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# THE EMPOWER HOUSE PROGRAM

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Empower House, LLC is a trauma-informed Behavioral Health Residential Agency serving women who, as a result of stressful events that interfere with their sense of security, leads to an impaired emotional or behavioral functioning, which may interfere with their capacity to remain in the community without support. At The Empower House, we realize the widespread impact of trauma, and fully integrate the paths for recovery in our program. We are committed to the well-being of our residents and hence, we provide safety, structure, support, collaboration, trust and empowerment to women.

The experience of domestic violence, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, a crime, a witness to violence or something horrific, loss, war, an unsafe environment, or the experience of many other difficult situations, can cause a person emotional or psychological trauma. Trauma can be caused by a one-time event such as an attack or natural disaster or it can be caused by an ongoing stressful situation such as an illness or a poor living environment. Traumatic experiences can be any situation that leaves a person feeling overwhelmed and alone. Symptoms often include:

- Shock, denial, disbelief
- Anger, irritability, mood swings
- Guilt, shame, self-blame
- Sadness, hopelessness
- Confusion, difficulty in concentration
- Anxiety, fear
- Withdraw, disconnection, numbness
- Physical symptoms of pain, tension, insomnia, racing heartbeat, fatigue or startle response

When someone is traumatized, it can adversely effects the person's mental and physical health, relationships, and even daily functioning. No one is immune to the impact of trauma, but trauma does not have to be a life-sentence.

Our trauma-informed environment is an organizational structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing and responding to the effects of trauma. It also emphasizes psychological and emotional safety and helps individuals rebuild a sense of control and empowerment. We acknowledge the individual's need to be respected, informed, connected and hopeful regarding their own recovery. The Empower House, LLC is licensed through the Arizona Department of Health Services, Bureau of Residential Facilities Licensing.

## **NEED FOR SERVICES**

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), 50% of women have experienced at least one traumatic event in their lives and there are 8 million adults in the U.S. who have been diagnosed with PTSD.<sup>1</sup> Of these, between 11-12% are veterans. This disorder is both prevalent and persistent, often resulting in debilitating consequences. Of those exposed to trauma, between 15% and 30% will develop symptoms that meet the criteria for PTSD. However, only 57.4% of the individuals who suffer with PTSD receive treatment through healthcare or other systems.<sup>2</sup> We serve any women

who have a diagnosis of PTSD, or symptoms of PTSD, which may include depression, anxiety, nonspecific somatic complaints, and a host of other issues.

The DVA does have residential services in Northern Arizona that allows veterans healing, and in Southern Arizona, there is another residential program that serves individual with PTSD, but there is virtually no residential services that treat women with PTSD in the Phoenix, Metropolitan area. With a city of over 1.5 million people, over 100,000 people at any given time suffer from PTSD.

Although we serve women with a variety of traumatic experiences, many of the women who will come through our doors are survivors of domestic violence. The need for safe housing is the most pressing concern among abused women who are planning or who have recently left someone who was abusing them. In 2014, domestic violence programs were unable to meet over 14,682 requests for services.<sup>3</sup> Nearly one in every four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime. It is thought that there are many more women who have not yet reached out for help, and that number is of course, not included in the statistics.

While it is imperative that the state of Arizona increases safe housing availability, we have to also consider how trauma from domestic violence impacts mental health. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Medical Association (AMA) and many health care providers have determined that domestic violence is a major public health problem.<sup>4</sup> It affects not only victims, but it burdens our healthcare, criminal justice, education, child welfare and other systems, and diminishes our workforce productivity. The CDC estimates that the cost of medical and mental health care is over 8.3 billion dollars per year. Often crisis shelters provide counseling services to survivors, if women are not exposed to an empowerment model of self-sufficiency, they often repeat the same type of relationships over and over. There is increased annual health care costs for victims that can persist as much as 15 years after the cessation of abuse.<sup>5</sup>

## **HISTORY OF OUR AGENCY**

Voices Empowered, LLC opened its doors in 2011 as a private investigation agency licensed through the Arizona Department of Public Safety. Our cases involve domestic violence, child abuse and investigating complaints in behavioral health agencies. We also provide advocacy to women and violence prevention training in the community. Our principle investigator, Wendy Y. Shepherd, has over 20 years of experience working in this capacity and is a Certified Clinical Trauma Professional. Throughout her career, she saw a tremendous need for safe housing and wellness. In 2016, The Empower House, LLC opened its doors.

## **PROGRAM MISSION**

Our mission is empowering those affected by trauma by creating a space in which the vulnerable can speak, allowing healing, wellness, and hope.

## **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

- We believe women who are given the tools and the opportunities they need, have a greater chance in reaching their highest potential.
- We believe in creating a space for a voice to be heard, which empowers women to advocate for themselves.
- We believe women who are supported are more likely to make safer and healthier choices.
- We believe in creating collaborative partnerships to enhance the health, safety and well-being of women.

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

It is our goal to help people within our facility reach their potential of living successful happy lives and we look forward to being a step in that process. We realize that recovering from trauma can be very difficult. We are fully committed to providing the environment and services a resident will need to regain optimal mental, emotional, physical and spiritual health.

We strongly believe that each individual deserves to be listened to, and treated dignity and compassion. We strive to go above and beyond standard care to ensure that the needs of our residents are fully met while focusing on the paths to recovery. Specifically, our goals for our residents are:

- To live in a safe, nurturing and positive environment
- To develop healthy coping skills, personal integrity, and a sense of self-worth
- To enhance personal growth and develop a feeling of wellness
- To cultivate relationships of trust through honest and open communication
- To develop a sense of personal empowerment
- To recognize and utilize their unique skills, talents and creativity
- To live in harmony with themselves and others throughout their healing and growth
- To grasp opportunities for self-sufficiency, and educational and career success.
- To acquire and practice positive interpersonal communication skills
- To learn how to find resources and develop skills to obtain services from other community agencies when needed
- To obtain independent living skills, including medication compliance, decision-making, food preparation and housekeeping

## **POPULATION SERVED**

We serve female residents age 18+ who meet our admission criteria. We have a capacity of five residents. Our residents are primarily those experiencing:

- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Other symptoms of trauma.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Administrative Hours are Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Residential Services are 24 hours per day, 365 days a year.

We are a residential agency and not an outpatient clinic and therefore, do not provide partial care. We are not a secure facility.

## **LICENSED SERVICES**

- Counseling: Individual, Group and Family
- Assistance in the Self-Administration of Medication

## **DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES**

**Residential Treatment:** The Empower House provides a safe, home-like environment. The facility milieu operates under the model of an intentional community, which promotes social cohesion, egalitarian values, communal meals and teamwork. Residents will be engaged in a variety of activities involving personal and group study. The program will provide daily opportunities to each resident in:

- Attending to physical, mental, and emotional health and wellness
- Developing and maintaining socially effective behaviors such as communication and relational skills
- Accessing community resources while participating in a variety of integrated community activities
- Following healthful habits with nutrition, exercise and rest
- Participating in skills of daily living, and increasing skills in self-sufficiency
- Engaging in educational and vocational guidance and career preparation
- Taking part of a larger community
- Attending to multicultural diversity and spiritual enrichment

**Individual Counseling:** Individual counseling will be based on each resident's unique problem or concern as indicated in the individual's assessment and treatment plan. The counseling will include, but is not limited to, all trauma work, cognitive re-scripting work, relaxation training, mindfulness exercises, and any designated exercises and involvement that is appropriate to strengthening the resident's resiliency, self-awareness, and management of emotions and behavior. Individual therapy is scheduled at a minimum of once (1) per week, or as often as deemed necessary by the therapist. All individual counseling is provided by a behavioral health professional or a behavioral health technician under the oversight of a behavioral health professional. Our therapeutic models are research-based and modified based on the unique and specific needs of each of our residents. We use models such as:

- Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR)
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)
- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy
- Other research-based approaches.

Through treatment planning, we address the identified issue(s) that are interfering with healthy functioning. By using research-based approaches to treating trauma, we provide residents with skills they need to find healing and wellness.

**Group Counseling:** Each resident will receive a minimum of one (1) group counseling session per week, or otherwise as indicated on the individual treatment plan. Group counseling will have emphasis on positive peer interaction and group discussion.

**Family Counseling:** Family counseling is offered and encouraged so residents will have family support throughout treatment and when they discharge. Residents may invite supportive person(s) as part of their supportive team (with approval).

**Empowered Women Program:** This program looks at the value of women, and develops the individual's strengths. We study amazing women in history and we guide our residents to identify with or even emulate the qualities of those women. We believe that women are an extremely important element in our society and part of our role at the Empower House, is to help her find her aspirations and develop her faculties to her highest potential. This, will propel her ability to connect with the world in a healthy and empowered way.

**Psycho-Educational Groups or Daily Activities:** Skilled Behavioral Health Technicians provide psycho-educational groups throughout week. A behavioral health professional will oversee all behavioral health technicians facilitating groups to ensure appropriate content. Group topics include, but are not limited to:

Personal Development: Topics such as behavior management, self-esteem, self-awareness, values, belief systems, anger control, relationships, and communication skills.

Life skills: Health issues, stress management, goal setting, financial management and independent living skills.

Non-Violent Communication: This group focuses on positive communication, expressing needs, feelings and desires, and appropriate responses to feelings.

Education: Topics such as literacy, study skills, obtaining a GED, and post-secondary college or vocational options.

Career Development: Career awareness and self-appraisal, preparing and completing a resume, filling out an application, employment interviews, attendance and punctuality.

Self-Sufficiency: Making cleaning and personal care products, simple auto repair, simple home repair, restoring and reusing items, and researching where and how to ask for help when needed.

Health: Making healthy choices, nutrition, sleep, exercise

Legal: Divorce, custody issues, orders of protection

Financial: Budgeting, saving, using money wisely

Art: Creative projects

Some of our activities may be provided by screened volunteers with oversight from our behavioral health technicians.

**Nutrition Program:** The United States Department of Agriculture and the Food and Nutrition Information Center identifies studies that indicate the general role of nutrition in learning, behavioral,

physical activity, and academic performance. At The Empower House, our Registered Dietician who oversees our nutrition program understands the positive impact of sound nutrition and hence, it is a vital part of our program. Residents will learn how to plan, shop for, prepare and eat a whole food, vegetarian diet. Residents will learn that they can still eat the many foods they love such as pizza, burgers and tacos, but prepare them in a way that is helpful to the body. We provide all food for our residents, which is often locally sourced and organically grown. None of our food is genetically modified or processed.

**Organic Gardening Program:** We have a gardening program where residents are able to participate as part of our nutrition program. As published in 1984 in the journal Science by environmental psychologist Roger Ulrich, now at Texas A&M University, this study used strict experimental controls and quantified health outcomes to demonstrate that simply gazing at a garden can sometimes speed healing from surgery, infections and other ailments. We believe that residents engaging in growing their own food can give a sense of purpose and provide a peaceful environment. Residents will have opportunities to learn about soil enrichment, composting, planting, organic weeding and pest control and harvesting food. The Empower House collaborates with a local organic farm and the downtown Phoenix Farmers' Market in which residents can earn income selling excess food produced.

**Independent Income Program:** Part of independence is being able to support oneself. Many programs have education and job programs. However, we realize that low-skilled workers often make minimal wage, which causes a person to live paycheck to paycheck. We believe in expanding the box of employment and identifying areas of self-sufficiency, without depending on a job. In addition to our farmer's market collaborative income potential, our residents can engage in our Etsy program and make natural care products, green cleaning products and upcycled art and craft projects. We set our residents up with an online store so they can earn income alongside of any education and job program that we provide. This gives women a sense of independence and confidence they need to move forward with their lives.

**Meditation and Yoga:** We have a meditation room that residents are able to enter in if they feel stressed or simply if they want to engage in self-reflection. The room is also utilized to teach both Hatha Yoga and Yoga Nidra. We also utilize this space for increased calmness, spiritual exploration and offer readings in self-help, philosophy, poetry, and spirituality.

**Green Living Program:** Residents are encouraged to care for our environment. Our product purchases are based on low packaging, rather than cost savings. We encourage recycling and discourage waste. We educate our residents to use products that are better for the environment and better for health. We strive to use cleaners and hygiene products are free from:

- Phthalates
- Parabens
- Sodium Lauryl Sulfate and Sodium Laureth Sulfate
- Triclosan
- Polyethylene Glycol
- FD & C Color Pigments
- Most "Fragrances"

- Other chemicals that may be carcinogenic

**Multicultural Diversity and Spiritual Enrichment\*:** At intake, we complete a cultural assessment with our residents and our staff members are trained in cultural competency. We also offer our residents opportunities to learn and practice traditions from diverse cultures. Non-required activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Traditional Native American Healing practices such as Talking Circles and Medicine Wheels
- Eastern practices such as yoga, and mandalas
- African drumming circles
- Prayer, meditation and chanting
- Ancient text readings such as Tao te Ching, Torah, Bible, Kaballah, Dhammapada, Bagavata Gita and various philosophical texts
- Poetry and art of different traditions

\* Spiritual enrichment can be determined in many ways. All cultures and beliefs will be respected and all activities are optional

**GED/Job Preparation:** The Empower House connects with Goodwill, Phoenix Indian Center, Maricopa Community Colleges, Maricopa County Workforce Connection, Maricopa County Volunteer Literary Program for Adult Education, Native Workforce Connection and DES Jobs Virtual One Stop Programs. We encourage all of our residents to develop and reach vocational and educational goals.

**Case Management Services:** In addition to services offered on site, each resident will be empowered to access ancillary services to supplement what we provide in our residential program. These services include but are not limited to:

- Psychiatric or psychological evaluation
- DES Family Assistance or AHCCCS
- Social Security benefits (SSI and SSD)
- GED Classes/Higher education preparation/Job training/Vocational rehabilitation
- Locating permanent housing after discharge

**Assistance in the Self-Administration of Medications:** Residents who are prescribed medications by a medical practitioner receive appropriate assistance in following the physician's orders while self-administering their prescription. We educate the resident on the medical diagnosis that indicates their need for the medication, the pharmaceutical name, dosage and amount taken, the anticipated results, potential adverse reactions and side effects, and the potential adverse reaction that could result from not taking the medication as prescribed.

All of our Assistance in Self-Administration of Medication policies and procedures are developed and approved by a medical practitioner, or registered nurse. Furthermore, assistance in the self-administration of medication is provided only by a trained staff member. We do not have skilled nursing on-site, however, a registered nurse is available to provide assessments and is on call for any medical needs.

**Medical Marijuana:** The Empower House is one of the few residential programs where prescribed use of medical marijuana is allowed. We recognize that many of our residents may have Post

Traumatic Stress Disorder, or chronic pain - qualifying conditions for the Arizona Medical Marijuana program and therefore, may be registered as a Medical Marijuana Patient. All registered residents may use medical marijuana according to strict guidelines indicated in our policies and procedures.

**Transportation:** We offer transportation to medical appointments and outings, however, we encourage residents to be self-sufficient and take public transportation when they are ready and it is appropriate to do so.

**Behavioral Health Services Off the Premises:** We provide assistance in the self-administration of medication off the premises during outings and activities sponsored by the agency.

**Discharge Planning:** We believe it is important for a resident to recognize when she is ready to leave our facility and therefore, discharge planning begins on the day of admission. Families, friends or other community support persons are encouraged to participate in planning for permanent safe housing, finances, transportation, medications and/or other needs that the resident may have upon discharge. We also believe that ceremony, ritual and traditions play a vital role in the stability of human beings. Therefore, we have made our graduation ceremony a meaningful process.

## **CRITERIA FOR SERVICES**

**Admissions:** All potential residents must meet the following admission criteria:

- Be a female or transgender woman, age 18 and over,
- Be capable of self-care, including the ability to self-administer medications,
- Be willing to participate in the behavioral health program as identified in this Program Description,
- Have the ability to function cognitively in a structured environment,
- Have medical and medication stability (No need for intensive ongoing medical care),
- Provide a copy of all relevant court documentation, if applicable,
- Complete an assessment and an initial treatment plan,
- Provide evidence of freedom from infectious pulmonary tuberculosis,
- Sign and complete intake documents, including authorizations, AND
- Have a presenting general mental health problem that is appropriate for a Residential Treatment Facility such as:
  - An impairment in functioning manifesting as physical, emotional, or psychological distress or harm as a result of a traumatic event such as domestic violence, other violence or abuse, events of war, terror, disaster, or any event that is perceived and experienced as a threat to one's safety or the stability of one's world.
  - A mental health diagnosis such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or an Anxiety Disorder or a behavioral problem that exhibits symptoms of anxiety, fear, depression, withdraw, difficulty in concentrating, feeling disconnected, sad, fatigue, and a multitude of other symptoms.
  - A need for services as determined by the individual or a guardian, a treatment team member, or court documentation.

All residents will be assessed for admissions to The Empower House without regard to race, color, nationality, sexual orientation, or religion. The potential resident must show a willingness and ability

to form mutually agreeable treatment goals and objectives. Any individual who presents as actively a danger to themselves or others will not be admitted to our program. These individuals will be referred to a Crisis Team and/or local law enforcement. The Administrator and/or Clinical Director shall ensure that residents that are accepted for admission can be appropriately treated under the scope or range of services for which our agency is licensed to provide.

**Re-admission:** Any agency or individual requesting re-admission of a resident to our program, after voluntary discharge, will be required to go through our intake/admission process to determine eligibility based on the resident's behavioral health needs.

**Waiting List:** In the event a bed is not available, we will work together with the referring agency or individual requesting services to attempt to find alternative community resources. If the individual prefers to wait for an opening, a waiting list will be developed. Individuals will be prioritized for admission on a first come, first served basis. Individuals must meet the admission criteria to be placed on a waiting list.

**Referral:** All referring agencies requesting placement for an individual will be required to submit a referral packet prior to acceptance. We prefer referral packets in secure electronic format. In the event that additional information is required, the referring agency will be notified within **48 hours** of original packet submission. Upon receipt of a completed referral packet, the requesting agency will be notified within **7 days** of our intent to treat, or deny services. If we determine that a resident's behavioral health issue is related to a medical condition, or if a resident's medication prescription needs to be reviewed, a referral will be made to the resident's Primary Care Physician or psychiatrist. Residents are also referred to support systems in the community, when needed. In the event that an individual has been accepted into our program and is later found to have behavioral health needs beyond our scope of services, we will provide referrals in order for the resident to have the most appropriate treatment.

**Discharge:** A resident will be voluntarily discharged when they have achieved their treatment goals as documented in the resident's treatment plan and are able to demonstrate the desired skills as mutually determined by the resident or guardian and the Clinical Director or his/her designee. At the time of discharge or transfer, a resident will be provided referrals for follow up care as determined necessary by the Clinical Director.

**Involuntary Discharge:** The Empower House attempts to help all residents who come through our doors. At times, however, a resident may receive an involuntary discharge if the resident's behavioral health issues or treatment needs are not consistent with the services our agency is authorized to provide. Residents who are unwilling to engage in treatment and/or program policies and rules may also be discharged. This may include, but is not limited to: verbal/physical assault/abuse of staff or other residents, disruptive behaviors which interfere with the treatment needs of other residents in the program, or active continual substance use as determined by the treatment team. We will ensure that if a resident is involuntarily discharged that attempts are made to secure alternative and appropriate placement/services or resources in the community. Failure to keep any fee agreements will result in a 14 day notice prior to starting the discharge process.

Any resident who is involuntarily discharged is provided a notice of the agency's grievance policy and procedure.

**Transfer:** A resident's needs may change during their stay in our program, requiring a transfer to another health care institution. Before a resident is transferred from our program to another agency who will assume the treatment responsibilities, the resident and/or agency staff involved in the transfer will discuss all aspects of the case and come to mutual agreement. We will provide the necessary documentation, summaries, and history as part of any permanent transfer to another behavioral health agency, initiated by the placing agency source. The resident or guardian will sign an Authorization of Release of Information to the appropriate parties involved in the transfer to ensure continuity of care.

**Declining Services:** This agency shall not refuse to serve a resident, except for good cause related to the inability of this agency to safely and professionally meet resident's needs or except for regulatory or contractual limitations. Therefore, we will decline services for those who do not meet our admission criteria or who are currently a danger to themselves or others. We will also decline services for those individuals who, according to information in the referral packet or other information, have been previously involuntarily discharged for the following reasons:

- Physical or severe psychological threat to themselves, staff members or other residents
- Repeated property damage and destruction
- Theft of agency, resident or staff member property

## **RESIDENT EXPECTATIONS**

**Participation:** Residents are expected to participate in their own safety and healing including:

- Attending and participating in scheduled counseling appointments, group sessions, taking medications as prescribed, attending scheduled activities, participating in household chores, and following the program described in this document.
- Unless residents have prior approval or a scheduled appointment, residents will remain on site will remain on site and will not have visitors for the first 30 days of treatment. Throughout the program, unless residents have prior approval or a scheduled appoint, residents will remain onsite from 8:00pm until 6:00am each day.
- Residents agree to disable GPS on personal devices and mobile phones. Electronic devices will remained locked, but available for usage.
- Residents agree to refrain from bringing meat, chemicals, illegal or unprescribed drugs, alcohol, contraband, pornography, or hate materials into the facility.
- Residents agree to turn in all medication and herbal supplements upon admission and during their stay at the residential facility.
- Residents agree to follow house rules including quiet times, assigned chores, and remaining free from alcohol and unprescribed drugs.

**Random Drug Tests and Inspections:** We recognize that substance abuse can be a symptom of trauma. If substance abuse is a primary treatment need, we encourage any potential residents to seek treatment for substance abuse first, and once substance abuse treatment is completed, the individual can request admission into our residential program. Once admitted, all residents are subject to random

urinary analysis, breathalyzers, and room inspections. At least two staff members will be present in order to provide these tests or inspections

**Emergency Safety Response:** The Empower House will not use any form of emergency safety response measures (restraint or seclusion). If a resident ever displays a behavior that would be considered escalated, staff members shall use non-physical intervention skills such de-escalation, meditation, re-direction and active listening techniques. If there is ever a situation where a resident becomes an immediate or imminent threat to safety or to the life or health of their self or another individual, staff members will immediately call 911 and ensure the resident's or other person's safety. A Crisis team such as TERROS may be utilized in times of crisis. Residents may be assessed to determine whether our residential program is an appropriate placement and residents may be subject to transfer to a more appropriate residential treatment facility.

### **STAFF MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS**

The Empower House is an equal opportunity employer that has strict hiring guidelines to verify identity, eligibility, skills and knowledge of prospective candidates. We ensure the staff members we hire will have the minimum qualifications, experience, training, skills and knowledge necessary in relation to behavioral health services that our agency is authorized to provide.

Each employee must be at least 21 years of age. Staff members will have the experience, skills and knowledge necessary to provide the behavioral health services and ancillary services in order meet the needs of our residents, and ensure their health, safety and wellness. In addition, our staff members will regularly participate in continuing education.

The Empower House strives to provide a positive work environment for our staff members, while supporting, preparing and motivating them. This often ensures a level of personal responsibility and commitment. We believe that we have a compassionate team of Behavioral Health Professionals, Behavioral Health Technicians, Behavioral Health Paraprofessionals who provide a variety of interventions designed to assist residents in their path to wellness.

### **HIRING PROCEDURE**

We believe that it is imperative that our staff members serve our residents to the best of their ability. The qualifications, skills, and knowledge required are based on the type of behavioral health services or physical health services expected to be provided by the staff member according to their established job description, and the acuity of the residents receiving behavioral health services. A copy of all signed job descriptions will be kept in the employee's individual personnel record.

**Prior to Working with Residents:** Before any staff member provides behavioral health services to a resident the Clinical Director or his/her designee will verify competency by one or more of the following methods: visual observation of the staff member interacting with another individual, interviews, questions and answers, or written examination. The date the skills and knowledge were verified, the method used and the signature, credentials or job title of the individual who completed the

verification will be documented and kept on file in the staff members personnel file. All staff members, volunteers and interns will submit evidence of freedom from infectious pulmonary tuberculosis such as a negative Mantoux skin test or a written statement from a medical practitioner. All staff members, volunteers and interns will complete an orientation and complete all new hire paperwork. All staff members will be trained in the assistance in the self-administration of medication and those who work alone with residents will be CPR and First Aid certified. At no time will a volunteer or intern work alone with residents.

**Orientation:** All staff members will have an orientation prior to working with residents that will include at minimum:

- Resident rights;
- Policies and procedures necessary for the performance of the staff member's duties;
- The staff member's job description;
- A tour of the facility, including the evacuation path;
- Procedures for responding to a fire, a disaster, a hazard, a medical emergency, and a resident experiencing a crisis situation;
- Reporting requirements for suspected or alleged abuse, neglect, or exploitation or a violation of a resident's rights to the administrator or clinical director;
- Identifying the location of resident records and how resident records and information are protected;
- An introduction to staff members;
- A review of accreditation and regulatory requirements and licensing training; and
- Incident response and report writing.

## **RATIO**

The Empower House is a non-secure facility with 24 hour staff coverage at a 1:5 staff to resident ratio. We have on-call staff members available at all times if we ever need additional coverage.

## **RESIDENT FEES**

Most of our residents have AHCCCS or other benefits and typically receive our services at no cost to the individual. Residents who were referred by a placing agency will be notified upon admission that all costs associated with services provided are billed to and paid by the placing agency. Some of our residents have private insurance and would be responsible for any co-pays determined by their private insurance company. If the resident will be self-paying, the resident will be given a list of current fees for service and a payment agreement will be arranged. Upon admission to program, all fees for service will be discussed with the responsible party. All statements for billing will be prepared and mailed on a at least a monthly basis. In the event that there is an increase in the price of services; a 30 day notice will be sent to the responsible party.

All overpaid accounts will be handled by the Administrator for refund. Refunds will be issued within not more than 15 days, and refunds will be made by company check.

The Empower House has the right to discontinue services after 30 days if the resident or responsible party has not made an effort to make payment or discuss arrangements for payments. We will ensure that if a resident is involuntarily discharged that attempts are made to secure alternative placement/services or resources in the community.

### **MANAGEMENT OF RESIDENT FUNDS**

We do not manage resident funds. Residents are given a personal locked box to keep any monies or other valuables.

### **NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING RESIDENTS**

Services are primarily provided in the English language. The Empower House offers accommodations for Spanish speakers and French speakers. Residents Rights, are posted in English and Spanish and we will utilize a Language Line to explain the resident's rights in a language he or she can understand.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR RESIDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES**

We have ensured that the premises are in compliance with all applicable federal and state health and safety codes. We serve ambulatory residents only.

### **Contact Information**

Wendy Shepherd, Administrator  
The Empower House, LLC.  
18631 N. 19<sup>th</sup> Ave.,  
Suite 158, Box 305  
Phoenix, AZ 85027  
623-986-3987  
shepherd@voicesempowered.org  
[www.voicesempowered.org](http://www.voicesempowered.org)

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