

# HOMELESS BILL OF RIGHTS

To be posted in all facilities operated and/or funded by the NYC Department of Homeless Services, and the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development through the Continuum of Care included but not limited to: the EAU, Single and Family Shelters, Drop-in Centers, Transitional and Permanent Supportive Housing and SRO's.

## VALUE STATEMENT

Homelessness is a crisis caused by the lack of housing and by poverty. *New Yorkers who lose their housing still have the same civil and human rights as all other New Yorkers.* We are committed to ensuring that services are effective and appropriate because they are chosen by homeless New Yorkers who have input in the services that they receive and work in partnership with people providing services so that the system as a whole functions to assist people into housing.

## AS A HOMELESS NEW YORKER IN THE SERVICE SYSTEM YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO:

- Be treated with respect by staff.
- Be informed of your rights as a recipient of services.
- Safety of your person and your belongings.
- The right to be free of sexual harassment by employees or other residents.
- Security of knowing that maintenance, security or social service staff will not enter your locker, room or shelter unit without advance notice except in cases of emergency.
- The right to compensation if your belongings are damaged or stolen if staff do not follow guidelines and enter your personal space.
- Receive information about services available to you in the language that you are most comfortable with.
- Exercise your Civil Rights including but not limited to: freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, due process and freedom of worship.
- Complete an application for housing within 48 hours of entering the system, including the EAU, shelter or Drop In sssss
- Send and receive private written and verbal communications, including mail or other correspondence without interception or interference.
- Submit a grievance and receive a written response within 5 business days.
- Join with other homeless people to work to improve the facility that you are in or the system at large.
- Manage your own money and/or have a written explanation about the management of your money.
- Confidentiality regarding any medical, psychiatric or substance abuse treatment that you receive with all applicable confidentiality laws respected.
- Privacy to take care of personal needs and access treatment.
- Flexibility with regards to the curfew if you need to return after curfew and provide this information in advance to staff or afterwards in case of emergency.
- Be informed about the cost of services you are receiving and where the funding comes from by publicly posting all services offered in the facility where you are.
- The right to a written and phone referral for services.
- Clarity of eligibility criteria by publicly posting the eligibility criteria for each facility or service offered within the facility and the right to apply for all services that you feel are appropriate.
- The right not to be kicked out from the facility without a pre discharge hearing with an advocate with you.
- The right not to be forced to work for shelter or services.

If you feel that any of your rights have been violated by staff or volunteers in this facility, you have the right to file a grievance in writing. You will be provided with a written response to your concerns if you choose to provide your name by \_\_\_\_\_ in this facility.