



Our **B**rothers **K**eeper Shelter

Mission Statement

Our Brothers Keeper offers a step toward self-sufficiency for families and individuals experiencing homelessness by providing a safe, faith-based, temporary shelter.

Our Vision

At Our Brothers' Keeper we envision a community where every family and individual enjoy self-sufficient lives secure in their own home.

**Mailing Address:
405 S. Third Ave,
Big Rapids, Michigan
231-629-8160
office@obkshelter.org**

***Policies & Procedures are subject to change**

WELCOME!

Welcome to Our Brothers Keeper Shelter. Our staff/volunteers are here to serve individuals and families that find themselves in a housing crisis. We are committed to provide: shelter, food, and access to clothing resources, and community information.

While you are here, we expect you to seek permanent housing, OBK is a temporary, emergency shelter. Your stay here is up to 90 days.

Opportunities may be available during your stay to eliminate the barriers that led to your homelessness. Please let us know of any concerns or needs that you have so that we may best assist you.

No person, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, familial status, sexual orientation, or disability, shall be discriminated against or denied participation. We will do our best to help each individual to the best of our ability but we acknowledge that we cannot meet every need of every person. **Your stay here is based on your participation and behavior.**

This handbook covers important information regarding your stay at OBK Shelter. Please take the time to read this material or ask that it be read to you. We expect the individuals that utilize our facilities to maintain safety and gain self-sufficiency and respect for themselves and others.

Things you need to do:

During initial intake with staff you will call the homeless hotline 1-877-213-5955 and leave a message.

If you do not receive a return call within 7 days you must call again. The return call will be from a Farwell number. This is to connect with Mid-Michigan Community Action Agency and begin the process of locating stable housing.

You will need all forms of ID (Social Security Card, Driver's License or State ID, Birth Certificate) for all family members to apply for housing. These items need to be applied for and obtained immediately if you do not have them. Contact staff if you need assistance.

OBK Handbook: Policies & Procedures

Guest Expectations

You are expected to become familiar with these expectations within your first day in the shelter. If an incident occurs, a report will be filled out and the Shelter Support Specialist will review it with you.

- I will treat staff, other participants, and volunteers respectfully.
- I will not swear, sexually harass, or use harsh words against others.
- I will maintain personal hygiene and appropriate dress (please ask if you are unsure what is appropriate). Showers are to be taken daily or every other day.
- I will provide true and accurate information to staff in order to obtain services.
- I will make my bed neatly every day.
- I will adhere to the daily schedule of the shelter.
- I will not bring pets to the shelter or on shelter property.
- I will keep food and beverages on the tiled floor only.
- I will comply with curfew. Guests arriving after 8 p.m. may not be admitted.

- I will not gamble on OBK Shelter premises.
- I will cooperate with staff.
- I will report any action(s) that threaten the safety or security of myself or another person.
- I will not show public displays of affection or engage in sexual activities in the shelter.
- I will attend all my scheduled appointments with agencies and social work staff.

Guests With Children

- I will take full responsibility for the care of my own child(ren) and keep them under my watch at all times.
- I will follow the set bedtimes for children.
- Family units may stay in a family room together with their children unless space is needed for another mother with children. The father will then need to move to a bunk on the men's side.

Shelter Hours – Admissions

The shelter is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. New admissions to the shelter will be accepted between the hours of 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. daily.

Shelter Hours for Residents

In order to ensure that the shelter runs smoothly, there are expectations regarding the times in which certain activities are to occur.

- Lights on at 7:00 a.m. Guests must be up and have beds made by 9:00 a.m.
- Guests must remain in bed until 6 a.m. (other than restroom use).
- Shelter will remain open on Holidays.
- Guests must be in the shelter by 8:00 p.m. unless at a pre-approved meeting or event.
- Guests that do not return by 8 P.M. may not be allowed in for that evening.
- Guests who work nights need to discuss their schedule hours with staff. Persons working after curfew will be admitted to the shelter.
- Guests that have not returned to the shelter by 8:00 p.m. risk losing their bed by it being assigned to another guest.

Length of Stay

OBK Shelter offers temporary services. Your stay in our facility is determined individually. In the event the guest stay is not approved, a guest must vacate the shelter and its premises with just their belongings immediately. If a guest is evicted, they must vacate the shelter with just their belongings immediately or risk being arrested for trespassing.

Laundry

A laundromat is located just south of the shelter. Clean linens are provided by the shelter every Sunday unless needed sooner. When available, guests may request laundry detergent and dryer sheets. Laundry cards are available only for guests with zero income. Please see staff to request a card.

Shelter Chores

- Guests are encouraged to complete housekeeping chores around the shelter.
- The employee/volunteer on duty may request assistance with additional housekeeping chores as needed.

- Guests **will be assigned** a chore. Chores must be completed by bedtime with the exception of vacuuming. Vacuuming should be completed by 8:30 p.m. due to guests/children who may be sleeping.
- It is the responsibility of each guest to keep their own sleeping area, dining area, and common areas clean and free from personal belongings
 - Turn off lights, radios, televisions, and other appliances when not in use
 - Make bed and tidy individual sleeping area daily
 - Showers cleaned after each use
 - All personal belongings must fit in/stay in your designated tote under your bed or assigned cupboard space.
 - No hanging of blankets on bed for curtains.

Food Access

A breakfast will be provided each morning between 7:00 am and 9:00 am.

A limited lunch will be provided each day between Noon – 1:00 pm

Dinner will be served daily between 6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

Diabetics, and guests working late can request food from staff if needed outside of scheduled meal times. Clean up is expected after each meal. Food and beverages are allowed on the tiled areas only. **No food or beverages are allowed on carpeted areas.** Food or beverages may not be consumed or stored in totes or sleeping areas.

The freezers located in the kitchen are for OBK use only.

***FOOD DELIVERY IS NOT ALLOWED**

For the privacy of each guest, deliveries of any kind will not be permitted.

Employee/Volunteer Rights

An employee/volunteer has the right to ask a guest to leave and not return until 8 p.m. if the guest is being disrespectful, causing a problem, not following the rules, or if the employee/volunteer feels threatened in any manner. They do not need permission from the Executive Director and/or Board Member.

Guest Rights

- You have the RIGHT to check out permanently from the shelter anytime you choose.
- You have the RIGHT to not be discriminated against on the basis of race, ethnicity, age color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or handicap/disability (mental, physical or developmental).
- You have the RIGHT to be treated with consideration and respect for personal dignity, autonomy and privacy by the staff, volunteers and other participants.
- You have the RIGHT to an extension of your stay, provided you have complied with the OBK Shelter's rules and regulations and are actively working to achieve your goals.
- You have the RIGHT to be informed of the reason(s) for your dismissal and the right to receive an explanation.
- You have the RIGHT to participate in any appropriate and available services

Privacy Policy

- **Guests** should have no expectations of physical privacy; however they can expect privacy of personal identity. No pictures or names will be given out without permission.
- **Phone Calls:** In order to respect the privacy of guests, staff/volunteers are not permitted to release information over the phone regarding guests (past or present) at the shelter. Staff/Volunteers may take the name, number, and a message from the caller.
- **Staff/Volunteers** are to keep guest's identity secure. Information given to staff/volunteers is to be kept confidential, including guest circumstances of why they are at the shelter.
- **Non-agency** visitors are not allowed in the shelter.
- **Police Agencies** are welcome on our property. Drug dogs have and will do inspections regularly and whenever deemed necessary.

EVICITION POLICY

- Immediate eviction will take place for smoking, vaping, chewing, drinking, and any illegal drug use in the building. Possession of contraband consisting of: alcohol, marijuana, illegal drugs, pornography, and/or weapons is not permitted.
- Immediate eviction will take place for assaultive behavior including: non-defensive physical contact or verbal threats of violence.
- An employee/volunteer may send the guest outside of the building, evict any guest, and/or call 911 if there is an immediate danger to anyone.

GUEST TOTE KEY

- One tote and one cupboard is provided for guest use. Locks can be obtained for a \$5 deposit for totes. The deposit will be returned when the lock and key are turned in.

Medications

- All prescription and over-the-counter medications must be signed in with the shelter volunteer/employee.
- Your medications will be placed in a labeled plastic tub and locked in the cabinet located in the shelter intake area.
- You are responsible to ask the shelter staff/volunteer for your medications at the time they are to be taken.
- All medications are to be taken in the shelter intake area in front of the OBK staff/volunteer.
- Minor first-aid supplies may be available in the shelter reception area (for example: Band-Aids, gauze, burn spray, etc.), ask staff for assistance with these items.

Computer Rules

Guests have access to the computer(s) located in the common areas. Computer use is for applying or searching for housing, employment, or other government related applications. They are not for social media, downloading of music, movies or photographs. Accessing pornographic websites will result in immediate eviction from the shelter. Tampering with computer settings may result in immediate eviction.

Mail

- Mail will be delivered to 405 S. Third Ave, Big Rapids, MI 49307
- Mail will be retrieved by staff and distributed to guests.
- If there is no forwarding address, all mail received after a guest is no longer at the shelter will be held for seven days and then returned to Post Office.
- OBK Shelter will not provide postage for guest's personal outgoing mail.

Guest Cell Phones

- Personal cell phones may be used during the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.
- No personal speakers are allowed.

Safety Drills

- Shelter participates in safety drills (for example fire and tornado drills) on a regular basis.
- In case you detect a fire, immediately contact staff.
- Fire extinguishers are located in several locations throughout the shelter.
- If you hear an alarm and if the hallway is safe, proceed to the nearest exit. If the hallway is not safe, leave through a window.
- Wait for an employee/volunteer or fire department personnel to give instructions when you can return to the shelter.

Guest Parking on Shelter Parking Lot

- Please remember that parking is always at your own risk.
- Only shelter guests, employees, and volunteers may park on the lot.
- Guest may not park a non-operational vehicle on the OBK Shelter's parking lot. Doing so will result in the car being towed away at the guest's expense.
- Pets of any kind may not be left in vehicles.
- No one may sleep overnight in a vehicle on OBK property.

Discharge & Moving

- Staff/volunteers are to be notified when a guest plans to move out of the facility.
- Guest(s) will complete the exit process.
- Sleeping areas are to be left clean. Trash thrown out and all personal articles removed from sleeping area and locker.
- Complete Exit Interview.
- Any personal belongings left will be kept for a maximum of 2 days. After that time, items may be thrown out or donated.

BEDDING AND PILLOWS

OBK provides your bedding and pillow. For health reasons you may not bring in your own pillows or blankets. OBK cannot store them for you. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Alcohol Policy

- The consumption or storage of alcohol is not permitted on shelter property.

Smoking Policy includes Marijuana, Tobacco, Vaping, E-Cigarettes and Chew

- Marijuana products of any kind are not permitted on shelter property.
- Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building.
- Smoking in the building will result in immediate eviction.
- Guest must smoke tobacco products in the designated area by the picnic table, NOT near the building.
- Cigarette rolling is not allowed in the shelter.
- No smoking is permitted for anyone under the age of 21.
- If cigarette butts are not picked up and/or properly disposed of, smoking privileges could be rescinded.

BEDTIMES for CHILDREN

- INFANT TO 7 YEARS OLD
 - 8:30 P.M.
- 8 YEARS OLD TO 14 YEARS OLD
 - 9:00 P.M.
- 15 YEARS OLD TO 17 YEARS OLD
 - 10:00 P.M.

LIGHTS OUT FOR ADULTS AT 11:00 pm