house temporarily. This may occur due to problems with Recovery Works, a positive drug screen leading to the resident attending 28 day inpatient treatment, or other unique situations. Residents are required to participate in all requirements as outlined by staff during their time away or risk their place in the program. If a resident abandons their temporary placement, they subsequently lose their placement in the Dismas House program. Placement in the program upon return is contingent on approval by the Executive Director. Temporary leave only occurs after extensive communication with staff and prior approval.
- **Voluntary Termination:** Residents may elect to leave the program regardless of phase. If a resident chooses to vacate the program, they must submit at least a two (2) week notice to the Case Management Coordinator or Director of Operations. Staff recommends providing a thirty (30) day notice to properly address all needs in the last month. Residents are still required to abide by all program rules during this time. Residents are still subject to termination by staff during this time if rules are violated. If the resident vacates without providing at least a two (2) week notice, they may be financially responsible for programming fees until their original move out date regardless of prior coverage under grants or Recovery Works, unless waived by the Executive Director.
- **Termination by Staff:** If a resident violates significant and/or multiple rules, they may be mandated to vacate the Dismas program. Residents must meet with either the Director

of Operations and/or the Executive Director to discuss reason(s) for termination, go over proper documentation, and create a plan of action if needed. Residents may have as little as 24 hours after notice to vacate the program unless stated otherwise by appropriate staff. Residents are required to complete all proper documentation provided by staff before vacating the program. Resident belongings that are not collected by the predecided move out time will be held at the house for two (2) weeks. If belongings are left unclaimed after this time, items are to be disposed of at the discretion of Dismas House.

- **Graduation:** In the event a resident has progressed through the program and completed all milestones and requirements, they may be eligible for graduation. Residents on track for graduation may either request a development track or be provided with a development plan by staff during case management. Residents are still required to abide by all rules program requirements regardless of graduation track. Graduation eligibility occurs after at least three (3) months in phase 3 or in unique circumstances as approved by staff.

## 7. Graduation and Aftercare Support

Graduation from the Dismas House program marks a major milestone in your journey toward independence. We are committed to supporting you through this transition and providing resources that will help you succeed in the long term.

### **Graduation Requirements**

To graduate from Dismas House, you must meet the following criteria:

- **Employment:** Secure, stable employment or engage in full-time education or volunteer work.
- **Programming Participation:** Complete the required hours of structured programming and community events for your phase.
- **Clean Drug and Alcohol Screenings:** Pass all required drug and alcohol tests.
- **Financial Responsibility:** Make regular fee payments as agreed upon with staff and create a budget system with your case manager.
- **Leadership and Community Engagement:** Show active engagement in the community and, in Phase 3, take on leadership or mentoring roles.
- **Given Proper Notice to Staff:** Submit all necessary notices and agreements to the Case Management Coordinator. This includes a 30 day notice to vacate and repayment agreement if applicable.

### **Aftercare Support**

After graduation, we continue to offer support through our Aftercare Program:

- **Ongoing Case Management:** Graduates may continue to meet with their case manager on an as-needed basis to receive guidance on employment, housing, or personal

challenges. Graduates must reach out to Dismas House case managers to set up an appointment time.

- **Peer Support:** You can participate in alumni events or become a mentor for newer residents.
- **Continued Community Involvement:** Graduates are encouraged to stay connected to Dismas House by attending events, volunteering, or supporting house activities.

## 8. Case Management and Support Services

At Dismas House, we provide individualized case management to help you achieve your personal goals. Your case manager will meet with you regularly to assess your progress, provide resources, and help you navigate any challenges you face. Support services include:

- **Recovery Planning:** Assistance with creating a personalized recovery plan.
- **Job Readiness:** Help with resume writing, job searches, and interview preparation.
- **Education Support:** Guidance on pursuing GEDs, vocational training, or higher education.
- **Legal Support:** Coordination with parole, probation, and legal obligations.
- **Family Reconnection:** Assistance with reconnecting with family members, if appropriate.
- **Financial Literacy:** Preparations for understanding personal finances and budgeting.
- **Mental Health and Check Ins:** Support in upkeeping mental health and providing support in daily well being.

## 9. Daily Routines and House Expectations

### **Curfews**

- **Orientation Phase:** 8:00 PM
- **Phase 1:** 9:00 PM
- **Phase 2:** 10:00 PM
- **Phase 3:** 11:00 PM
- Curfew extensions are available based on work or programming but must be approved by staff in advance.

### **Chore Assignments**

- Residents will be assigned weekly chores based on their phase. Chores help maintain the cleanliness and order of the house. Residents are expected to complete their assigned chores to the best of their ability. Chores are subjected to be checked by staff, failure to complete chores may lead to an accountability process to address the impact of the behavior.

### **Family Dinners and House Meetings**

- **Mandatory Family Dinners:** Monday to Thursday at 5:30 PM. These dinners are an opportunity for residents to connect, share, and support each other. Residents must give a 24 hour notice to the Executive Director and/or Director of Residents if they are unable to attend or will be late.
- **House Meetings:** Weekly on Thursday at 5:00 PM. Regular house meetings are held to address any issues, plan events, and share updates. Attendance is mandatory.

## **10. Health, Safety, and Security Policies**

### **Substance Use Policy**

- Dismas House is a sober living environment. The use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or misuse of prescription medication is strictly prohibited. We conduct regular drug and alcohol testing to ensure compliance.

### **Drug and Alcohol Testing**

- Residents are required to submit to regular testing. Refusal to participate in testing or a positive test result may lead to consequences, including discharge from the program.

### **Guests and Visitation Policy**

- Dismas House allows guests and visitors between 10:00 AM and 9:00 PM only. Overnight guests are not permitted, and visitors may not remain on the premises outside of approved visiting hours. Quiet hours are observed from 9:00 PM to 10:00 AM, during which residents and guests must keep noise at a respectful level. All guests must be approved by staff in advance and included on the resident's approved guest list. Residents are limited to two (2) total hours of visitation per day and are responsible for their guests at all times. Guests must remain in designated common areas, must be accompanied by the hosting resident, and are not permitted upstairs. All guests are required to follow house rules; alcohol, drugs, and disruptive behavior are prohibited. Failure to follow this policy may result in restriction or loss of visitation privileges. *See the full Guest & Visitation Policy for complete details.*

## **11. House Resources**

### **Programming and Events**

- Dismas House offers a variety of workshops, classes and community events designed to help you build skills, stay engaged, and connect with others. Programming includes recovery support, job skills workshops, family dinners, case management and volunteer opportunities. Programming at Dismas is resident-driven, and you will have the opportunity to routinely provide feedback and request new programming.

### **Career and Education Support**

- Staff will assist with job searches, resume writing, interview preparation, and finding education opportunities. We work with local organizations to offer vocational training and career development programs.

### **Mental Health and Recovery Resources**

- If you need additional support, we can connect you with mental health services and recovery resources in the community. We offer peer support and recovery programming in-house.

## **12. Conflict Resolution and Grievance Procedures**

Dismas House is committed to resolving conflicts in a fair and respectful manner. We encourage open communication to address any issues that arise between residents, staff, or within the house community.

### **Conflict Resolution Process**

#### **1. Addressing the Issue Directly:**

If you are comfortable, the first step is to speak directly with the person(s) involved. Often, issues can be resolved through respectful communication.

#### **2. Mediation with Staff:**

If the issue cannot be resolved directly, you can request mediation with a staff member. Staff will act as neutral parties to help facilitate a constructive conversation and reach a resolution.

#### **3. Case Manager Involvement:**

For more serious or ongoing issues, your case manager may be involved in finding a solution. They will work with you to ensure the conflict does not impact your recovery or progress in the program.

### **Grievance Procedures**

If you believe that an issue has not been resolved or you have concerns about how a situation has been handled, you can file a formal grievance.

#### **1. Submit a Grievance:**

Grievances must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director or a designated staff member. Include details about the issue and any steps that have been taken to resolve it.

**2. Grievance Review:**

The Executive Director or staff will review your grievance and conduct any necessary investigations. You will be notified of the outcome and any further actions that may be taken.

**3. Follow-Up:**

If the grievance requires further action or follow-ups, staff will work with you to address your concerns. We aim to resolve all grievances in a timely and fair manner.

### **13. Incident Reporting and Program Probation**

In the instance you violate any of the house rules, staff will warrant an incident report to which you receive a predetermined amount of points depending on the severity of the violation. Minor violations are worth 1-2 points and phase out after 30 days, Moderate violations are 3-4 points and phase out after 60 days. Major violations are 5 points and phase out after 180 days.

#### **Minor Violations (1-2 points)**

- Being late to required programming, meetings, or dinner (or leaving early without valid reason) – 1
- Failure to clean up after oneself in common areas – 1
- Excessive noise after quiet hours – 1
- Failure to complete assigned chores – 2
- Failure to participate in agreed-upon community responsibilities – 2
- Disruptive behavior that does not escalate to disrespect – 2
- Other minor violations as determined by staff – 1-2

#### **Moderate Violations (3-4 points)**

- Dishonesty related to safety, finances, compliance, or program participation – 3
- Missed programming without reasonable explanation – 3
- Unauthorized use of house resources or spaces – 3
- Repeated interruption of staff or residents after being asked to stop – 3
- Refusal to follow a direct staff instruction after clear directive – 3-4
- Raised voice toward staff or residents without threats, intimidation, or aggressive gestures – 3-4
- Use of insulting, demeaning, or derogatory language towards staff, volunteers, or residents – 4
- Violation of guest policies – 4
- Other moderate violations as determined by staff – 3-4

### **Serious Violations (5 points)**

- Repeated or serious dishonesty related to safety, finances, compliance, or participation – 5
- Positive drug screen – 5
- Threatening language, intimidation, or aggressive behavior (verbal or physical) – 5
- Unauthorized borrowing, theft, or tampering with another resident's property – 5
- Any behavior posing a serious threat to house safety or stability – 5
- Other serious violations as determined by staff – 5

If you receive a total of 5 points in minor or moderate violations, you will receive a written notice of violation and expectations. If you accrue 10 points through minor and/or moderate violations or one major violation, you will be placed on program probation, staff may notify your Probation or Parole Officer, and a staff meeting is held to discuss concerns and corrective actions. If you have a major violation, you will be placed on program probation immediately. A second major violation may result in immediate removal from the program, regardless of total points. If you accrue 15 points total, you will undergo a review for possible program removal.

In the case you are placed on program probation, you will be required to have a meeting with the Policy and Compliance Manager at their earliest convenience. When placed on probation, you will be provided various stipulations that correspond with the purpose of probation. This may include out-patient or in-patient treatment, repayment agreements, required programming, conflict resolution meetings, etc. Regardless of the reason for probation or phase, you must abide by an 8pm curfew unless otherwise specified, have limited or no access to passes, and meet with Case Management Coordinator once a week. This probation is temporary with a timeline provided by staff. During the probation period, you must fulfill all requirements. If you deny probation stipulations, violate any additional rules, or do not comply with stipulations, you may be asked to leave within 24 hours.

### **14. Important Contacts and Emergency Information**

In case of emergencies or if you need assistance, here are important contacts and information:

#### **Dismas House Main Office:**

- Phone: (574) 233-8522
- Hours 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM Mon-Fri

#### **Emergency Services:**

- Dial 911 for life-threatening emergencies
- Local non-emergency police: (574) 235-9201
- Local non-emergency fire department: (574) 235-9255
- Crisis Lines: Dial 988 or text IN to 741741

**Key Staff Contacts:**

- **Executive Director:** Andee Huxhold, [director@dismasin.org](mailto:director@dismasin.org), (574) 309-5469
- **Director of Operations:** Andrea Gordon, [andrea@dismasin.org](mailto:andrea@dismasin.org)
- **Case Management Coordinator:** Sierra Stone, [info@dismasin.org](mailto:info@dismasin.org)
- **Programming Coordinator:** Kristine Hines, [kristine@dismasin.org](mailto:kristine@dismasin.org)