

Chapter:	Technology & Facilities Management		
Title:	Visitors		
Policy: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Procedure: <input type="checkbox"/>	Review Cycle: Triennial Author: Director of Operations	Adopted Date: 08.2020 Review Date: 09.2023	Related Policies: Confidentiality & Privacy Emergency Preparedness Reasonable Accommodations Service Animal Policy

Purpose:

Hopeful Horizons (HH) maintains a policy that outlines rules for receiving clients, visitors and guests at our premises. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that visitors will not:

- Pose a threat to our employees, clients, volunteers, premises and/or property
- Have access to confidential information about persons receiving services
- Distract employees from their work
- Be exposed to danger

Scope:

This policy applies to

- All HH Staff Selected HH Staff, as specified:
 HH Board Members HH Volunteers
 Other: Visitors and Guests

Policy:

Due to the nature of HHs’ work, all facilities are secured from public entry. Unless otherwise specified in policy or related procedures, employees may not allow access to HHs’ buildings to unauthorized visitors. It is a general expectation that persons seeking entry shall have an appointment with a specified HHs’ employee. Visitors shall be accompanied to the meeting room or office where they have a scheduled appointment.

Visitors shall comply with HH policies and procedures including protection of client confidentiality and privacy. Visitors shall sign a Confidentiality Agreement upon entry. Any violation of HHs’ policies or procedures is cause for removal from the facility.

- A. **Visitor/Appointment:** All appointments of a visitor to the facility shall be listed on the master calendar for that location. The calendar appointment shall include the visitor’s first name, date, time of visit and the person the visitor is seeing.
- B. **Client Walk-ins:** If a current, former, or prospective client comes to any HH office for support or assistance, reasonable attempts shall be made to accommodate their needs in accordance with HHs’ written procedures on visitor building access/admission.
- C. **Unauthorized Visitors:** Individuals known to HH as alleged perpetrators are prohibited entry to any facility without the prior approval of the HH Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or designee.

The exceptions to this are:

- Youth with problematic sexual behaviors who are receiving treatment services for abuse or who are being interviewed to assess if they are a victim of abuse. The youth with problematic sexual behaviors will wait in a separate area away from other children.

Forensic interviews will also be scheduled on different dates or at different locations to avoid contact between the child victim and the youth with problematic sexual behaviors.

- Adult victims/survivors of domestic violence or sexual assault who may have been indicated (or found guilty) of child abuse or neglect will be permitted at the shelter or offices to receive services as victims. If their child is currently receiving services through the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC), arrangements will be made to ensure the adult victim is seen virtually at a different location and/or at a different day/time. In no instance will the adult and child be seen at the same site at the same time.
- D. Shelter Visitors: Visitors to the shelter for current clients must be pre-approved by the Director of Residential Services. All former shelter residents, outreach clients, visitors and persons other than staff must be met at and admitted through the front door at the shelter facility.
- E. Personal Visitors: While personal visitors are discouraged during normal working hours, employees may bring personal visitors to company events after obtaining authorization from their supervisor. If a circumstance should arise where an employee would need to bring their child to work, they must get permission from their supervisor in advance and must sign a form releasing HH of any liability or responsibility for the child in case of injury. The child must always remain with their parent, under their parent's supervision and in their parent's office/workspace. Generally, children should not be onsite for more than two hours.
- F. Contractors, Suppliers and Vendors: Generally, contractors, suppliers and service vendors (e.g., IT technicians, maintenance, etc.) can enter HH facilities with a scheduled appointment. They shall be accompanied to and from their location of work by the responsible staff person.
- G. Deliveries: Anyone who delivers donations, orders, mail or packages shall remain in the building's reception area or conference storage area if accompanied by a staff person.
- H. Restricted Areas: Entry to the shelter is expressly prohibited for anyone other than individuals with a scheduled appointment. For all facilities, visitors should be limited to common areas, offices and meetings rooms with every attempt being made to avoid taking visitors into client service/treatment areas.
- I. Reasonable Accommodations: When necessary, HH may provide access support and reasonable accommodations to persons who require assistance accessing the organizations facilities or using its services/treatment programs.
- J. Policy Violation: Employees who violate this policy may be subject to discipline. Persons who attempt to gain unauthorized access to a HHs' facility or who refuse to leave upon request may be subject to prosecution in accordance with South Carolina Law 16.11.620.

Communication and Training:

The Board shall receive a copy of the policy at the time of periodic review and will have an opportunity to ask clarifying questions during the approval process. Employees and volunteers shall receive notice of the Board's policy review and approval including notice of any substantive changes. The notice will provide a link to the policy located on the HH website.

Employees and volunteers assigned to a certain worksite shall receive location specific training on procedures for responding to visitors and admitting them to the facility.

Definitions:

1. Visitors: Refers to contractors, external vendors, stakeholders and the general public.
2. Personal Visitors: Refers to an employee’s family members and/or friends.
3. Reasonable Accommodation: Any change in the administrative/service/treatment environment or in the way service/treatment is customarily performed that would enable a person with a physical, psychological or religious need to enjoy equal access.

Other Related Materials:

Visitor Confidentiality Agreement
Building Access and Visitor Admission Procedure

References/Legal Authority:

[Offenses against property, SC Code of Laws 16.11.620](#)

Change Log:

Date of Change	Description of Change	Responsible Party
09.2023	Updates the policy to the new template; Clarifies entry requirements for different types of visitors; Adds communication & training, definitions and references.	N. Miller, Program Eval. in consultation with J. Brown, Director of Operations