Policies and Procedures Manuals for Property/Housing Management

Every supportive housing project should have documented policies and procedures that are clearly written and comprehensible to all staff. Having clear policies and procedures in place helps provide support to staff, helps supportive housing projects run smoothly, and ensures consistent and predictable responses to important events. A Policies and Procedures Manual represents an important guide to: who does what; when or how often it is done; how it is done (in writing, in a meeting, etc.); what resources are available (staff on call, logbooks); and what forms to use. At a minimum, the manual should outline the performance of critical functions, such as emergency on-call systems, fire safety procedures, and responses to crises. Policies and procedures should also be periodically reviewed and revised throughout the operating of the housing.

What is included in the policies and procedures manual will vary based upon the particular project. For example, the policies and procedures related to operating the building may not be relevant for leasing-based projects in which housing management staff is not directly responsible for building operations.

Many supportive housing projects have three different manuals:
- A Welcome/Orientation Guide (for tenants);
- A Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual (for staff); and
- A Building Operating/Program Policies and Procedures Manual (for staff, if relevant based on the housing model).

What to Include in a Policy and Procedures Manual:

The manual should address the following essential elements:

Introduction
- ❑ Introduction
- ❑ Agency overview and mission
- ❑ Project description and goals

Organizational Chart
- ❑ Organizational chart
- ❑ Job descriptions

Admission and Discharge Policies
- ❑ Tenant selection processes
- ❑ Eviction processes

Building Management Policies (if relevant)
- ❑ Rent collection
- ❑ Inspections
- ❑ Repairs and maintenance
- ❑ Lease violations
- ❑ Health and safety violations
- ❑ Front desk responsibilities (in projects with a front desk)

❑ Building security and visitor policies

Emergency Policies and Procedures
❑ Psychiatric/medical
❑ Accidents and death
❑ On-call phone numbers, emergency contacts and resources

Fire Safety Policy
❑ Fire prevention and inspection policy

Grievance Policies
❑ Informal tenant grievance policy
❑ Formal tenant grievance policy
❑ Dispute resolution services

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting
❑ Criteria for identifying incident of abuse or neglect
❑ Child abuse and neglect reporting

Inciden Review Policies
❑ Investigating an incident
❑ Writing and filing incident reports