

Resident Code of Conduct

The following rules are in alphabetical order.

Animal Policies

There are multiple dogs living on the property that are our responsibility - they are not wild. Do not feed human food to these dogs; they have their own food.

It is not out of the ordinary to come into contact with coyotes, wild dogs, snakes, mice, lizards, turtles, ants, wasps, bees, and so on. Keeping safety in mind, do not touch or tease such animals. If you encounter a potentially hazardous animal, notify staff immediately and staff will make a decision at that time about how to handle the situation.

Buddy System

All residents are assigned a Buddy. When a resident has a question or concern, she is to speak to her Buddy and/or community peers prior to addressing the concern with staff. Every resident is as responsible for her Buddy as she is for herself. When a new resident is assigned a Buddy, the Buddy is to follow the 'Buddy' checklist for 72 hours. When an existing resident is assigned a new Buddy, or when the Program Directors call for a "Buddy Day," both are to follow the "Buddy Day" checklist.

Chain of Command

Residents should not approach staff with issues, but should follow the Chain of Command - unless it is a true emergency. The chain of command for residents is: Buddy, other residents, a Resident Care Associate (RCA), and then her Program Director (PD).

Confidentiality

Residents may share their experiences at MHR centers with anyone they wish. However, they may not share anything about other residents with anyone, including fellow residents, family, or alumni. This is important to maintaining a comfortable, emotionally safe environment.

Contraband

Residents are prohibited from possessing any of the following: alcohol in any form, illicit drugs, pornography, weapons of any kind, and pictures exhibiting party scenes/alcohol/drug use/sexual or implied sexual content. All prescribed medications must be submitted to staff for monitoring.

Disciplinary Actions

All employers use what is called "progressive discipline" for infractions of company policy, up to and including termination. In re-creating real life, MHR also uses progressive discipline to teach valuable lessons to residents about themselves, how they behave in work situations, and for a host of other reasons. Disciplinary action may take the form of verbal "contracts" regarding specific behaviors by residents that are unacceptable or in conflict with established Program Rules & Expectations and/or the Code of Conduct. If a resident fails to correct unacceptable behaviors, she may be discharged from the program.

Dress Code

Clothes should be clean and laundered on a regular basis. Shirts must have sleeves; no tank tops or sleeveless shirts can be worn except at gym time. Pants and hats must be worn appropriately; for example, pants cannot be worn "sagging" and no hats or sunglasses can be worn inside. Sweats may be worn after 5:00 p.m. Mon - Fri, on weekends, and during gym, but no sweats are to be worn off campus. House shoes/slippers may be worn after 9:00 p.m.

Electrical Appliances/Devices

These are to be turned off when not in use. This includes, but is not limited to, lights, fans, televisions, stoves, coffee makers. Do not turn outside lights on or off.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency drills are to be treated as real emergencies.

Fire Alarm: When the fire alarm sounds, all residents are to proceed immediately to the other side of the pool in front of the house. Under no circumstances is a resident to re-enter a building after gathering in the overflow parking field, not even to rescue someone, prior to staff sounding the all-clear.

Severe Weather: In the event of a tornado or severe weather warning, staff will alert the residents and gather them in the downstairs RCA office.

“Five Minute Early” Rule

Residents must be present and seated five minutes before all scheduled activities and van departures. The resident is considered late if she is not present at the appointed place five minutes early.

Gossip

There is no gossiping at any time. If a resident has a concern regarding another resident, talk to that resident and/or follow the Chain of Communication. Gossip destroys trust and a strong feeling of safety in the group is an integral part of recovery.

Gym

The gym hours of operation are Monday - Friday, 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Saturday 1p.m. to 4 p.m. with a Buddy and Sunday, closed. The MHR trainer on duty will decide when your workout is complete. There is no smoking during your gym time.

Kitchen

Residents are to stay out of the kitchen unless they are on cook crew. There is no cooking or creating dirty dishes when the kitchen is closed between meals. Gloves must be worn when handling food that others will eat, including reaching into containers of food. Beverages other than water are permitted only at the dining tables, coffee bar, and porches of the main house.

Laundry Facilities

The laundry room is open from 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., every day of the week. The last load must be completed by 5:00 p.m. daily. Laundry must be in the laundry room by 8:30 a.m.

Each room is assigned a specific day on the Laundry Room schedule to do laundry. Sheets and mattress pads, but not necessarily comforters or blankets, are to be washed weekly with personal laundry. Personal laundry does not begin until towels from morning Work Ethic have begun.

Write your correct name on the whiteboard of the machine you use.

Turn off washers and dryers when residents go on outings or leave property as a group.

Fill out a maintenance request if there is a problem with the machines.

Be courteous to your fellows and remove your clothing from the machines as soon as the cycle finishes. Clean up any mess you make, clean the lint filter in the dryers before and after use, and use only the directed amount of detergent.

Do not overload the machines, dye clothing, remove the clothes of another from the machines, or leave clothing in the area.

Lights Out

“Lights Out” is defined as being in your assigned room, in your assigned bed. Lights Out is at 10:30 p.m., Sunday thru Thursday, 12:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. There is no talking or smoking after lights out.

Mail

Incoming mail should be directed to the name of the resident and addressed:

Residents Name
C/O MHR
11503 Parsons Road
Manor, Texas 78653

Residents are entitled to mail privileges as outlined in the Resident Bill of Rights.

Items acceptable to ship to residents are stationary, stamps, envelopes, cigarettes, and personal hygiene items. No food items or drink mixes, except for vitamins and essential fatty-acid pills, will be accepted via the mail and, if received, will be disposed of.

Outgoing mail must be put in the receptacle located at the RCA office no later than 7:00 a.m., to go out the same day. All outgoing mail must have correct return address, full name of the sending resident, and correct postage.

Maintenance

All maintenance needs are to be written on the maintenance request form.

Residents are not to make repairs, or attempt to make repairs, unless directed to do so by staff. Maintenance requiring immediate attention, like running water or safety hazards, should be reported to staff verbally as soon as possible.

Meals

Good, nourishing, well-balanced meals are an important part of the healing process. Meal times are opportunities to interact and bond with fellow residents; they foster a fellowship that is a vital part of the recovery process. Eating together makes personal relationships between residents stronger and creates a healthier community. To this end, please refrain from reading books, magazines, or mail during meals.

Meals will be served at designated times and are to be a group experience. Meals are specifically designed to provide all the daily nutritional requirements and healthy eating that is essential to recovery. Residents are not allowed to prepare separate meals unless approved in advance by staff for medical or health reasons, so please alert staff to any issues you may have with special nutritional needs or diet. Meal times are as follows:

Breakfast: 8:30 a.m. Mon.-Fri. 9:00 a.m. Sat Sun

Lunch: 12:15 p.m.

Dinner: 5:30 p.m.

Snack: 9:00 p.m. or after the evening meeting. One piece of fruit may be eaten at this time.

Popcorn can be consumed during T.V. time Friday-Sunday.

Residents will be assigned to 'cook crews' to prepare the meals for the group. All residents must be present before the food will be served, and residents are to remain at the dinner table until 6:00 p.m. Cook crew, however, is allowed to begin clean-up ten minutes before dinner ends.

Medications

Residents are not permitted to share medication with other residents.

Staff will determine what medications are allowed and whether medications will be released to the resident for unmonitored self-administration.

All medications must be turned in to staff for recording, after which they will be given back, unless they are a medication which will be held by staff to monitor the resident in learning how to properly self-administer their meds.

Times for medications and OTCs are:

Morning: 6:35 a.m. Mon.-Fri; 7:35 a.m. Sat.-Sun.

Afternoon: 11:30 p.m. 12:00 p.m. Sat. -Sun.

Evening: 6:00 p.m.

Night: 9:00 p.m., or upon return from outside meeting.

Medical Problems or Illness

If a resident feels ill, or if a resident is experiencing a non-emergency medical or dental problem, the RCA will need to write it on the Medical Request Form located in the RCA office.

Do not approach staff verbally for medical needs unless you are experiencing a medical emergency.

Personal Conduct

Residents are required to respect all MHR property and the personal property of others. Residents are expected to clean up after themselves and to keep all areas neat and Zen-like at all times.

Personal items may not be left in common areas but are to be stored in issued bed boxes. All games, guitars, sporting equipment, and movies are to be turned into the RCA when no longer in use. Newspapers are to remain in the common areas of the houses and be stored neatly when not in use.

Residents are expected to maintain good hygiene. Wash your hands after using the restroom. Shower daily.

To prevent injury, do not run to catch any object. Do not throw rocks, pecans, etc.

Residents are not to create or post any signs or remove any posted signs.

Knock and obtain permission from staff before entering the RCA office.

Resident Behavior Off-Property

Residents are expected to act as “ambassadors,” to hold each other accountable, and to remain with staff or her Buddy group during any outings. When off-property and not with staff, residents must stay in groups of four at all times. There are no exceptions.

Residents are prohibited from: leaving 12 Step meetings; purchasing medications, drugs, or alcohol; or using any public or private telephones.

Rooms

All rooms are to be kept neat, orderly, and Zen-like at all times. Keep toiletries in issued container.

Room inspections occur throughout the day. All chores are to be completed and your room presentable by prayer and meditation time (including on weekends).

Room Captains will act as squad leaders over the room and will be appointed by staff.

Residents are to remain outside of their rooms from 9:15 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. during the week except to change, prepare to shower, or get books.

Residents will not have food or drink in their rooms with the exception of water.

Windows, doors, and screen doors are to remain closed; do not alter the thermostat.

Napping is allowed on Sunday only when no events or groups are scheduled. No naps are allowed during Sunday Visitation. If residents fall behind in their work, nap privileges may be revoked by staff.

Saturday Night Speaker Meeting

Mark Houston Recovery hosts a Saturday night dinner and speaker meeting on the Saturday before Visitation Sunday. This meeting is intended to bring the recovery community from the Austin area out to the facility to enjoy a good meal, interact with the residents, and hear a good speaker.

Although visitors who are in town for Visitation Sunday are allowed to attend this dinner and meeting, that

evening is not designated for visitation.

Residents will sit in their assigned seats in the front rows for the presentation of the speaker.

Residents need to make all guests feel welcome: introduce yourself and thank them for attending.

Searches

To support the philosophy and mission of the Mark Houston Recovery Center, and ensure the safety of all Mark Houston Center residents, Mark Houston Recovery Center reserves the right to perform random resident searches. "Resident searches" can include personal searches and searches of the property or sleeping quarters of the resident.

Resident searches will only be conducted to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the clients, staff, or facility.

Searches will be conducted in a professional manner that maintains respect and dignity for the resident. The Mark Houston Recovery Center will not conduct a directly observed strip search of any client, and a witness shall be present during all resident searches.

Routine searches of possessions may be performed when a resident returns to the facility from an off-property outing.

Searches will be documented in a central log, including the reason for the search, the result of the search, and the signatures of the individual conducting the search and the witness.

Sick In Quarters (SIQ)

Resident SIQ will be determined by staff on an individual basis.

The Executive Director or the RCA Supervisor will make all SIQ determinations, including all parameters of SIQ restrictions and duration.

The resident is to remain in her room in her bed while on SIQ. The SIQ resident's Buddy will bring meals to her room and the RCA will monitor vitals every four hours. Medications will be distributed to the SIQ resident in her room.

Study Hall

Study hall is designed to help you strictly adhere to your timeline of Step work.

Study hall is to be done solitarily, in silence, and there are no exceptions; you may work with others during your free hours.

There is no smoking or using the restroom until Study Hall is over.

Swimming Pool

Swimming pool hours are Monday thru Friday, 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., and it is closed on Visitation Sunday.

Safety issues: You must wear proper swimwear, take another resident with you to the pool area, and together inform the RCA on duty that you will be at the pool.

No children are allowed at the pool at any time.

There is no: running, glass, diving, or horseplay. Tobacco products are prohibited while in the pool.

Talks / Groups

Arriving late, or leaving talks/groups early, is unacceptable without staff approval or an emergency situation.

Eating, drinking, wearing hats, sunglasses, bandanas, etc. in talks/groups is not allowed.

Taking notes is highly encouraged.

Telephones / Pagers / Wi-Fi / etc...

Residents are not allowed cell phones, pagers, Wi-Fi, personal computers, or any other type of communication device either on or off MHR property.

Telephones will be provided as follows: one ten minute phone call per week during which staff will monitor general tone and content. Residents are asked to use English. The phone must be hung up before the timer sounds or phone privileges will be lost for the following weekend.

Any resident that exceeds the ten minute limit will lose her next phone call. Phone calls will also be to only one person during the ten minutes, i.e., no calling girlfriend for five minutes and mom the other five minutes.

Phone calls can be withheld due to individual loss of privileges and/or the status of the group.

Residents are not eligible for phone calls until their second weekend.

Television, CD players

MHR centers provide televisions in common areas.

Television hours are:

Monday - Friday: 5:00 p.m. to 5:25 p.m. (local news)

Friday: 6:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Saturday: 1:00 p.m. to 5:25 p.m., 6:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Sunday: 1:00 p.m. to 5:25 p.m.

Radios/iPods are not allowed, and CD players are to be used with headphones for MHR CDs only.

Tobacco Products

Tobacco products of any kind must be furnished by the family members of the resident. MHR will not purchase or arrange the purchase of tobacco products for any resident. Tobacco products may be sent by mail to the resident.

Residents are allowed to use tobacco products in the approved smoking areas both on property and off property. There will be no use of any tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, in any MHR buildings or residences. Any violation of this will result in the loss of the privilege by that resident.

Twelve Step meetings

Bring your Big Book. All meetings are mandatory unless excused by staff. Residents are not permitted to leave the meeting for any reason without prior approval from staff. Residents are required to use the restroom, get coffee, etc., before the meeting begins to eliminate moving around during the meeting. Be on time and stay in your seat for the entire meeting. Dress and act respectfully; no hats. Leave reading materials or other distracting materials at MHR centers. Do not read or write other than note-taking during the meeting. Spread out and sit in groups less than three if possible.

You are asked not to share until you are on Step Nine. Do not mention MHR specifically when sharing. If you are called on to speak in a meeting, unless it is a beginners meeting, respectfully take a pass. If you are asked to help, do so. Introduce yourself as an alcoholic only at AA meetings, addict only at CA. Be polite to all who approach you. Do not take the initiative to approach members of the opposite sex. Seek out and talk to "the winners," those who appear to be staying sober and working the Twelve Steps. Introduce yourself to two people (of the same sex as you) at every meeting. Thank the speaker in speaker meetings. Clean up after yourself and others; this is service work. After the meeting, residents are to return to the van only when directed to do so by a Resident Care Associate.

Van Behavior

Guidelines are to provide structure and safety to you, the residents. No behaviors that could distract the driver are allowed. Any violations that distract the driver may result in the van returning to MHR property, and residents are expected to hold each other accountable so that the driver may focus on driving.

Residents will observe silence on the way to an outside meeting.

Rude behavior towards fellow motorists or pedestrians is prohibited. Vulgarity or any offensive verbal/behavioral displays toward peers, staff, or members of the community at large are prohibited.

There are no changes to the van list once the staff generates the list. Staff is in control of the seating arrangements and climate control.

There is no eating, drinking, smoking, smokeless tobacco, open or un-opened drinks, candy, radios/headphones, reading materials, chewing gum, or personal lights are allowed in the vans.

Residents must wear seat belts. Vans will not depart unless everyone is on time and belted safely in the manner in which the seatbelt manufacturer intended. There will be no more passengers in the van than there are seat belts.

Visitation

Residents are permitted visitors during their second Visitation Sunday in residence at MHR. Residents are allowed three adult visitors and immediate children but no pets. You must clear your planned visitors with your Program Director before inviting your loved ones to MHR.

Visitation is as follows:

1st month - no visitation 2nd month - one visit 3rd month - one visit

Visitation will take place on the ***second Sunday of the month***, following the family presentation (12:15 p.m.-1:00 p.m.), between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Visitors may bring food in the form of pot luck to be placed in the dining area of the house and shared.

Visitors are asked to not bring any other items at this time. Additional items of clothing, tobacco, etc. will need to be shipped at a later date.

Actual visiting will take place in the house and immediate grounds.

Residents may not leave campus to visit their families or loved ones.

Residents may not be in a vehicle of a visitor at any time.

No guests are allowed in bedrooms.

Please remember that visits will always be highly visible and residents are expected to refrain from extravagant displays of public affection.

“Work Ethic”

“Work Ethic” is a mandatory period of labor done daily from the resident’s first day to her last. Work Ethic is directed and supervised by Facility Personnel and a Resident Care Associate.

Residents must wear all safety equipment, work boots, long pants, and a long sleeve shirt for Work Ethic.

There is no smoking, eating, drinking, or using the restroom until Work Ethic is over.

All residents will have received signed-off on training for using power equipment before they will be allowed to use power tools.

Work Ethic Times:

Monday-Friday: 7:30 a.m.-8:15 a.m.

Sunday (except Visitation Sunday): 11:00-11:45 a.m. (disinfect)

Visitation Sunday: 9:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.