Seattle Social Housing Developer

Resident Eligibility & Occupancy Handbook

October 2026

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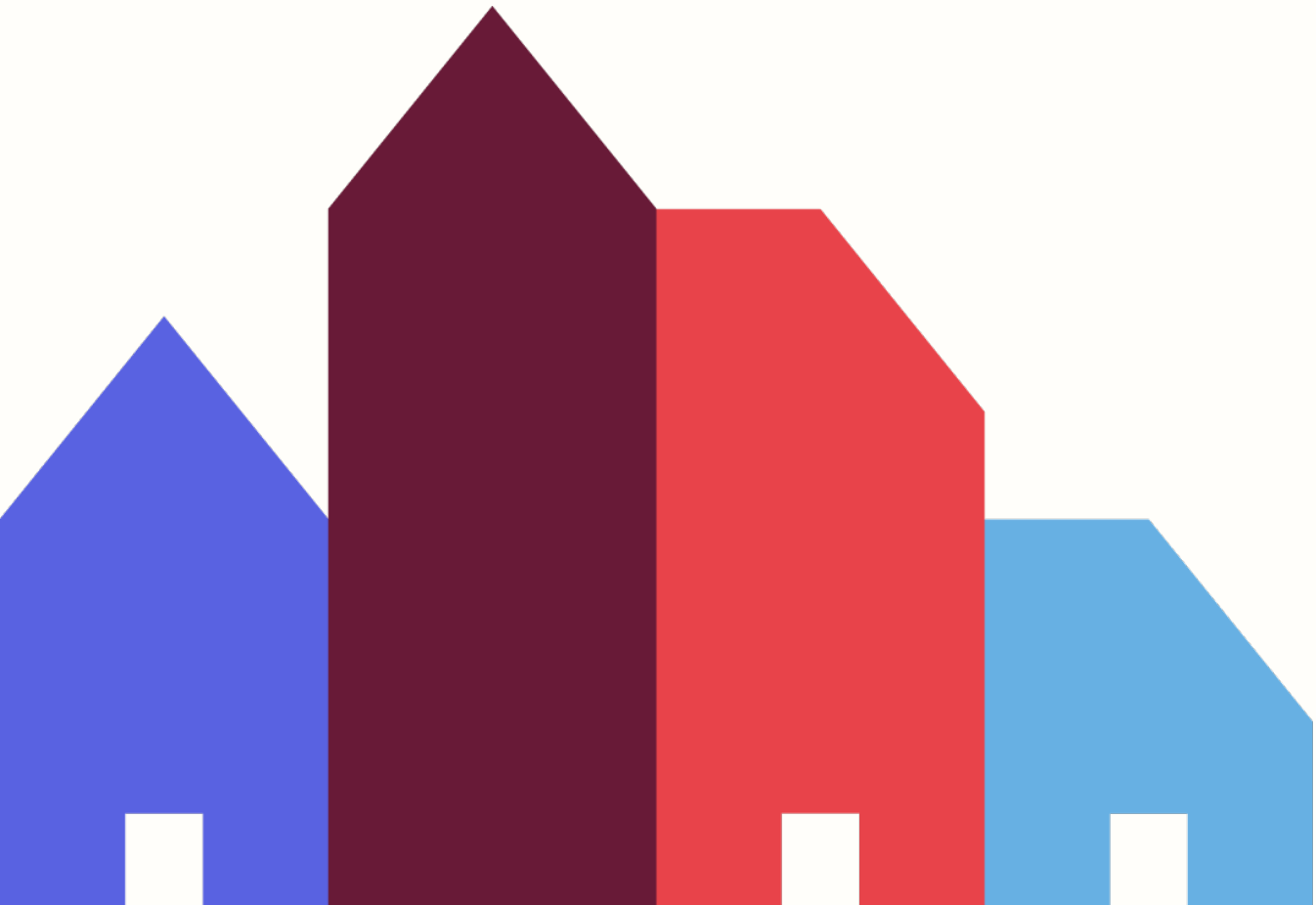


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1. WELCOME TO SEATTLE SOCIAL HOUSING

1.1 Welcome

Welcome to your community and to the Seattle Social Housing Developer (SSHD).

We want your home to be a place where you feel respected, connected, and able to enjoy a comfortable and fulfilling living experience.

Every resident brings different experiences, interests, and perspectives to the community. Residents, SSHD, and property management share responsibility for creating a welcoming community, caring for the building, and supporting a positive living environment.

Purpose of This Handbook

This Resident Handbook explains the Seattle Social Housing Developer model and what residents can expect while living in an SSHD community.

It provides information about resident rights and responsibilities, housing requirements, communication with property management, access to assistance, community living, and the processes that may affect your household or tenancy.

The handbook is intended to make SSHD's housing requirements understandable and accessible. Residents are encouraged to ask questions whenever something is unclear or when assistance is needed.

Resident Governance is an important part of the SSHD model. Election

procedures, Resident Governance Councils, voting, and other governance processes are addressed in the separate Resident Governance Handbook.

This handbook should be read together with your lease, lease addenda, applicable program notices, and the Resident Governance Handbook.

This handbook does not independently change your lease or waive rights provided by law. If information appears inconsistent or unclear, you may ask property management for an explanation.

1.2 What You Can Expect from SSHD and Property Management

SSHD and its authorized property management agent are committed to:

- Treating residents with dignity, respect, and fairness.
- Maintaining a well-managed, safe, and comfortable residential community consistent with applicable health, safety, and habitability requirements.
- Explaining housing requirements and communicating clearly about matters affecting your home.
- Providing reasonable and accessible ways to report maintenance needs, ask questions, and raise concerns.
- Providing information about how to request reasonable accommodations, disability-related modifications, or assistance accessing information and services.
- Protecting personal and sensitive information consistent with applicable privacy, confidentiality, public-records, and records-retention requirements.
- Listening to resident feedback and supporting meaningful opportunities for resident participation.
- Supporting residents' ability to use and enjoy their homes, amenities, and shared spaces.

- Providing opportunities for restorative justice consistent with SSHD's charter and applicable procedures.

These commitments apply throughout this Handbook and are reflected in the more specific resident rights and protections described in later sections.

1.3 Resident Responsibilities

A successful residential community also depends on residents understanding and meeting their responsibilities.

Residents are responsible for:

- Following their lease, applicable program requirements, and community rules.
- Paying rent and other lawful charges when due and contacting management when questions or concerns arise about their account or ability to make a required payment.
- Providing accurate information and completing required household, income, or eligibility reviews when those requirements apply.
- Caring for their homes and promptly reporting leaks, damage, maintenance needs, or unsafe conditions.
- Respecting neighbors, staff, visitors, shared spaces, and other residents' ability to peacefully enjoy their homes.
- Following applicable requirements concerning guests and household members.
- Helping maintain clean, considerate, and welcoming shared spaces.

Residents are encouraged to ask questions when they do not understand a requirement, notice, or housing process.

If you need assistance completing a required step, understanding information, communicating with management, or accessing a housing process, contact

property management. Language assistance, accessible communication, and reasonable accommodations are addressed in later sections of this Handbook.

Current property, management, maintenance, accessibility, grievance, and other important contact information is provided in the Property & Resident Contact Information Exhibit at the end of this Handbook.

1.4 SSHD's Mission and Housing Philosophy

Seattle Social Housing Developer is a public development authority created following Seattle voters' approval of Initiative 135 in 2023.

SSHD's mission is to create and maintain high-quality, publicly owned housing for households across a range of incomes.

SSHD communities are intended to provide well-maintained homes, thoughtful amenities, and a strong sense of community. Social housing brings together residents with different household sizes, incomes, backgrounds, professions, interests, and life experiences while maintaining a consistent standard of service and care.

Every resident is an equal member of the community.

Resident Stability

Resident stability is an important part of the SSHD housing model.

The goal is to support a positive, consistent, and long-term residential experience rather than create unnecessary displacement as household circumstances change.

For residents who have qualified for the SSHD social housing model, a change in household income alone does not end the resident's tenancy under SSHD's charter. Residents must continue to meet applicable reporting, certification, rent-review, lease, and other program requirements.

The specific requirements concerning income changes, continued occupancy, rent, and recertification are explained later in this Handbook.

Long-Term Affordability

SSHD is intended to provide housing that remains a community resource over the long term.

SSHD's charter requires rents to support the long-term operation, maintenance, and financial sustainability of its communities. Rent and any adjustments will be determined under the affordability requirements applicable to the household and its home.

Residents will receive information about applicable rents, income reviews, and changes that may affect the amount they pay.

A Diverse Residential Community

SSHD communities are designed to bring together neighbors with different incomes, household sizes, backgrounds, professions, interests, and life experiences.

Residents across SSHD's affordability bands and Modest Market homes are equal members of the same residential community.

All residents may participate in Resident Governance regardless of income, household composition, background, or other personal characteristics, subject to the procedures established in the Resident Governance Handbook.

1.5 Resident Voice and Governance

Resident participation is a central part of the SSHD model and a responsibility established by SSHD's charter.

Resident Governance provides residents with opportunities to participate in decisions affecting their community.

Resident Governance Councils may provide building-level representation, guide the use of designated amenity and social-event budgets, and participate in renovation approvals as provided under SSHD's governance structure.

All residents are eligible to participate in Resident Governance subject to applicable procedures.

Detailed information about eligibility, elections, meetings, voting, council responsibilities, and other governance processes is provided in the separate Resident Governance Handbook.

Current Resident Governance contact and meeting information is included in the Property & Resident Contact Information Exhibit.

1.6 Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is part of SSHD's approach to community and housing stability.

SSHD's charter provides for opportunities for restorative justice before eviction procedures. Restorative justice offers a process for people affected by conflict or harm to identify what happened, understand needs and responsibilities, and explore opportunities for repair.

Participation in a restorative justice process is voluntary.

Restorative justice or other conflict-resolution processes may also be available when conflict or a community concern affects residents, staff, or the broader residential community.

Participation does not guarantee a particular outcome and does not, by itself, eliminate lease responsibilities or prevent SSHD or property management from addressing health, safety, legal, or housing concerns.

Additional information about when and how restorative justice opportunities are provided will be available through applicable SSHD and property-management procedures.

1.7 Healthy and Sustainable Communities

SSHD's housing model emphasizes well-maintained buildings, environmental sustainability, responsible use of shared resources, and healthy living environments.

As part of its charter responsibilities, SSHD is required to implement Passive House standards in its housing development and operations as applicable. Passive House is a high-performance building approach intended to support energy efficiency, indoor comfort, healthy indoor air, and reduced environmental impact.

Residents contribute to these goals by caring for their homes and common areas, using building systems and resources responsibly, and following applicable recycling, waste, ventilation, and energy-use guidance.

SSHD and property management are responsible for maintaining the building and its systems consistent with applicable requirements. Residents are encouraged to report maintenance, ventilation, moisture, comfort, or other building concerns promptly so they can be addressed.

1.8 About Your Community

SSHD provides ownership oversight and program direction for its communities. An authorized property management company manages the day-to-day operations of each property.

Property management is generally the resident's first point of contact for routine questions involving the home, rent account, maintenance, amenities, building operations, and other day-to-day matters.

Each SSHD community may have different amenities, office hours, maintenance contacts, security arrangements, building services, and other property-specific information.

Rather than placing information that may change in the body of this Handbook, current property-specific information is provided in the Property & Resident Contact Information Exhibit.

Residents should receive a current copy of the exhibit and may request a replacement or updated copy from property management.

Emergencies

Call 911 for a fire, medical emergency, or immediate threat to life or safety.

For urgent building conditions requiring immediate attention, use the emergency or after-hours maintenance contact listed in the Property & Resident Contact Information Exhibit.

Do not rely solely on email, voicemail, or a routine online maintenance request for an emergency requiring immediate attention.

2. ELIGIBILITY & OCCUPANCY

This section explains the basic rules SSHD uses to determine whether a household qualifies for a home. We want you to understand what information we need, why we need it, and how it affects your eligibility.

Different SSHD homes may have different income and occupancy requirements. Meeting the requirements for one home does not necessarily mean that your household will qualify for every SSHD home.

2.1 Basic Eligibility

To qualify for an SSHD home, your household must meet the requirements that apply to the available home. These may include:

- Meeting the applicable household income limit
- Meeting the occupancy requirements for the home
- Providing the information reasonably needed to determine eligibility
- Meeting any other eligibility requirements that apply to the property or home.

Income limits are based on Area Median Income (AMI), a measure of income for the Seattle area. Income limits may vary based on household size and the home you are applying for. SSHD will use the income limit that applies to your household and the available home when determining eligibility.

The current AMI and income-limit grid will be provided with this Handbook as an attachment and updated as limits change.

Eligibility is determined using current information about your household and the circumstances reasonably expected when you move in. Eligibility documentation must generally be current within 120 days of the effective move-in date.

If something material changes while your application is being processed, tell SSHD. A change does not necessarily mean starting the application process over. SSHD will update the information needed to determine whether the change affects your eligibility.

2.2 Your Household

Your household includes the people who will live with you and make the SSHD home their primary home. Household members do not need to be related to one another.

Tell SSHD about everyone who is expected to live in the home. Household composition may affect income eligibility, occupancy, and the size of home that is appropriate for your household.

Some people who live in the home are treated differently for eligibility purposes. For example, the income of an approved live-in aide or a foster child or foster adult is not counted as household income, although they may be considered when determining the appropriate unit size.

2.3 Household Income

SSHD determines eligibility using the income your household reasonably expects to receive.

Income does not have to look like a traditional paycheck to count. Depending on the circumstances, household income may include wages, self-employment income, benefits, retirement payments, recurring financial support, income from assets, and other income reasonably expected by the household.

SSHD considers what income is actually expected rather than assuming income that is speculative or merely possible. Income that is irregular is not automatically excluded simply because the amount changes.

Some payments and resources are excluded from household income. SSHD will apply its adopted income exclusions when determining eligibility.

2.4 Whose Income Counts

Not every person living in the home has their income treated the same way. SSHD considers each household member's age, household role, and circumstances when determining whose income counts.

Earned income of minor children is not counted.

Income of an approved live-in aide is not counted as household income.

Income of foster children and foster adults is not counted as household income.

Earned income of a qualifying adult dependent who is a full-time student is not counted when that person is not the head of household, spouse, or co-head. Other income received by that person may still count.

SSHD will explain how these rules apply to your household if you have questions.

2.5 Students and Financial Aid

Being a student does not, by itself, make someone ineligible for SSHD housing.

Student financial assistance may be treated differently from other household income. SSHD will determine what portion, if any, must be counted based on the type and purpose of the assistance and the income rules adopted by SSHD.

If someone in your household receives scholarships, grants, educational assistance, or other financial aid, tell SSHD during the eligibility process so staff can determine the appropriate treatment.

2.6 Assets

Having assets does not, by itself, make a household ineligible for SSHD housing. SSHD does not have an asset limit for eligibility.

Assets may still matter because they can produce income or provide information needed to understand a household's financial circumstances.

Households with $100,000 or less in countable assets may generally self-certify the value of those assets and the income they are expected to produce. When countable assets exceed $100,000, SSHD will request documentation sufficient to verify the assets and anticipated income.

SSHD counts income that an asset is actually expected to produce. SSHD does not assign income to an asset simply because the asset could potentially earn money.

Example: Money in a savings account is not itself household income. Interest the account is expected to earn may be income.

Ordinary personal belongings are not counted as household assets. This includes household goods, clothing, personal electronics, items used for work or education, personal vehicles, and items with religious, cultural, ceremonial, family, or sentimental significance. An item's monetary value, by itself, does not make it a countable asset.

Certain protected savings accounts are not counted as household assets. This includes education savings accounts and disability-related savings accounts, such as ABLE accounts. Money held in these accounts, and distributions from them, generally will not affect SSHD eligibility.

Retirement savings are generally not counted as household assets. Regular retirement payments you receive may be counted as income. A one-time withdrawal is not treated the same as an ongoing retirement payment.

Certain trusts and protected accounts may also be excluded. This may include special needs trusts, pooled trusts, and other disability-related arrangements. If a household member is the beneficiary of a trust or protected account, tell SSHD so staff can determine how it should be treated.

Cash that is being held as savings may be counted as an asset. Ordinary cash kept for routine household spending is not treated as an asset.

2.7 Occupancy

The size of home offered to your household will be based on your household composition, the size and configuration of the available home, applicable occupancy requirements, and SSHD's occupancy standards.

SSHD does not determine who should share a bedroom based on assumptions about a household member's age, gender, marital status, or relationship to another household member.

Reasonable accommodations may be made when a household member's disability-related needs require a different unit size or configuration.

2.8 Changes After Move-In

Your household's circumstances may change after you move in.

If your household income changes, you will not automatically lose your housing. Depending on the circumstances, your rent or other program requirements may change.

During the first six months of occupancy, an adult who was not included in your household's initial eligibility determination generally may not be added to the household.

This restriction does not apply to minor children joining the household, including, but not limited to, children added through birth, adoption, foster placement, changes in custody, kinship care, or family reunification.

SSHD may approve an exception for an adult household member when the change was not reasonably anticipated at the time of initial eligibility or when an exception is necessary under reasonable accommodation, VAWA, or other applicable legal protections.

Household changes should be reported to SSHD so staff can explain whether the change affects your household's rent or other program requirements.

3. APPLYING FOR HOUSING

This section explains the basic steps for applying for SSHD housing, how applications are reviewed, and how applicants may ask questions or request review of a decision.

3.1 Applying for Housing

SSHD will provide applicants with information about how to apply, what information is needed, and how to request assistance with the application process. Applicants may request language assistance, an accessible format, a reasonable accommodation, or another available method of completing required steps.

3.2 Selection & Waitlists

Applicants will be considered for available homes using SSHD's adopted selection and waitlist methodology. Selection procedures will be applied consistently and will account for the eligibility, occupancy, preference, and other requirements applicable to the available home.

An applicant who is not matched to a particular home because the home does not meet the household's needs or applicable requirements is not necessarily refusing housing, being denied, or being removed from consideration.

3.3 Application & Eligibility Review

Eligibility is based on the household's actual circumstances and information reasonably expected at the time eligibility is determined. Applicants should

provide accurate information and tell SSHD when a material circumstance changes while the application is being processed.

A genuine change does not automatically require the household to start the application process over. SSHD will update the information affected by the change and determine whether additional review is needed.

3.4 Minimal-Barrier Review

SSHD's application process is intended to reduce unnecessary barriers while still allowing SSHD to determine whether a household meets applicable eligibility and occupancy requirements. SSHD will not require information or documentation merely because it is customary in conventional rental screening when that information is not reasonably needed for an SSHD housing decision.

3.5 Communication During the Application Process

Applicants should receive clear information about important next steps, requests for additional information, deadlines that apply to their application, and how to ask questions or obtain assistance.

3.6 Denials, Reconsideration & Appeals

When SSHD makes an adverse eligibility or application decision, the applicant will receive information explaining the reason for the decision and how and when to request review.

An applicant may provide corrected or additional information, explain why they believe information was misunderstood, or identify a material change in circumstances. Review does not guarantee that the decision will change.

Applicants may request language assistance, a reasonable accommodation, an accessible format, or another appropriate communication method during a review or appeal.

4. HOUSEHOLD CHANGES, GUESTS & TEMPORARY ABSENCES

Households change over time. This section explains when residents should contact property management about people joining or leaving the household, guests, and temporary absences.

4.1 Changes in Household Composition

Residents should tell property management when a person is expected to join or leave the household so SSHD can determine whether the change affects occupancy, eligibility, rent, or another housing requirement.

4.2 Adding a Household Member

A person who will become a household member should generally be approved before moving into the home when prior approval is required. SSHD will review the proposed change using the requirements applicable to the household and home.

During the first six months after initial occupancy, adding an adult who was not part of the original household is generally not permitted unless the change results from an unanticipated circumstance, a reasonable accommodation, a VAWA-related protection, a legal requirement, or another approved exception.

4.3 Removing a Household Member

Residents should report when a household member permanently leaves the home. SSHD may request information reasonably needed to update household records and determine whether the change affects the household's housing requirements.

4.4 Guests

Residents may have guests consistent with the lease and community rules. A guest is not the same as an added household member. If a guest's stay or circumstances suggest the person may be using the home as a primary residence, property management may ask the resident to clarify the arrangement.

4.5 Temporary Absences

A temporary absence does not automatically mean that a person has left the household. Residents should contact property management when an extended absence may affect occupancy, household composition, safety, access, or another housing requirement.

4.6 Reporting Changes

Residents should use the contact method identified in Exhibit A to report household changes or ask whether a change needs to be reported.

5. RECERTIFICATION, RENT, FEES & UTILITIES

5.1 Annual Review & Continuing Eligibility

When an annual review is required, SSHD will ask the household to confirm current household information and provide information needed to complete the scheduled review. Annual review should focus on information that is current and relevant rather than requiring residents to recreate the original application file each year.

Forms should be renewed because information, authorization, or a legal requirement requires renewal—not merely because another year has passed.

SSHD and property management will make reasonable, documented efforts to contact a household about required annual-review steps. Nonresponse is not established by one unanswered email.

Failure to complete a required review may affect a benefit or program treatment when applicable, but it does not automatically terminate tenancy.

5.2 Changes Between Annual Reviews

Residents must report changes in household composition as described in Section 4.

Unless SSHD notifies a resident that another specific reporting requirement

applies to their household or housing, residents are not required to report changes in income, assets, employment, or other financial circumstances between scheduled annual reviews.

5.3 Rent

Residents will receive information explaining the rent that applies to their home and when a rent change may occur. Lease renewal alone is not an independent basis for changing rent.

5.4 Rent Changes

When rent changes, residents will receive the notice required by applicable law, the lease, and SSHD policy.

5.5 Utilities

Residents will receive clear information about which utilities are included in rent and which utilities are their responsibility.

When an applicable utility allowance or other utility adjustment is used in determining rent, SSHD will apply the allowance or adjustment established for the property under its rent policy.

Utility allowances are estimates and may not reflect a household's actual utility costs. Residents remain responsible for their actual utility charges when utilities are paid directly to the utility provider.

Residents will be informed before move-in of any utility accounts they are required to establish in their own name and of any applicable utility allowance or adjustment used in determining rent.

SSHD will provide required notice of changes to utility allowances or other utility adjustments that affect resident rent.

5.6 Fees & Deposits

Fees and deposits will be disclosed and administered consistent with applicable law and SSHD policy.

5.7 Rental Assistance

Residents may use lawful rental assistance consistent with applicable requirements.

5.8 Payment Difficulties & Housing Stability

Residents who are having difficulty paying rent are encouraged to contact SSHD's designated housing-stability or restorative-justice contact as early as possible. Early contact may create more options for addressing the problem before it becomes more serious.

6. RESIDENT RIGHTS & FAIR HOUSING

6.1 Our Commitment to Fair Housing

Every resident and applicant has the right to fair and equal access to housing and housing services.

Seattle Social Housing Developer (SSHD) is committed to administering its housing fairly, consistently, and without unlawful discrimination. This commitment applies throughout the housing process, including application, eligibility, leasing, rent and household reviews, resident services, use of common areas and amenities, transfers, enforcement of community rules, and termination of tenancy.

SSHD will comply with applicable federal, Washington State, and City of Seattle fair housing and civil rights requirements.

6.2 Protection from Discrimination

Federal, Washington State, and City of Seattle laws protect applicants and residents from housing discrimination.

Seattle provides protections that extend beyond federal fair housing law. SSHD will not discriminate against an applicant or resident because of a characteristic or status protected by applicable law.

These protections include, as applicable, race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion or creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, familial or parental status, marital status, age, political ideology, caste, immigration or citizenship status, veteran or military status, and lawful sources of income or rental assistance.

This list is intended to help residents understand the broad protections available to them. It does not limit any protection provided by federal, state, or local law.

6.3 Fair and Respectful Treatment

Applicants and residents have the right to have housing requirements applied fairly and consistently.

SSHD and property management will not apply different eligibility requirements, rental terms, services, rules, privileges, or conditions because of a protected characteristic or status.

Fair treatment does not always mean that every resident will receive exactly the same response. Individual circumstances may require different treatment to provide equal access to housing, including a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability or another action required by law.

SSHD is also committed to a community where residents, staff, property management, service providers, and others are treated with dignity and respect. Discrimination, discriminatory harassment, or abusive conduct directed toward another person because of a protected characteristic is not acceptable, regardless of who engages in the conduct.

This expectation does not limit a resident's right to raise concerns, disagree with management, file a complaint or grievance, request an accommodation, participate in Resident Governance, or otherwise exercise their rights.

6.4 Source of Income and Rental Assistance

SSHD will not discriminate against an applicant or resident because they receive income or rental assistance from a lawful source protected under applicable law.

Depending on the household, income may come from employment, Social Security, retirement benefits, public benefits, child support, rental assistance, housing subsidies, or other lawful sources.

SSHD will consider income and rental assistance in accordance with applicable

program requirements and fair housing laws.

The fact that income comes from a source other than employment does not, by itself, make that income less valid or make a household less deserving of housing.

6.5 Disability Rights and Equal Access

Residents and applicants with disabilities have the right to equal access to SSHD housing, services, programs, facilities, and communications.

This may include reasonable accommodations, reasonable modifications, assistance animals, accessible communication, or other disability-related assistance.

A person does not lose these protections because they did not use a particular form or particular words when asking for assistance.

Additional information about reasonable accommodations and modifications is provided in Section 9 — Reasonable Accommodations & Modifications.

6.6 Harassment

Residents have the right to live in their homes without unlawful discriminatory harassment.

SSHD will not tolerate discriminatory harassment when SSHD or property management has a responsibility to address the conduct.

Residents who experience or become aware of discriminatory harassment are encouraged to report the concern so it can be reviewed and appropriate action can be taken.

6.7 Protection from Retaliation

SSHD will not retaliate against an applicant or resident for exercising a housing right, requesting an accommodation, reporting discrimination, participating in an investigation, filing a complaint or grievance, or assisting another person in exercising their rights.

A resident will not be penalized simply for raising a good-faith concern about discrimination, accessibility, housing practices, or administration of the SSHD program.

6.8 Privacy & Public Records

SSHD respects the privacy of applicants and residents and limits the collection and use of personal information to information needed to administer housing, provide services, meet legal requirements, and carry out SSHD's responsibilities.

Because SSHD is a public entity, some records maintained by SSHD may be subject to Washington's Public Records Act. At the same time, state and federal laws protect certain personal, confidential, and sensitive information from disclosure.

When SSHD receives a public-records request involving applicant or resident information, SSHD will review the records and apply applicable exemptions and privacy protections before records are released. Information protected from disclosure will be withheld or redacted as required or permitted by law.

Disability-related information, reasonable accommodation or modification documentation, VAWA-related information, and other sensitive information will be handled with particular attention to applicable confidentiality and privacy requirements.

Applicants and residents may contact SSHD if they have questions about how their information is maintained or about SSHD's public-records responsibilities.

In some internal communications and processes, SSHD may use a resident's unit number instead of their name as an additional privacy measure. This does not replace SSHD's responsibility to protect confidential information and limit sensitive information to people who need it to perform their responsibilities.

6.9 Other Resident Protections

Residents may have additional protections under federal, Washington State, and City of Seattle law, including protections related to:

- Domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking
- Disability and reasonable accommodation
- Language access and effective communication
- Lawful sources of income and rental assistance
- Criminal history and housing screening
- Applicant selection and rental practices
- Privacy and confidentiality
- The right to raise concerns or challenge certain housing decisions.

Other sections of this handbook explain many of these protections in greater detail.

6.10 Asking Questions or Raising a Fair Housing Concern

Residents and applicants may ask questions or raise concerns about discrimination, fair housing, accessibility, or other housing rights without fear of retaliation.

A person who believes their fair housing rights may have been violated may contact property management, SSHD, or an appropriate federal, state, or local civil rights agency.

Contact information for SSHD, property management, and outside fair housing resources is provided in the Resident Resources and Contact Information Exhibits.

Using SSHD's internal complaint or grievance process does not prevent a person from contacting an outside agency or exercising other rights available under law.

7. VAWA & HOUSING STABILITY

7.1 Purpose and Commitment

Seattle Social Housing Developer (SSHD) is committed to protecting the safety, dignity, privacy, and housing stability of applicants and residents who have experienced domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

SSHD recognizes that stable housing can be especially important when a person is experiencing or recovering from violence or abuse. An applicant or resident will not be denied housing, lose housing, or otherwise be treated adversely because they have experienced domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking when doing so would be inconsistent with applicable law or the protections adopted by SSHD.

Requests for protection will be handled with sensitivity and with respect for the individual's privacy and choices. SSHD will not require a person to provide more information than is reasonably necessary to address the protection being requested.

Although SSHD housing is not a HUD-assisted housing program, SSHD has chosen to use the housing protections and resident-centered principles established under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) as the framework for its practices. SSHD also uses applicable HUD VAWA notices and forms so applicants and residents have access to established information and documentation when seeking protection.

These protections do not limit any greater rights or remedies available under federal, Washington State, or local law.

7.2 Equal Access and Housing Protections

The protections in this section are available without discrimination based on sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, color, national origin, religion, familial status, marital status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.

SSHD uses the term survivor whenever possible. The term victim may appear when it is part of the official title or language of a law, regulation, HUD form, or other source.

SSHD will not deny admission, terminate tenancy, refuse to renew tenancy, evict, or take another adverse housing action against an applicant or resident because the person has experienced domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking when the action would be prohibited by applicable law or inconsistent with the protections adopted by SSHD.

An incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking will not, by itself, be treated as a lease violation or other cause for adverse housing action against the survivor.

Conduct directed toward a survivor, or conduct for which the survivor is not responsible, will not be attributed to that person simply because of their relationship or association with the person responsible for the conduct.

These protections do not prevent SSHD from addressing a separate lease violation or other conduct unrelated to the person's status as a survivor or exercise of protected rights.

7.3 Requesting Protection

An applicant or resident may request VAWA-related housing protection at any time. A person does not need to use the words VAWA, domestic violence, or other legal terminology to ask for assistance or protection.

A request may be made through SSHD, its authorized property management agent, or a designated contact identified by SSHD. Information about available

protections and applicable forms will be made reasonably accessible, and assistance may be requested in understanding or completing a form.

If a request or disclosure is made to a staff member who does not handle VAWA-related matters, the information will be treated with sensitivity and referred to the appropriate person. The applicant or resident will not be required to unnecessarily repeat sensitive information simply because the request was initially made to another staff member.

Applicants and residents may request language assistance, a reasonable accommodation, an accessible format, or another appropriate method of communication when seeking information or requesting protection.

7.4 Documentation

SSHD will not require documentation that creates an unnecessary barrier to receiving a housing protection or requires disclosure of information that is not reasonably needed.

SSHD uses HUD Form 5382, Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking, and Alternate Documentation, as its standard self-certification form.

When documentation is needed, SSHD will accept documentation consistent with applicable law and the protections adopted by SSHD. Only information reasonably necessary to address the requested protection will be required.

A police report, criminal charge, arrest, protection order, or similar law-enforcement action is not required simply because a person is seeking VAWA-related housing protection. The absence of such documentation does not, by itself, make an applicant or resident ineligible for protection.

7.5 Confidentiality and Privacy

Information provided concerning domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or a related request for housing protection will be treated as confidential and handled with heightened sensitivity.

Access to sensitive information will be limited to individuals who need the information to respond to or administer the request. Information will not be unnecessarily included in records used for routine property or resident administration.

Staff who receive sensitive information but are not responsible for handling the request will not seek unnecessary details and will follow SSHD procedures for protecting and referring the information.

Information concerning a request for protection will not be disclosed except with the individual's authorization or as otherwise permitted or required by law.

SSHD will make reasonable efforts to communicate in a way that protects the individual's privacy and safety. Applicants and residents may identify a preferred or safer method of communication when another method of contact could create a safety concern.

7.6 Emergency Transfers

A resident who believes remaining in their current unit creates a safety concern because of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking may request an emergency transfer.

SSHD will maintain an Emergency Transfer Plan informed by HUD's VAWA emergency transfer framework. Until the SSHD-specific plan is finalized, requests will be handled promptly and with attention to the resident's safety, privacy, accessibility needs, and housing stability.

An emergency transfer depends on the availability of an appropriate unit and any requirements that apply to that unit. Requesting an emergency transfer does not guarantee that an appropriate unit will be available.

If an appropriate transfer is not available, SSHD will provide information about other housing resources and supportive services that may be available. The resident is not required to pursue another housing option or participate in supportive services.

Participation in counseling, advocacy, mediation, restorative justice, or other supportive services is voluntary and is not a condition of requesting or receiving an emergency transfer or another housing protection.

Need Help or Need to Get Somewhere Safe?

A resident does not have to wait for an emergency transfer decision to ask for help. SSHD will make information available for immediate crisis assistance, confidential advocacy, safety planning, sexual-assault support, legal assistance, shelter or other housing options, relocation support, and other services that may help a resident get somewhere safer. Residents may ask for these resources without disclosing details about their circumstances and are not required to use a particular service to request or receive a housing protection. See Exhibit D — Resident Resources for the current safety and support resource guide.

VAWA / Safety Resources — Find the Right Help

Resource Category	Types of Assistance	Current Contact / Link
SSHD Housing Assistance	Housing protections, VAWA forms, emergency transfer requests, accessibility and language assistance.	
SSHD Community Partners	Supportive services available through SSHD partnerships.	
Domestic Violence Resources	Advocacy, crisis support, safety planning, shelter/housing referrals, and other assistance.	
Sexual Assault Resources	Crisis support, advocacy, safety planning, and referrals.	
Legal Resources	Housing-related information, advocacy, and legal assistance.	
Washington State Resources	Statewide advocacy and support.	
Seattle / King County Resources	Local advocacy, crisis intervention, housing referrals, and community services.	
National Resources	National hotlines and specialized support.	
Emergency Assistance	Emergency services when immediate assistance is needed.	

7.7 Household and Lease Protections

When domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking involves members of the same household, SSHD will consider available options with the goal of protecting the survivor's safety and housing stability whenever reasonably possible.

Depending on the circumstances and applicable law, available protections may include changes to household or lease arrangements, removal of the person responsible for the conduct from the lease or unit, an emergency transfer, or another appropriate housing action.

A survivor will not be required to leave their housing solely because another household member committed domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against them.

7.8 Specialized Support

SSHD recognizes that residents experiencing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking may benefit from assistance provided by individuals trained in trauma-informed and survivor-centered practices.

SSHD intends to provide access to designated VAWA support partners with appropriate training in trauma-informed and survivor-centered practices. These partners may assist residents with understanding available housing protections, safe communication, emergency-transfer coordination, and connections to supportive resources.

Residents do not have to begin with a designated VAWA support partner. A request for assistance or protection may be made to SSHD or its authorized property management agent and will be appropriately referred when specialized assistance is needed.

Sensitive information will be shared only as necessary to respond to the resident's request and administer the applicable housing protection.

Participation in restorative justice, counseling, advocacy, mediation, supportive

services, or other services is voluntary. A resident does not have to participate in these services to receive a housing protection, request an emergency transfer, maintain tenancy, or exercise another right under this Handbook.

Current contact information and available supportive services will be maintained in the Resident Resources Exhibit.

7.9 Protection from Retaliation

SSHD prohibits retaliation, intimidation, threats, coercion, or interference against an applicant or resident because they requested information, sought a housing protection, requested an emergency transfer, provided documentation, assisted another person in exercising their rights, or otherwise exercised a right protected by this Handbook or applicable law.

Seeking assistance from law enforcement, emergency services, an advocate, legal representative, service provider, or other support resource will not, by itself, be treated as a lease violation or basis for adverse housing action.

7.10 HUD VAWA Notices and Forms

SSHD uses HUD's established VAWA notices and forms as its standard documents for providing information and administering the protections described in this section.

The following forms are part of SSHD's VAWA framework:

- HUD-5380 — Notice of Occupancy Rights under VAWA — current English source included with this package
- HUD-5382 — Certification / Alternate Documentation — current English source included with this package
- HUD-5383 — Emergency Transfer Request — current English source included with this package
- SSHD Emergency Transfer Plan — pending finalization; HUD-5381 model intentionally held back from this translation packet

SSHD may provide additional instructions or information needed to use these forms within the SSHD program. Additional instructions will not reduce the resident protections established in this Handbook.

VAWA notices and forms will be made available in accessible formats and with language assistance when needed.

7.11 Resources and Assistance

Applicants and residents may request information about VAWA-related housing protections, the Emergency Transfer Plan, applicable HUD forms and notices, reasonable accommodations, accessible formats, language assistance, or available community resources.

Information about advocacy, crisis support, safety planning, legal assistance, and other supportive services will be made available to applicants and residents. Current contact information will be maintained in the Resident Resources Exhibit so that it can be updated without changing this Handbook.

Seeking, accepting, or declining supportive services will not affect a person's eligibility for the housing protections described in this section.

A person does not need to disclose details about their circumstances simply to ask for information about available rights, forms, protections, services, or resources.

8. LANGUAGE ACCESS, ACCESSIBILITY & COMMUNICATION

8.1 Meaningful Access

Seattle Social Housing Developer (SSHD) is committed to making housing information, services, programs, and resident rights meaningfully accessible.

An applicant or resident should not lose access to housing, important information, services, or protections because of language, disability, communication needs, lack of technology, or an inaccessible method of communication.

SSHD and its authorized property management agent will provide language assistance, accessible communication, reasonable accommodations, and alternative methods of access when needed.

8.2 Preferred Language and Communication

Applicants and residents will be asked to identify the language they prefer to speak, the language they prefer for written information, and their preferred method of routine communication. Spoken and written language preferences may be different. This information helps SSHD understand how to communicate with the people it serves and identify when additional assistance may be needed.

Applicants and residents may update their language or communication information at any time.

SSHD will make reasonable efforts to use a person's preferred method for routine communication when practicable.

A communication preference is different from a communication need. A preference describes how a person would like to communicate when different options are available. A communication need exists when a particular method, format, language service, aid, or other assistance is necessary for the person to effectively receive, understand, respond to, or participate in housing-related communications.

A communication need will not be treated merely as a communication preference.

A person does not lose the right to assistance because a language or communication need was not identified on an application or other form.

8.3 Language Assistance

Applicants and residents with limited English proficiency may request language assistance when needed to understand or participate in housing-related matters.

Language assistance needed to provide meaningful access will be provided without charge to the applicant or resident.

Assistance may include qualified oral interpretation, translated written information, multilingual notices, assistance understanding housing information, or another appropriate form of language support.

An applicant or resident will not be required to provide their own interpreter as a condition of applying for housing, maintaining tenancy, completing a housing requirement, communicating with management, or exercising a resident right.

8.4 Interpretation

Qualified interpretation will be made available when needed for meaningful communication.

SSHD and its authorized property management agent will not use minor children,

other residents, or untrained individuals selected by staff as a substitute for qualified language assistance.

An applicant or resident may choose to have a family member, friend, advocate, or other trusted person assist them. Choosing to have someone assist does not eliminate the person's right to qualified language assistance when it is needed.

Interpretation may be provided in person, by telephone, by video, or through another effective method appropriate to the communication.

8.5 Important Written Information

Some housing documents and communications are especially important because they can affect a person's ability to obtain or maintain housing, respond to a housing decision, meet a requirement, or exercise a resident right.

SSHD will identify these vital documents through its Language Access Plan and establish standards for making them meaningfully accessible to applicants and residents with limited English proficiency.

SSHD may maintain translated versions of frequently used vital documents in languages commonly encountered by the program. The languages and documents maintained in translation may change as the population served by SSHD changes.

The availability or absence of a translated document does not determine whether an individual applicant or resident may receive language assistance.

If an important document is not available in a person's preferred written language, the person may ask for qualified oral interpretation or other appropriate language assistance to help them understand the information. Language assistance does not change the terms of a lease, notice, or other legal document.

8.6 Accessible and Effective Communication

Applicants and residents with disabilities have the right to effective communication concerning their housing.

When needed, SSHD will provide an appropriate accessible format, auxiliary aid or service, communication method, or reasonable accommodation.

Depending on the person's needs, this may include accessible electronic information, large-print or alternative-format materials, qualified interpreters, captioning, assistive communication services, assistance reading or completing documents, or another effective method of communication.

SSHD will not require an applicant or resident to independently use a communication method that is inaccessible to them when another effective method can be provided.

A person does not have to know the name of a particular aid, service, accommodation, or technology in order to tell SSHD that they need help communicating or accessing information.

8.7 Electronic Access

SSHD may use electronic applications, resident portals, email, text messaging, electronic signatures, websites, and other technology to communicate and provide housing services.

An applicant or resident will not be denied meaningful access solely because they do not have reliable internet access, an email address, a smartphone, a computer, or the ability to independently use an electronic system.

When an electronic system is inaccessible or creates a barrier to meaningful participation, SSHD will provide a reasonable alternative way to access information, provide required documents, communicate with management, or complete the housing-related process.

Electronic systems do not replace SSHD's responsibility to provide language assistance, effective communication, accessible formats, reasonable accommodations, or other required methods of access.

8.8 Reasonable Accommodation and Communication Needs

A language or communication form does not replace a person's right to request a reasonable accommodation or modification.

A person is not required to disclose a disability or medical condition simply to identify a routine communication preference.

However, a person may communicate information that indicates they need a disability-related change, exception, adjustment, communication method, service, or other assistance. SSHD and its authorized property management agent are responsible for recognizing and appropriately responding to that information.

A reasonable accommodation or modification request does not have to be made on a particular form, in writing, or by using the words "reasonable accommodation" or "reasonable modification."

Additional information is provided in Section 9 — Reasonable Accommodations & Modifications.

8.9 Legal Notices and Important Communications

Some housing notices must be delivered, mailed, posted, served, or otherwise provided in a particular manner under applicable law.

SSHD will follow those requirements. A preferred communication method does not replace a legally required method of notice or service.

At the same time, meeting a legal delivery requirement does not eliminate SSHD's separate responsibility to provide required language assistance, effective communication, accessible formats, auxiliary aids or services, or reasonable accommodations.

SSHD will take reasonable steps to ensure applicants and residents can

meaningfully access important communications concerning their application, eligibility, rent, tenancy, resident obligations, housing decisions, notices requiring action, resident rights, and available review or appeal rights.

8.10 Asking for Assistance

Applicants and residents may ask for language assistance, interpretation, accessible communication, an alternative format, communication assistance, or a reasonable accommodation at any time.

A person does not need to know the legal or technical name of the assistance they need. Telling SSHD or its authorized property management agent that they are having difficulty understanding, accessing, receiving, or responding to housing information may be enough to begin the process of identifying appropriate assistance.

No applicant or resident will be retaliated against, discouraged from seeking assistance, or treated adversely because they requested assistance needed to access SSHD housing or exercise a resident right.

8.11 Privacy, Safety & Communication

Applicants and residents may ask to discuss sensitive information in a more private setting and may tell SSHD or property management when a usual method of contact could create a privacy or safety concern.

When a person identifies a safety concern, SSHD will make reasonable efforts to use a safer method of communication for sensitive housing information. A person may update a safer or preferred contact method when circumstances change.

A person does not need to disclose unnecessary details about a disability, medical condition, violence, abuse, or other sensitive circumstances simply to ask for an appropriate communication method.

8.12 Language Access Plan

SSHD will maintain a Language Access Plan to support the rights and commitments established in this section.

The Plan will establish SSHD's administrative standards for language identification, qualified interpretation, vital-document translation, multilingual information, accessible communication, electronic and non-electronic access, and responsibilities of SSHD and its authorized property management agent.

Administrative procedures, interpretation providers, technology, translated-document inventories, and similar implementation details may be updated without changing this Handbook.

Changes in administrative procedures will not reduce the rights and protections established in this section.

9. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS & MODIFICATIONS

9.1 Equal Opportunity & the Right to Request an Accommodation or Modification

Applicants and residents with disabilities have the right to equal access to SSHD housing, programs, services, facilities, and amenities.

SSHD views the reasonable accommodation and modification process as a partnership with applicants and residents to identify and address disability-related barriers to housing. The goal is to provide an equal opportunity to apply for, obtain, use, and enjoy a home and to participate fully in the services, amenities, and opportunities available within the SSHD community.

A reasonable accommodation is a change, exception, or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice, service, or procedure that may be necessary to provide that equal opportunity.

A reasonable modification is a physical change to a unit, common area, or other part of the property that may be necessary because of a disability.

SSHD will consider reasonable accommodations and modifications throughout the housing process, including application, screening, eligibility, leasing, occupancy, transfers, communication, use of common areas and amenities, and termination of tenancy.

The process should be collaborative. SSHD will work with the applicant or resident

to understand the barrier they are experiencing and identify an effective accommodation or modification. Applicants and residents are encouraged to participate in that process and share the information needed to help SSHD understand what will provide equal access.

An accommodation or modification does not have to benefit every person in the same way. Equal opportunity sometimes requires doing something differently for an individual because of a disability.

Reasonable accommodations may involve many aspects of housing. Depending on the individual circumstances, examples may include communication methods, policies or procedures, transfers, parking arrangements, access to common areas or amenities, live-in aides, assistance animals, or other disability-related needs.

9.2 Making a Request

An applicant or resident may request a reasonable accommodation or modification at any time.

A request may be made orally or in writing. A person does not have to complete a particular form, use the words “reasonable accommodation,” identify a specific law, or use any other particular language to make a request.

A family member, advocate, service provider, or other person may assist an applicant or resident in making a request.

When SSHD or property management becomes aware that a person may be asking for assistance because of a disability, staff will help document and appropriately route the request rather than requiring the person to understand SSHD’s reasonable accommodation procedures before receiving assistance. A person does not need to identify the request as a reasonable accommodation or modification for SSHD to consider it.

Reasonable Accommodations During Application and Screening

A reasonable accommodation may be requested at any point in the application, eligibility, or screening process.

This includes a request related to information considered during applicant screening. For example, an applicant may request a reasonable accommodation when negative information identified during screening resulted from, or is related to, a disability.

SSHD will consider the applicant's individual circumstances and the requested accommodation before making a final decision.

An applicant may request an accommodation as part of an appeal or separately from the appeal process. An applicant is not required to complete an appeal before requesting a reasonable accommodation.

An applicant does not have to recognize or identify a screening concern as a reasonable accommodation issue. When information provided by an applicant indicates that a disability may be related to the circumstances being considered, SSHD or property management will help route the matter for reasonable accommodation review.

The purpose of this review is to give the applicant an equal opportunity to be considered for housing. It does not guarantee that every screening concern will be disregarded or that every requested accommodation will be approved.

Applicants and residents are encouraged to make a request even if they are unsure whether the accommodation or modification will be approved. Staff receiving a request will not discourage a person from making the request or make an informal determination about whether a request is reasonable. Requests will be routed to the person or team designated by SSHD to evaluate reasonable accommodations and modifications.

9.3 Information & Documentation

SSHD will request only the information reasonably necessary to understand and evaluate an accommodation or modification request.

When both the disability and the disability-related need for the requested accommodation or modification are obvious or already known, additional disability documentation will not be required.

When either the disability or the relationship between the disability and the requested accommodation or modification is not apparent, SSHD may request reliable information reasonably necessary to establish:

- That the person has a disability
- The connection between the disability and the requested accommodation or modification.

SSHD will not require unnecessary medical records, detailed medical histories, a diagnosis when it is not necessary to evaluate the request, or information unrelated to the accommodation being considered.

If additional information is needed, it does not necessarily have to come from a doctor. Depending on the circumstances, reliable information may come from the individual, a medical or other service provider, case worker, peer support group, non-medical service agency, or another reliable person who is familiar with the disability-related need. SSHD will request only the information reasonably necessary to evaluate the request.

If the information initially provided is not enough to understand or evaluate the request, SSHD will explain what additional information is needed and work with the applicant or resident to obtain the information necessary to continue the review.

A request will not be denied simply because the applicant or resident did not initially provide all of the information SSHD needs.

9.4 Privacy & Confidentiality

Information provided in connection with a reasonable accommodation or modification request will be handled with care and shared only as necessary to evaluate, implement, or administer the request and as otherwise required or permitted by law.

Disability-related information and supporting documentation will be maintained separately from routine property management records when appropriate and will not be included unnecessarily in routine notes, work orders, or other broadly accessible systems.

Staff responsible for implementing an approved accommodation should generally receive the information necessary to carry out the accommodation, rather than unnecessary information about a resident's disability, diagnosis, or medical history.

For additional information about SSHD's general privacy and public-records responsibilities, see Section 6.8 — Privacy & Public Records.

9.5 Reasonable Modifications

A resident may request a physical modification to their unit or another area of the property when the modification is necessary because of a disability.

Examples may include changes to fixtures, hardware, access features, or other physical elements of the housing.

SSHD will work with the resident to understand the barrier and determine how an approved modification can be completed safely and effectively.

Responsibility for the cost of a modification will be determined based on applicable law, funding requirements, the nature of the modification, and the circumstances of the request.

A resident may be responsible for costs associated with an atypical or substantial modification when permitted by law. Residents will not be charged for ordinary property maintenance or for work that is otherwise the responsibility of SSHD or property management.

If a requested modification cannot be completed as proposed, SSHD will work with the resident to determine whether another effective solution is available.

9.6 Live-In Aides

A live-in aide may be approved as a reasonable accommodation when the assistance of another person is necessary because of a household member's disability.

An approved live-in aide is permitted to reside in the unit to provide necessary

supportive services. A live-in aide is not treated as a household member for purposes of determining household income.

SSHD may request information reasonably necessary to understand and establish the disability-related need for a live-in aide but will not require unnecessary medical information.

Approval of a live-in aide may affect the appropriate unit size or other occupancy considerations.

SSHD will work with the resident to address the practical housing and occupancy needs associated with an approved live-in aide.

Changes involving a live-in aide must be reported to SSHD or property management so the accommodation and occupancy information can be kept current.

9.7 Assistance Animals

Assistance animals are not pets.

An assistance animal may include a service animal or another animal that provides disability-related assistance or emotional support.

Pet rules, pet deposits, and other requirements that apply only to pets will not be applied to an approved assistance animal.

When the disability and disability-related need for the animal are not apparent, SSHD may request reliable information reasonably necessary to evaluate the request.

SSHD will not impose categorical breed, size, or weight restrictions on an assistance animal solely because those restrictions apply to pets.

A person may have more than one assistance animal when each animal is necessary because of a disability.

Residents are responsible for the care and control of their assistance animals and may be responsible for actual damage caused by the animal in the same manner that residents may be responsible for other resident-caused damage.

If a concern arises involving a particular assistance animal, SSHD will work with the resident to understand the circumstances and determine whether the concern can be addressed while preserving the resident's disability-related need for the animal.

Concerns involving conduct, significant property damage, or a direct threat will be evaluated based on the individual circumstances rather than assumptions about an animal's breed, size, or type.

9.8 Decisions & Alternative Accommodations

SSHD will consider each reasonable accommodation or modification request individually.

A request will not be denied simply because it is unusual, because SSHD has not previously approved a similar request, or because an exception to an existing rule, policy, practice, or procedure is required.

SSHD will not deny an accommodation request solely because the requested accommodation involves an exception to an applicant screening, eligibility, or resident policy. The request will be evaluated individually under the reasonable accommodation standards described in this section.

If the accommodation or modification requested cannot be approved as proposed, the process does not necessarily end.

SSHD will work with the applicant or resident to determine whether another accommodation or modification can effectively address the disability-related barrier.

The applicant or resident is an important participant in identifying an effective solution. SSHD will consider the person's knowledge of their own needs and will explain any alternative being proposed.

The goal of this process is not simply to approve or deny a particular request. The goal is to identify an effective way, when reasonably possible, for the person to have an equal opportunity to obtain, use, and enjoy their housing and the services and amenities available to them.

9.9 Reconsideration & Appeals

An applicant or resident may ask SSHD to reconsider a decision concerning a reasonable accommodation or modification.

The person may provide additional information, explain why they believe the decision should be reconsidered, or propose another accommodation that may meet their disability-related need.

A reconsideration or appeal will be reviewed by a person who was not responsible for the original denial and who has authority to change the decision.

An applicant or resident may also request a reasonable accommodation during another SSHD appeal or review process. A person does not lose the right to request an accommodation because the issue first arose during an eligibility, screening, lease-enforcement, transfer, grievance, or other housing decision.

When an applicant or resident raises information indicating that a disability may be related to the matter being reviewed, SSHD will consider whether the issue should also be addressed through the reasonable accommodation process.

The applicant or resident does not have to know which process applies. SSHD will help make sure the concern reaches the appropriate review process.

Using SSHD's reconsideration or appeal process does not prevent an applicant or resident from exercising rights available under applicable fair housing or civil rights laws.

9.10 Protection from Retaliation

SSHD will not retaliate against an applicant or resident because they:

- Requested or received a reasonable accommodation or modification
- Assisted another person in making a request
- Provided information concerning a disability-related need

- Asked questions about disability rights or accessibility
- Challenged or appealed an accommodation decision; or
- Exercised another right protected by applicable fair housing or civil rights law.

A person will not be penalized simply for requesting assistance, participating in the accommodation process, or asking SSHD to reconsider how a rule, policy, practice, procedure, or housing decision affects them because of a disability.

10. TRANSFERS

10.1 Transfer Policy

SSHD recognizes that there are circumstances when a resident may need to transfer to another unit within the property. Transfers may be necessary because of an emergency, a disability-related need, a VAWA-related safety concern, changes in household composition, requirements of a rental assistance program, building or unit conditions, or other approved housing needs.

SSHD does not provide transfers solely for resident preference or convenience.

Residents with an approved transfer need will be placed on the Internal Transfer Waitlist. Approved internal transfers in Priorities 1–4 are considered before external applicants when an appropriate unit becomes available. Priority 5 is intended to address an identified housing-stability need and is not a general preference to move to a different unit.

10.2 Transfer Priorities

Transfers will be considered according to the reason for the transfer and the urgency of the resident's housing need.

The general order of priority is:

Priority 1 — Emergency Health or Safety

Transfers needed because the resident cannot safely remain in the current unit or because conditions make continued occupancy unsafe or unreasonable.

Priority 2 — Reasonable Accommodation or VAWA

Transfers needed as an approved reasonable accommodation or because of a VAWA-related safety need. An urgent disability-related or VAWA transfer may also qualify for emergency priority based on the circumstances.

Priority 3 — Property-Initiated Transfers

Transfers required because of repairs, rehabilitation, building conditions, or another property-related need.

Priority 4 — Rental Assistance Requirements

Transfers needed to meet the requirements of a Housing Choice Voucher or other tenant-based or portable rental assistance program.

Priority 5 — Household Composition or Housing Stability

Transfers needed because an approved change in household composition causes the household to exceed the occupancy standard for the current unit, or when a significant household change creates an affordability or housing-stability concern. A material change in household circumstances that creates a reasonable need for a different unit size or configuration, but does not require a transfer under the occupancy standards, may also be considered at the lowest transfer priority.

SSHD may adjust these priorities when required by law or when individual circumstances require different treatment.

10.3 Changes in Household Composition

An approved change in household composition does not automatically qualify a household for a larger unit.

A household may be placed on the Internal Transfer Waitlist for a larger unit when the approved household composition causes the household to exceed the occupancy standard established for its current unit.

For example, adding a household member does not by itself create a right to a

larger unit if the household can continue to occupy the current unit within SSHD's occupancy standards.

However, a material change in household circumstances may create a reasonable need for a different unit size or configuration even when the household is not required to transfer under the occupancy standards.

For example, the birth or adoption of a minor household member may create a need for a larger unit even though the household may continue to occupy the current unit within SSHD's occupancy standards.

When SSHD approves a transfer for this reason, the household may be placed on the Internal Transfer Waitlist at the lowest transfer priority. Approval does not guarantee that an appropriate unit will become available within a particular timeframe and does not take priority over emergency, reasonable accommodation, VAWA, property-initiated, rental assistance, or other higher-priority transfer needs.

A decrease in household size will not automatically require a household to move to a smaller unit. However, a decrease in household size may also result in a loss of household income. Because SSHD rent is not adjusted simply because household income decreases, a transfer to a smaller or lower-rent unit may be considered when it would help the household maintain housing stability.

Any transfer remains subject to the availability of an appropriate unit.

Disability-Related Unit Needs

Occupancy standards will not be used to deny a unit size that is necessary as a reasonable accommodation.

For example, a resident may need an additional bedroom for an approved live-in aide even though the aide is not considered a household member. A disability-related need for a different unit size or configuration will be reviewed through the reasonable accommodation process in Section 9 — Reasonable Accommodations & Modifications.

10.4 Internal Transfer Waitlist

SSHD will maintain an Internal Transfer Waitlist for residents with an approved transfer need.

When a unit becomes available, management will first determine whether the unit is appropriate for a household on the Internal Transfer Waitlist. An appropriate unit will be offered to the transfer household before it is offered to an applicant on the external waitlist.

The available unit must meet the needs associated with the transfer, including applicable bedroom size, accessibility, occupancy, and rental assistance requirements.

Placement on the Internal Transfer Waitlist does not guarantee that a particular unit or transfer date will be available.

When more than one household has the same transfer priority, SSHD will use its established transfer procedures to determine the order in which households are offered available units.

10.5 Reasonable Accommodation Transfers

A resident may request a transfer when another unit is needed because of a disability. These requests will be reviewed under Section 9 — Reasonable Accommodations & Modifications.

A disability-related transfer is not considered a preference transfer simply because the resident requested the move.

When the accommodation requires a particular unit size, configuration, accessibility feature, or other unit characteristic, SSHD will consider those needs when identifying an appropriate available unit.

10.6 VAWA Emergency Transfers

Residents who need a transfer because of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or a related safety concern should refer to Section 7 — VAWA & Housing Stability Protections and SSHD's Emergency Transfer Plan.

VAWA emergency transfers will be handled under those protections, including applicable confidentiality and safety requirements.

10.7 Housing Choice Vouchers and Other Rental Assistance

Some residents may receive a Housing Choice Voucher or other rental assistance administered by an outside agency.

The agency providing the assistance may have requirements concerning unit size, household composition, rent, inspection, or other conditions that affect the unit in which the assistance can be used.

If continued rental assistance requires a resident to move to a different unit, the household may be placed on the Internal Transfer Waitlist for an appropriate available unit.

SSHD will work with the resident and administering agency as reasonably necessary to facilitate the transfer. SSHD cannot change or waive requirements established by the agency providing the rental assistance.

10.8 Transfer Offers and Refusals

When an appropriate unit becomes available, the household will be given information about the unit and a reasonable opportunity to accept or decline the transfer.

The unit will not be offered to an applicant on the external waitlist until the transfer household has declined the unit or the time allowed to respond has expired.

SSHD understands that there may be a legitimate reason a household cannot accept a particular unit. A unit that does not meet an approved disability-related need, VAWA-related safety need, or other protected housing need will not be treated as an appropriate offer for purposes of the transfer.

SSHD may limit the number of appropriate transfer offers that a household may refuse and remain on the Internal Transfer Waitlist. The number of offers, response time, good-cause reasons for refusal, and effect of refusing an appropriate unit will be addressed in SSHD's transfer procedures.

10.9 Preference Transfers

SSHD does not maintain a general transfer program for residents who simply prefer another unit, floor, location, view, amenity, or other feature.

This does not prevent a resident from reporting a change in circumstances or requesting a transfer based on disability, safety, household composition, affordability, rental assistance requirements, unit conditions, or another recognized housing need.

11. LIVING IN YOUR HOME & COMMUNITY

11.1 Community Living

SSHD homes are places where residents should be able to live with dignity, privacy, and a sense of belonging. Living in a community also means sharing spaces, respecting neighbors, caring for the property, and communicating when concerns arise.

Property-specific requirements may also be included in the lease, Community Agreements, or other information provided by property management. Residents are encouraged to ask questions whenever they are unsure about a requirement or need help addressing a situation affecting their housing.

Looking Out for Our Community

A strong community is one where residents look out for one another and help care for the place they call home. Small actions can make a difference in protecting our shared spaces and helping concerns get addressed early.

Residents can help by keeping controlled-access doors and entrances secure, not allowing unknown individuals to follow them into secured areas, and promptly reporting damaged locks, doors, gates, lighting, or other building conditions that need attention.

Residents are also encouraged to report concerning or suspicious activity to property management when appropriate. You do not need to investigate a

situation or put yourself at risk. Looking out for the community simply means helping make sure the appropriate person knows about a concern.

If there is an immediate threat, fire, medical emergency, or another situation requiring emergency assistance, call 911.

Residents will not be retaliated against for making a good-faith report or asking property management to address a concern.

11.2 Common Areas & Amenities

Community rooms, outdoor areas, fitness spaces, resident lounges, and other shared amenities are intended to support community, recreation, connection, and resident activities.

Residents and guests are expected to use shared spaces respectfully and help care for them so they remain available to the community. Property-specific guidelines may address hours, reservations, occupancy, cleaning, safety, or other requirements. Community Agreements may also help establish shared expectations.

A community space may occasionally need to close temporarily because of maintenance, repairs, cleaning, safety concerns, emergencies, events, programming, or another legitimate operational need. When a closure is planned, residents should receive notice when reasonably practicable.

When a concern involves the conduct of an individual resident or guest, SSHD generally seeks to address the individual concern rather than unnecessarily restricting access for the entire community.

In some circumstances, an individual resident's access to a particular amenity or shared space may be restricted because of significant interference with others, safety concerns, property damage, or similar circumstances. Any restriction should relate to the conduct involved and should not be broader or continue longer than reasonably necessary.

Residents should be told the reason for an individual restriction and what is expected before access may be restored. A resident may ask property

management to review the restriction or provide additional information about the circumstances.

Community-space restrictions will not be used to interfere with lawful resident organizing, Resident Governance activities, or other protected activity.

11.3 Noise & Conduct

Living in multifamily housing means residents will sometimes hear their neighbors. Ordinary sounds associated with daily living are expected.

Residents and guests should be mindful of noise that unreasonably interferes with another resident's ability to enjoy their home. Property-specific quiet hours may apply, but excessive or unreasonable noise may be a concern at any time of day.

At the same time, quiet hours do not mean that residents are expected to remain silent or that ordinary activities of daily living are prohibited.

Residents experiencing recurring noise concerns may contact property management. Depending on the circumstances, concerns may be addressed through communication, restorative or community-based approaches, or other appropriate steps.

A complaint does not, by itself, establish that another resident violated a rule. Property management should consider the circumstances and available information when evaluating a concern.

11.4 Smoking

SSHD is committed to maintaining a smoke-free living environment while recognizing that residents may lawfully use certain products, including cannabis, for personal or medical purposes.

Residents and guests must follow smoke-free requirements contained in the lease and applicable property rules. For purposes of these requirements, smoking includes cigarettes, cigars, pipes, cannabis, electronic cigarettes, vaping devices, or other products that produce smoke or vapor.

Smoke-free requirements regulate where smoking or vaping may occur; they do not prohibit a resident from otherwise lawfully possessing or using a product in a manner permitted by law and the lease.

Residents who choose to smoke or vape may do so only in areas where it is permitted. Where a designated smoking area is provided, residents should use that area and be mindful of smoke or vapor traveling into homes, entrances, windows, or other resident areas.

Residents experiencing smoke, vapor, or persistent odors entering their home are encouraged to report the concern to property management. Residents do not need to identify the responsible person or determine the source before reporting the concern.

A disability-related or medical need does not, by itself, create permission to smoke or vape where prohibited. A resident with a disability-related need may request a reasonable accommodation. SSHD will consider whether another reasonable accommodation can effectively address the disability-related need.

See Section 9 — Reasonable Accommodations & Modifications for additional information.

11.5 Pets & Assistance Animals

Residents may have pets consistent with their lease and applicable property rules.

Assistance animals are not pets. Different requirements apply when an animal is needed because of a disability.

Pet rules, pet deposits, and other requirements that apply only to pets will not be applied to an approved assistance animal.

Residents who need an assistance animal or have questions about a disability-related animal should review Section 9 — Reasonable Accommodations & Modifications.

11.6 Guests & Guest Conduct

Residents are welcome to have guests and visitors as part of ordinary residential life.

Residents are responsible for helping their guests understand and respect community expectations and applicable property rules.

The lease or property rules may establish requirements regarding the length or frequency of guest stays and when someone may need to be added to the household.

Residents experiencing an unusual or temporary circumstance involving a guest are encouraged to contact property management before the situation becomes a potential lease concern.

A resident who needs an exception to a guest rule because of a disability may request a reasonable accommodation. Residents experiencing circumstances related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking may also have protections under VAWA.

Asking for assistance, explaining an unusual circumstance, or requesting an accommodation does not, by itself, constitute a lease violation.

Short-Term Rentals and Paid Lodging

SSHD homes are for residential use. Residents may not advertise, rent, sublease, or offer their home—or any part of it—for short-term or paid lodging, including through Airbnb, Vrbo, similar platforms, or private arrangements. This prohibition applies even to occasional rentals or when the resident remains in the home. Ordinary personal guests remain welcome under the lease and community rules.

11.7 Building Access & Security

Residents should take reasonable care of keys, access cards, fobs, mobile credentials, and other devices used to enter their home or building.

Lost or damaged access devices should be reported promptly. Property-specific information will explain how residents can obtain replacement access devices and how to request assistance if they are locked out during or after regular office hours.

Any applicable replacement or lockout charges will be identified in the lease or property information.

Residents who need a different access method or other adjustment because of a disability may request a reasonable accommodation or modification.

Residents should also report recurring problems with doors, locks, gates, intercoms, elevators, access systems, or other building-access equipment so the condition can be evaluated.

11.8 Parking, Trash & Recycling

Parking, Bicycle Storage & EV Charging

Parking, bicycle storage, electric-vehicle charging, and other transportation amenities may vary by property. Residents should refer to their lease and property information for availability, assignments, fees, permits, and other requirements.

Residents who need a particular parking arrangement because of a disability may request a reasonable accommodation. Depending on the individual need and the parking available at the property, an accommodation may involve an assigned or reserved space, a different location, an accessible space, or another appropriate arrangement.

A reasonable accommodation does not necessarily mean that the exact space requested will be available. When a requested arrangement cannot be provided as proposed, SSHD will work with the resident to consider reasonable alternatives that address the disability-related need.

Residents do not need to determine what accommodation may be possible before making a request.

See Section 9 — Reasonable Accommodations & Modifications for additional information.

E-Bikes, E-Scooters & Battery Safety

E-bikes and e-scooters can provide important transportation options for residents. Many use lithium-ion batteries that require particular care when stored or charged.

Residents should follow manufacturer instructions and applicable property fire-safety requirements when charging or storing these devices and batteries.

Devices and batteries should not be charged or stored where they block a doorway, hallway, stairway, exit, or other path of travel. Residents should use charging equipment intended for the device and should not use or charge a battery that is damaged, swollen, unusually hot, leaking, producing an unusual odor, or showing other signs of failure.

Lithium-ion batteries should not be placed in ordinary household trash or recycling. Residents may contact property management or use City disposal information to determine appropriate disposal options.

If a battery is smoking, hissing, burning, or otherwise appears to be failing, residents should move away from the area, leave if necessary, and call 911. Residents should not put themselves at risk attempting to handle a failing battery.

Residents who need to charge or store a disability-related mobility device and encounter a barrier because of a property rule or available charging arrangement may request a reasonable accommodation.

Trash, Recycling & Waste Disposal

Residents share responsibility for helping keep the property and community spaces clean and usable.

Trash, recycling, large items, batteries, hazardous materials, and other waste should be placed in the designated locations and disposed of according to property instructions and applicable City requirements.

Residents should not leave trash, furniture, large items, batteries, or other

materials in hallways, stairways, entrances, or other areas where they may block access or create a safety concern.

If you are unsure how or where to dispose of an item, contact property management before leaving it in a common area or collection area.

Residents who encounter a disability-related barrier to accessing or using the property's waste or recycling facilities may request a reasonable accommodation.

11.9 Property Damage

Taking Care of Your Home

Homes and the materials within them naturally age through ordinary use. Flooring, paint, appliances, fixtures, countertops, cabinets, and other components do not remain new forever.

Residents will not be charged simply because an item has become worn, aged, or needs replacement as a result of ordinary residential use.

When evaluating damage or a possible resident charge, property management may consider the condition and age of the item, its expected useful life, the nature and cause of the condition, and other relevant circumstances.

Damage resulting from misuse, neglect, or other circumstances beyond ordinary use may result in a resident charge when permitted.

Questions About Charges or Damages

Residents may sometimes have questions about charges related to damage, cleaning, repairs, or other costs associated with their home.

Property management will be available to explain a charge and the basis for it. Residents may ask for available supporting information, such as photographs, inspection information, invoices, receipts, repair records, or other documentation used to determine the charge.

Residents who believe a charge is incorrect or who have additional information about the circumstances may ask property management to review it. Asking

for an explanation or requesting review of a charge will not, by itself, negatively affect a resident's housing.

11.10 Insurance & Personal Property

Renter's insurance can provide important financial protection when something unexpected happens in your home or building.

Insurance carried by SSHD or the property owner generally protects the building. It does not replace a resident's personal belongings. If belongings are damaged or destroyed by a fire, water event, or another covered loss, building insurance does not mean the owner's insurance will replace the things the resident lost.

It is easy to think, "I don't own anything very valuable." But the cost of replacing ordinary belongings can add up quickly. Clothing, shoes, bedding, towels, toiletries, medications and personal-care items, dishes, cookware, small appliances, phone chargers, children's belongings, and other everyday items may individually seem inexpensive. Replacing many of them at once can create significant hardship.

Following a serious loss, emergency assistance may help with immediate needs but may not be enough to replace everything a household needs or cover all temporary displacement costs.

For these reasons, SSHD strongly encourages residents to maintain renter's insurance even when they do not believe they own expensive belongings. SSHD's property insurance does not insure a resident's personal belongings. Depending on the policy, renter's insurance may provide coverage for personal property, temporary living expenses, liability, or other losses. Residents should review the coverage and exclusions of any policy they purchase.

Renter's insurance is strongly encouraged and is not required unless a future lease or applicable property document lawfully provides otherwise.

For independent consumer information about renter's insurance, see the Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner resource listed in Exhibit D — Resident Resources.

12. MAINTENANCE, REPAIRS & EMERGENCIES

12.1 Requesting Maintenance

SSHD and property management share a commitment to maintaining homes that are safe, functional, and in good repair. Residents also play an important role by reporting maintenance concerns promptly and providing reasonable access when repairs or inspections are needed.

Residents will not be discouraged from reporting maintenance concerns because they are worried that making a request will negatively affect their housing.

Residents should report maintenance concerns as soon as reasonably possible. Properties may provide an online resident portal or another method for submitting maintenance requests.

Residents who cannot use the usual method may contact property management by email, in writing, or through another available method. Assistance may also be requested when a disability, language need, or communication barrier makes it difficult to submit or discuss a maintenance request.

When possible, residents should provide enough information to help maintenance staff understand the concern and determine what response may be needed.

When a maintenance request is made by phone, email, text, in person, or another approved method, property management will provide confirmation that the request was received and entered for follow-up. The request is treated as received

when property management receives it, not when it is later entered into an internal system.

12.2 Routine Repairs

Maintenance concerns will receive a timely and meaningful response based on the nature and urgency of the condition. Property management will communicate with the resident about the concern and appropriate next steps. Emergency and time-sensitive conditions will be addressed in accordance with applicable law.

Residents are encouraged to report concerns early so conditions can be evaluated before they become more serious.

12.3 Emergency & After-Hours Maintenance

Some maintenance conditions require immediate attention because they may present an immediate threat to health or safety or may cause significant property damage.

If there is an emergency maintenance condition, contact property management immediately using the emergency maintenance number or other emergency contact method provided for your property. Do not wait to submit an online maintenance request. After hours, use the emergency contact information provided in the Property & Resident Contact Information Exhibit.

If there is an immediate threat to life or personal safety, a fire, medical emergency, or another situation requiring police, fire, or emergency medical assistance, call 911 first.

Residents should not rely solely on email, voicemail, or a routine online maintenance request for an emergency requiring immediate attention.

12.4 Resident Maintenance Responsibilities

Residents share responsibility for caring for their home by reporting maintenance concerns promptly, using fixtures and equipment reasonably, following applicable

safety instructions, and providing reasonable access when inspection or repair is needed.

Reporting a maintenance concern does not, by itself, mean that the resident caused the condition or will be charged for addressing it.

12.5 Entry into the Unit

A resident's home is a private living space. Property management and maintenance staff will provide advance notice before entering a home as required by Washington law, except in an emergency or another circumstance where entry without advance notice is permitted by law.

For most nonemergency entries, residents will receive at least 48 hours' advance written notice. At least 48 hours means a full 48 hours between delivery of the notice and the earliest permitted entry time. The notice will identify the reason for entry, the date and permitted time or time window, and contact information if the resident needs to discuss a reasonable change to the scheduled entry or request an accommodation.

Entry will not be used to harass a resident or unnecessarily interfere with the resident's use of their home.

In an emergency, property management or emergency personnel may need to enter without advance notice or the resident's permission when immediate access is reasonably necessary to protect people or property. Residents may not prevent or delay entry when emergency access is necessary. Delaying necessary emergency access may allow a condition to become more serious or cause additional damage, and a resident may be responsible for additional damage caused by an unreasonable failure to provide required access when permitted by applicable law.

If SSHD enters a home during an emergency when the resident is not present, SSHD will leave written notice explaining that entry occurred, the reason for entry, and the action taken or next steps, as appropriate.

12.6 Preventive Maintenance

Routine and preventive inspections help identify maintenance and safety needs early, protect residents and their homes, and support SSHD's responsibility to care for publicly owned housing for the long term.

SSHD will generally inspect each occupied home at least once each year. Residents will receive advance notice in accordance with applicable law. An inspection is also an opportunity for residents to identify maintenance concerns that may not previously have been reported.

12.7 Pest Control

Pests and bed bugs can occur in many types of housing and are not necessarily an indication that a home or resident is unclean.

Residents should report suspected pests or bed bugs as soon as reasonably possible. Residents do not need to identify the type of pest, determine where it came from, or determine who may be responsible before making a report.

Property management will provide a timely and meaningful response based on the nature and urgency of the concern and will communicate appropriate next steps. The response may include professional inspection or treatment and, when appropriate, evaluation of nearby homes or other areas of the property.

Not everyone reacts to bed bug bites or other pests in the same way. The absence of bites or a visible reaction does not necessarily mean pests are not present.

Residents may be asked to prepare their home or provide access for inspection or treatment. Residents who need assistance because of a disability, language need, or other communication barrier may request assistance.

Residents may not use bug bombs, foggers, or similar pesticide-release devices in their homes. Residents should report pest activity to property management so the condition can be evaluated and appropriately treated.

Reporting a pest concern does not, by itself, mean that the resident caused the

condition or will be charged for treatment. Responsibility will be determined based on the circumstances rather than simply on who first reported the concern.

12.8 Mold & Moisture

Moisture and mold can develop for many reasons, particularly in the Pacific Northwest climate. Residents are encouraged to report leaks, persistent moisture, unusual condensation, visible mold, or other moisture concerns promptly.

Residents do not need to determine the cause of a moisture or mold concern before reporting it. Property management will provide a timely and meaningful response based on the nature and urgency of the condition, communicate appropriate next steps, and comply with applicable repair-response requirements.

Residents are expected to use available ventilation and heating appropriately, allow reasonable access for inspection and repair, and report water or moisture problems promptly. Property management is responsible for evaluating building, plumbing, ventilation, or other property conditions that may contribute to the concern.

Reporting mold or moisture does not, by itself, mean that a resident caused the condition or will be charged for addressing it.

Residents will receive or have access to Washington Department of Health information regarding mold, moisture, and healthy homes as required.

12.9 Emergency Conditions

Residents should use the property's emergency maintenance procedures for urgent building or unit conditions and call 911 when immediate police, fire, or emergency medical assistance is needed.

Property-specific emergency and after-hours contacts are provided in the Property & Resident Contact Information Exhibit.

13. CONCERNS, APPEALS, HOUSING STABILITY & MOVING OUT

This section explains how residents may raise concerns, ask for review of housing decisions, seek help when tenancy is at risk, and understand the move-out process.

13.1 Raising a Concern

Residents are encouraged to raise questions or concerns when something about their housing, account, treatment, lease, community rules, or a housing decision is unclear. Residents may use the contact information in Exhibit A to identify the appropriate starting point.

13.2 Informal Resolution

Many concerns can be resolved through timely communication, clarification, correction of information, or another informal solution. Informal resolution should not be used to prevent a resident from using a formal grievance, appeal, fair-housing process, reasonable-accommodation process, VAWA protection, or other right that applies.

13.3 Grievances

Applicants and residents may request review of an adverse eligibility or housing decision. Requests may include corrected or additional information. Language assistance, accessible formats, and reasonable accommodations are available to participate in the process.

13.4 Appeals & Review of Decisions

An applicant or resident should request review within 14 calendar days after the written decision is sent. Adverse eligibility requests go to waitlist@seattlesocial-housing.org. Housing-decision requests go to the property-management contact in Exhibit A. Additional time will be allowed when reasonably needed because of disability, language access, VAWA-related safety concerns, a communication or delivery problem, or another meaningful-access barrier.

When reasonably possible, the reviewer will be someone other than the original decision-maker. Adverse eligibility reviews are handled by the SSHD role responsible for compliance, or another qualified reviewer designated by SSHD. Housing-decision reviews are handled by the Property Manager. Either may be escalated to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) if unresolved.

The applicant or resident will receive the review outcome in writing within 5 business days after the review is completed. Fair-housing, reasonable-accommodation, VAWA, language-access, and other applicable protections remain available throughout the review.

13.5 Protection from Retaliation

SSHD will not retaliate against a resident for raising a concern, requesting review, providing information, assisting another person, requesting an accommodation or housing protection, or exercising another right protected by law or this Handbook.

13.6 Lease Concerns & Notices

When SSHD or property management identifies a lease concern, residents should receive information that is reasonably clear about the issue, any action requested, available opportunity to respond or correct the problem, and the consequences that may follow if the issue is not resolved.

13.7 Opportunities to Correct Problems

When a concern can reasonably be corrected, SSHD's housing-stability approach favors early communication and a meaningful opportunity to address the issue before it becomes more serious. The response will depend on the nature of the concern, applicable law, safety considerations, and the lease.

13.8 Nonpayment & Payment Difficulties

Residents experiencing difficulty paying rent are encouraged to contact SSHD's designated housing-stability or restorative-justice contact early. Depending on the circumstances and available resources, SSHD may help the resident understand the account, explore available payment arrangements or rental-assistance resources, request a reasonable accommodation when applicable, and identify other housing-stability options.

Seeking help with a payment difficulty does not erase rent that is lawfully owed, but early communication may create more options for addressing the problem.

13.9 Housing Stability

SSHD's housing-stability approach is intended to address problems early, reduce avoidable displacement, and connect residents with applicable protections and available resources. Housing-stability efforts may include clarification of requirements, opportunities to cure, payment discussions, reasonable accommodations, VAWA protections, referrals, restorative or conflict-resolution processes, and other appropriate interventions.

13.10 Termination of Tenancy

SSHD will not terminate tenancy solely because a household's income changes after move-in. When termination or eviction is being considered for another reason, SSHD and property management will follow the lease, applicable law, and adopted SSHD procedures.

Before beginning eviction procedures, SSHD will provide residents an opportunity to participate in restorative justice or another applicable conflict-resolution process consistent with SSHD's Charter and established procedures. Restorative justice is voluntary and does not require residents to reach an agreement or waive other rights. Some circumstances may require immediate or different action under applicable law or emergency procedures.

A resident retains any applicable right to request a reasonable accommodation, VAWA-related protection, review, legal assistance, or another protection during lease enforcement or termination proceedings.

13.11 Moving Out

When preparing to move, residents should review their lease and contact property management for current move-out instructions, including the notice required, returning keys or access devices, removing belongings, and other steps needed to complete the move.

After notice of move-out has been given, residents may request a pre-move-out inspection. SSHD will offer residents a reasonable opportunity to participate in an inspection before move-out so that conditions that may require attention can be identified before the home is returned to SSHD.

Whenever practical, the inspection should occur near the end of the notice period, when the resident has begun preparing the home for move-out and its condition can be more readily evaluated. Property management should help residents understand the difference between conditions that may result in a charge and conditions generally associated with ordinary use of the home.

The pre-move-out inspection is intended to help residents understand potential concerns before move-out. It is not a final determination of charges and does not guarantee that additional conditions will not be identified after the home is vacant.

13.12 Security Deposit & Final Account

The move-in condition checklist is an important record of the condition of the home at the beginning of residency. Residents should keep a copy for their records and document any condition they observe at move-in, even if it seems minor or they believe management is already aware of it.

When in doubt, write it down. The staff member completing the move-in inspection may not be the person who evaluates the home when the resident moves out. Documenting a condition at move-in helps create an objective record that can be understood later.

Residents have 14 calendar days after move-in to report additional conditions they believe were present when they took possession of the home. SSHD will review the report and, when appropriate, document it in a dated Move-In Condition Addendum that is retained with the original move-in condition checklist. The resident will receive a copy.

The 14-day period applies only to documenting conditions believed to have existed at move-in. Residents may report maintenance needs at any time. Conditions that are not documented as existing at move-in may be considered resident-caused damage at move-out, subject to ordinary wear and tear, the lease, documentation, and applicable law.

After move-out, security deposits will be handled in accordance with applicable law. Residents should provide property management with an accurate forwarding address so that required statements, refunds, or other information can reach them.

Residents may ask property management to explain damage, cleaning, or other move-out charges and provide available supporting information, such as photographs, inspection information, invoices, receipts, repair records, or other documentation used to determine the charge.

13.13 Resident Rights at the End of Tenancy

Residents who believe a move-out charge is incorrect or who have additional information about the circumstances may request review.

Asking for an explanation, requesting supporting information, or requesting review of a charge will not, by itself, negatively affect a resident's housing or other rights.

GLOSSARY — COMMON HOUSING & ACCESS TERMS

This glossary explains common terms used in this Handbook. These plain-language explanations are intended to help applicants and residents understand SSHD processes; they do not replace definitions established by applicable law, a lease, or an adopted SSHD policy.

Accessible Format — Information provided in a form a person can effectively access or use, such as large print, accessible electronic information, captioning, or another appropriate format.

Alternative Access Method — Another reasonable way to receive information, provide documents, communicate, or complete a housing-related step when the usual method creates a barrier.

Applicant — A person or household seeking SSHD housing.

Appropriate Unit — A home that can meet the household's applicable occupancy, eligibility, accessibility, program, and other housing requirements.

Assistance Animal — An animal that provides disability-related assistance or emotional support and is not treated as a pet under applicable fair housing requirements.

Auxiliary Aid or Service — A communication aid or service used to support effective communication for a person with a disability.

Communication Preference — How a person would like SSHD or property management to communicate when different options are available. A preference is different from a communication method or service needed for effective access.

Designated VAWA Support Partner — A person or partner identified by SSHD to provide specialized, survivor-centered support related to VAWA protections, safe communication, emergency transfers, and supportive resources.

Effective Communication — Communication provided in a way that allows a person with a disability to meaningfully receive, understand, respond to, and participate in housing-related information or processes.

Emergency Transfer — A transfer requested because remaining in the current unit may create a safety concern related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Household — The people approved to live in the SSHD home as their primary residence, subject to the requirements described in this Handbook.

Internal Transfer Waitlist — The list used to track residents with an approved need to transfer to another unit.

Interpretation — Spoken or signed communication assistance that helps people who use different languages communicate with one another.

Language Assistance — Interpretation, translated information, multilingual notices, or other support used to provide meaningful access to housing information and processes.

Live-In Aide — A person approved to live with a person with a disability to provide necessary supportive services and who is treated differently from a household member for certain housing purposes.

Management Agent / Property Management — The company or authorized personnel responsible for day-to-day management of an SSHD property on SSHD's behalf.

Meaningful Access — A person's practical ability to understand, participate in, and use housing information, services, programs, and protections.

Reasonable Accommodation — A change, exception, or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice, service, or procedure that may be necessary to provide a person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy housing.

Reasonable Modification — A physical change to a unit, common area, or other part of a property that may be necessary because of a disability.

Resident — A person who is an approved member of a household living in SSHD housing.

"Restorative justice" means a voluntary, community-centered process for residents grounded in relationship, respect, responsibility, repair, and reintegration. It brings together those impacted by harm to address conflict or issues by asking who has been harmed, what they need, and whose responsibility it is to meet those needs. The process supports meaningful accountability, repair of harm, and the restoration of relationships to the greatest extent possible, and, where feasible, addresses unmet needs connected to the conflict, harm, or issue.

Safe Communication Method — A way of contacting or communicating with a person that the person identifies as safe when another method could create a privacy or safety concern.

Survivor — The resident-centered term SSHD generally uses for a person who has experienced domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Official laws or forms may use different terminology.

Transfer Priority — The relative order used to consider approved transfer needs based on the reason for and urgency of the transfer.

Translation — Written information converted from one language into another.

VAWA — The Violence Against Women Act. SSHD uses VAWA housing protections and resident-centered principles as the framework for the protections described in Section 7, even though SSHD housing is not a HUD-assisted housing program.

Vital Document — An important housing document or communication that may affect a person's ability to obtain or maintain housing, respond to a decision, meet a requirement, or exercise a resident right.

Warm Handoff — Helping connect a person to the appropriate staff member or resource rather than simply directing the person elsewhere or requiring them to restart the request.

EXHIBIT A — WHO DO I CONTACT?

Use this page when you are not sure where to start. SSHD or property management will complete these contacts before the Handbook is distributed.

Something in my home needs repair

Routine maintenance

CONTACT/PORTAL: _____

I have a maintenance emergency

Emergency / after-hours maintenance

CALL: _____

I have a question about my rent or account

Property management

CONTACT: _____ **PHONE/EMAIL:** _____

My household is changing

Add or remove a household member — see Section 4

CONTACT/PORTAL: _____

I need language assistance

Interpretation, translation, or another communication method — see Section 8

CONTACT: _____ **PHONE/EMAIL:** _____

I need a reasonable accommodation or modification

Disability-related request — see Section 9

CCONTACT: _____ **PHONE/EMAIL:** _____

I want to request a transfer

Transfer request — see Section 10

CONTACT: _____ **PHONE/EMAIL:** _____

I need help related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking

VAWA / safety assistance — see Section 7

CONTACT: _____ **PHONE/EMAIL:** _____

I have a question about an eligibility decision or want review

Application / eligibility review — see Sections 3 and 13

CONTACT: _____ **PHONE/EMAIL:** _____

I have a fair housing concern

Fair housing / discrimination concern — see Section 6

CONTACT: _____ **PHONE/EMAIL:** _____

I am having trouble paying rent or keeping my housing stable

Housing-stability help — see Sections 5 and 13

CONTACT: _____ **PHONE/EMAIL:** _____

EXHIBIT B — CURRENT PROPERTY, INCOME, RENT & OCCUPANCY INFORMATION

This is a living property-information exhibit. It should contain the actual current schedules and property-specific information that apply to this property and should be updated whenever those facts change.

YOUR PROPERTY

Add or remove a household member — see Section 4

PROPERTY NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EFFECTIVE DATE: _____ **LAST UPDATED:** _____

APPLICABLE INCOME & RENT LIMITS

Current applicable published income and rent limit schedule

This exhibit is updated when the applicable published schedule changes.

OCCUPANCY INFORMATION

Current property occupancy standards / occupancy chart

This exhibit is updated when the property occupancy standards change.

UTILITIES

UTILITIES INCLUDED IN RENT: _____

UTILITIES PAID DIRECTLY BY RESIDENT: _____

APPLICABLE UTILITY ALLOWANCE / ADJUSTMENT: _____

OTHER PROPERTY INFORMATION

PARKING / OPTIONAL AMENITIES: _____

OTHER CURRENT PROPERTY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION: _____

EXHIBIT C — VAWA RIGHTS, PROTECTIONS & HUD FORMS

The translation package includes the current English HUD-5380, HUD-5382, and HUD-5383 as controlled source documents. These forms are part of the translation scope unless SSHD supplies an authoritative current translated version for the requested language. HUD-5381 is intentionally not included; SSHD's Emergency Transfer Plan will be finalized from the HUD model and then translated as an SSHD document. See Section 7 — VAWA & Housing Stability Protections for additional information about SSHD's policies and available assistance.

- HUD-5380 — Notice of Occupancy Rights under VAWA — current English source included with this package
- HUD-5382 — Certification / Alternate Documentation — current English source included with this package
- HUD-5383 — Emergency Transfer Request — current English source included with this package
- SSHD Emergency Transfer Plan — pending finalization; HUD-5381 model intentionally held back from this translation packet

EXHIBIT D — RESIDENT RESOURCES

These organizations and resources are provided for information and assistance. They are not part of SSHD, and inclusion does not mean SSHD controls their services or eligibility requirements.

PART 1 — SAFETY, VAWA & EMERGENCY HOUSING RESOURCES

Start here if you need help because of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or another immediate safety concern. You do not need to disclose details about your circumstances simply to ask for information or resources.

If using this Handbook or an online resource could create a safety concern, consider using a safer device or communication method when possible.

I NEED HELP WITH:

SSHD housing protections or an emergency transfer

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Housing protections, VAWA forms, emergency-transfer requests, safer communication, accessibility and language assistance.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Immediate safety or crisis assistance

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Emergency and crisis assistance when immediate safety is a concern.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Safety planning & domestic-violence advocacy

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Confidential advocacy, safety planning, crisis support and referrals.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Sexual-assault support

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Specialized crisis support, advocacy, safety planning and referrals.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Shelter, relocation or somewhere safer to stay

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Shelter, emergency housing, relocation support, housing navigation and other options that may help a resident leave or relocate safely.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Legal assistance & protection-order resources

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Legal information, advocacy, protection-order assistance, housing-related legal help and referrals.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Seattle / King County support

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Local advocacy, crisis intervention, housing referrals and community services.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Washington State support

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Statewide advocacy, crisis support, legal and housing resources.

I NEED HELP WITH:

National or specialized support

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: National hotlines and specialized support resources.

I NEED HELP WITH:

SSHD community-partner support

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Supportive services available through SSHD partnerships, when established and appropriate.

PART 2 — OTHER RESIDENT RESOURCES

These resources support residents with housing rights, accessibility, communication, housing stability, and other day-to-day needs. Keep this section current without requiring revision of the full Handbook.

Understanding Renter's Insurance — Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner provides independent consumer education about renter's insurance, including personal-property coverage, liability coverage, additional living expenses, common exclusions, and questions to consider when choosing coverage. This resource is informational; SSHD does not endorse an insurance carrier or specific policy.

Website: How renter insurance works — Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner

Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner: https://www.insurance.wa.gov/insurance-resources/home-insurance/how-home-insurance-works/how-renter-insurance-works

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I NEED HELP WITH:

Seattle renter rights & tenant resources

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Local renter-rights information, tenant education and housing resources.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Fair housing & discrimination

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Fair-housing information, discrimination concerns, complaint resources and advocacy.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Disability & reasonable accommodation

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Disability-rights information, reasonable accommodation/modification support and advocacy.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Language & interpretation

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Interpretation, translation, accessible communication and language-access resources.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Rent & housing-stability assistance

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Rental assistance, eviction prevention, financial/housing counseling and housing-stability resources.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Mold, moisture & healthy-housing information

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Resident education and public-health or housing resources related to mold, moisture and healthy housing.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Renter-insurance education

Organization / resource: Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner

Website: insurance.wa.gov — How renter insurance works

What this resource may help with: Neutral education about renter insurance and coverage. Inclusion here does not establish whether renter insurance is required by SSHD.

I NEED HELP WITH:

Food, behavioral health & community support

ORGANIZATION/RESOURCE: _____

PHONE/WEBSITE: _____

What this resource may help with: Food, emergency needs, behavioral-health, community navigation and other supportive services, including 211 or similar referral resources.

