

Nativity House Safety and Security Plan

Revised March, 2009

The plan was constructed based on historical best practices within Nativity House, input from staff and board of directors, businesses, city officials and members of the Tacoma Police Department. The March, 2009 revisions reflect the addition of security cameras.

I. Neighborhood Safety

Nativity House is committed to the safety and security of its staff, guests, and the community.

The Nativity House plan includes staff training, program staff enforcement and monitoring, continued use of uniformed security guard, communication and cooperation with Tacoma Police Department, and the addition of recording security cameras.

Uniformed Security Guard

Nativity House will have a uniformed security guard who will patrol both the inside and the outside of Nativity House from one half hour prior until one half hour after hours of operation. This individual is a direct employee of Nativity House. (Nativity House moved away from contract security companies in order to insure all of the expenditure went to the security guard, thereby providing a higher wage, attracting and retaining an employee with greater experience and professionalism.) Priority in hiring for this position is given to individuals with security and criminal justice background and/or experience. The Security Officer will be trained by a representative of the Tacoma Police Department, and by Nativity House staff.

Individuals seeking services at Nativity House will use the facility as intended or will leave the policy enforcement zone. Individuals who violate the rules of Nativity House will be banned from the facility and from the policy enforcement zone. Cooperation with property owners and the Tacoma Police Department is critical in achieving this result.

In addition to contacting the police, the Security Guard has the ability to ban individuals from receiving services from Nativity House. The Security Guard has little influence over individuals within the neighborhood who do not use Nativity House's services. Neighborhood businesses and residents are encouraged to call 911 to report problems on their property, especially with regard to crimes in progress. As always, community members will be welcome to call our office if they have specific concerns about Nativity House guests. The security camera will provide some deterrence and assistance identifying individuals who engage in nuisance behavior within view of the cameras.

Staff Training

Nativity House staff will participate in staff trainings and workshops, which will provide instruction in enforcing rules, banning individuals, non-violent de-escalating conflicts, and responding to medical emergencies. Also, Nativity House staff will participate in annual trainings with Tacoma Police Department officers on de-escalation techniques and other specialized issues as they related to the guests we serve.

Community feedback

We reconfirm our commitment to work with our neighbors to continue to enhance and improve our area. Nativity House representative will continue to attend monthly Hillside Development Counsel meetings and will arrange to meet with community members to discuss neighborhood issues. If neighbors want to share the cost of additional services, Nativity House will be willing to be part of a community group joining the Business Improvement Association (BIA).

II. Building Safety

Nativity House has historically been effective in providing a safe atmosphere within our building, patrolling and policing its interior for inappropriate behavior.

Design of the Building

In each phase of the development of Nativity House, the design of the building was intentional to best provide a secure environment. We utilized a Department of Corrections consultant to help in the design of the building to ensure maximum visibility and security from both inside and outside the facility. The management of Nativity House, the architect, consultant, and contractor reviewed and implemented the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles accepted by the City of Tacoma and the Tacoma Police Department as the standard in building design to promote safe and healthy neighborhoods in which to live and work. The Nativity House executive director also attended the Crime Free Housing training. A segment of that training was led by a Tacoma Police Community Liaison Officer and focused on the implementation of CPTED principles including a case study of an existing property.

CPTED states there are three elements to a crime: target, desire, and opportunity. The focus of CPTED and the design of Nativity House center on the last element - opportunity. There are three CPTED design strategies used in addressing opportunity: natural surveillance – to facilitate observation, natural access controls – to deny access and create a perception of risk to the offender, and territorial reinforcement – to design a space to contribute to a sense of territoriality.

The floor plan, placement of rooms, doors, and windows, and the selection of construction materials and security hardware were intentional and address these three CPTED strategies. The following are design intents for providing a safe environment.

- There is only one entrance for guests seeking service at the northeast corner of South 23rd Street and Jefferson Avenue South. A second emergency exit as required by fire code exists on the southeast corner of the building.
- The Jefferson Street side of the building is lined with windows to allow visibility from the street into the gathering hall as well as from the gathering hall to the street, allowing security and police to monitor behavior effectively from inside and outside the facility.
- Service rooms are placed on the west side of the building furthest from the entrance/exit. To access any room that could potentially be used for an unsafe activity, a guest must first walk through the gathering hall and by several staff. This provides natural surveillance and increases the perception of risk for potential offenders.
- All service rooms will be locked unless a staff person is present in the room.
- The program office is set further out than the adjacent rooms with windows facing into the gathering hall. Any staff person attending to guest needs in the office will also be able to visually monitor the gathering room, the bathrooms, the front door, and have a line of sight out the front windows to the street.
- To provide natural surveillance, the men and women's restrooms were placed as far from the front door as the designs would permit. Again, in order use the restroom, a guest must first walk through the gathering hall and by several staff. Three bathrooms may appear to not be sufficient for the 70 to 250 people per day served by Nativity House. However, in order to provide for the best access control, security, and consistency in monitoring, the restrooms must be single use only, even if there are multiple stalls in each restroom. They are located next to and can be easily monitored from the program office. They are also equipped with sensitive smoke detectors separate from the main smoke and fire detection system that will trigger a light above the restroom door and sound an alarm if there is smoking within the bathroom.
- There is a half wall that separates the kitchen from the gathering hall. Any staff assigned to cooking will be able to visually monitor the gathering hall, the front door, the staircase, and have a line of sight out the front windows to the street.
- The entrance to the staircase leading to the second floor is on the west side of the staircase. A guest accessing the second floor must walk through a part of the gathering room, past staff in the gathering hall, and past staff in the kitchen.
- The second floor has an open balcony, allowing for full visibility of the hallway from the main floor below. While elevator access to the second floor by our handicapped guests must be open at all times in order to comply with ADA regulations, use of the elevator by guests who are not disabled will result in warnings and/or ban time. Again, any service room on the second floor will be locked unless a staff person is present and any outside or outside-access door is equipped with panic hardware.

- There is a second floor highly ventilated smoking room. Smoking will only be allowed in the designated smoking room. Guests will not be allowed to smoke in front of the building. The hallway side of the smoking room is lined with windows to allow for visibility both into and out of the room. Staff will monitor the smoking room. The room will also have windows facing the alley between Jefferson and Fawcett Avenues. The staff monitoring the smoking room will be able to visually monitor South 23rd street next to our building and the parking area behind the building.
- The parking lot area is currently fenced and will remain fenced and locked when not being accessed and used by staff. The fenced parking area will have a landscaped space that will be professionally maintained. Currently there is City lighting on the corner of 23rd and Fawcett Avenue. The landscaping will allow for lighting of the parking area from that source. Nativity House will also meet City of Tacoma requirements in providing enough lighting to ensure a visible and safe parking area.
- There is also City lighting on the corner of 23rd and Jefferson Avenue illuminating both Jefferson Avenue and 23rd Streets. Nativity House will meet City of Tacoma requirements in providing enough lighting to ensure a visible and safe area.
- The exterior of the building has no overhang and does not have any low surrounding exposed wall. The exterior design is intended not to provide any comfort or shelter from the elements that would promote loitering and congregation.

Security Cameras

Nativity House recognizes the need to strike a balance between the individual's right to be free from invasion of privacy and the organization's duty to promote a safe environment for all community members. Nativity House strives to maintain a safe and secure environment for its staff and guests. In pursuit of this objective, selected areas of Nativity House premises are equipped with surveillance cameras that are recording at all times. Nativity House's security camera system shall be used only for the protection and safety of guests, employees, assets, property, and when appropriate to assist law enforcement.

Security cameras will be used where needed to discourage violations of Nativity House rules and policy, to assist Nativity House staff in preventing the recurrence of any violations and, when necessary, to provide law enforcement assistance in prosecuting criminal activity. At no time will the security cameras replace the existing Nativity House Security Guard, but rather supplement staff presence and rule enforcement.

Procedures

- ◆ Signs will be posted in appropriate areas, either at the entrance to the area under surveillance or in close proximity to the camera informing the general public of the usage of video surveillance.

- ◆ Cameras will not be installed in areas where staff and the public have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as restrooms.
- ◆ Surveillance cameras will be placed in both indoor and outdoor locations.
- ◆ Selected staff will have access to the real time monitors, although activity is only randomly monitored.
- ◆ Images will typically be stored for a period of 7 to 14 days. As new images are recorded, the oldest images will be automatically deleted. However, selected digital video may be saved for as long as required. All records produced by the surveillance system shall be kept in a secure manner, and managed appropriately by Nativity House to protect legal obligations and evidentiary values.

Use/Disclosure of Video Records

- ◆ Security camera records may be used to identify the person or persons responsible for Nativity House rule and policy violations, criminal activity, or actions considered disruptive to normal operations.
- ◆ Security camera records may be used to assist law enforcement agencies in accordance with applicable state and federal laws upon receipt of a subpoena. The requirement of a subpoena may, however, be waived by the Executive Director or authorized employees when appropriate.
- ◆ Security camera recordings may be shared with authorized employees when appropriate to identify person(s) banned from Nativity House and to maintain a safe, secure, and policy-compliant environment.
- ◆ Security camera recordings may be used, upon authorization by the Executive Director, as otherwise allowed by law.
- ◆ Only the Executive Director, as authorized by the Board of Directors shall be authorized to release any video record to any third-party other than law enforcement.
- ◆ Security camera recordings are property of Nativity House. Nativity House reserves sole authority to determine any and all use of recordings. Requests for copies of recordings must be submitted in writing and approved by the Executive Director and the Board of Directors.
- ◆ Security camera recordings shall not be used or disclosed other than as specifically authorized by this policy.

Guidelines

- ◆ Security cameras will not be installed for the express purpose of monitoring staff performance.
- ◆ Security cameras will not record or monitor sound.
- ◆ Only authorized personnel will be involved in, or have access to, surveillance camera data.
- ◆ When an incident is suspected to have occurred, designated personnel may review the images from surveillance camera data.
- ◆ A log will be maintained for all access to and use of data stored in the surveillance system.

- ◆ Any persons who tamper with or destroy security camera equipment will be subject to criminal proceedings and established Nativity House ban times.

Staffing

The design of the building itself will not deter inappropriate activity from occurring. With the addition of staffing and security to the building to clearly and consistently apply the Nativity House Rules and the subsequent consequences, the behavior of Nativity House guests can be effectively managed. Please see the attached **Nativity House Rules**.

There will be a ten member staff working in the facility. There are certain areas within the building where staff will be assigned. These assignments are shared equally by each staff person and are rotated roughly every hour.

- One staff will be located in the program office to address the personal needs of guests (bus tickets, phone calls, referrals, hygiene items, etc.) and will also be responsible for visually monitoring the gathering hall and bathroom.
- On the days that volunteer groups do not prepare food one staff will be assigned to the kitchen. They will be responsible for preparing the meal and also visually monitoring the gathering room and the stairwell.
- One staff will monitor the smoking room and visually monitor 23rd street, the alley and parking area through the windows in the side and back of the building.
- The Security Guard will be located primarily in the front of the building. They will be responsible for enforcing the no loitering policy on Nativity House property, t on Jefferson Avenue. They will also be responsible for making periodic patrols through the policy enforcement zone.
- The art room will be open for certain hours during the day and will be staffed, monitored and run by volunteers.
- The donation room will not be accessible to guests and volunteers will maintain it.
- The clothing room will be open for one hour during the days of operation. It will be managed and monitored by staff.
- The long term storage room will be open for a total of one hour during the days of operation. It will be managed and monitored by staff.
- The remaining staff will be interacting with guests in the gathering hall. They are responsible for carrying out the ministry of presence. They will initiate conversation, establish relationships with guests, attend to their needs, help with referrals (mental health, treatment, housing, job placement, etc.), and informally counsel guests. They will monitor and strictly enforce the Nativity House Rules in the gathering hall, stairwell, balcony hallway, and restrooms. They are also the backups for the staff member posted in front of the building.

In each of these assignments, staff will also be responsible for the way in which they interact with guests, focusing on building stable relationships with the individuals being

served while at the same time being firm in applying rules. Each staff is challenged to believe in the dignity and worth of every person seeking help, and that by serving with full acceptance, free of judgment and prejudice, they can challenge individuals to believe in their own dignity and self worth and allow for progress towards a greater life. As with any relationship, there is a certain level of trust and respect established between staff and guests. Along with that relationship is an expectation placed on guests to behave in a certain manner. Developing positive relationships and focusing on prevention and proactive intervention with guests allows for effective behavior management. The purpose of this type of behavior management is to keep the program and our guests safe, to deal with unacceptable behaviors, and to reinforce positive behavior patterns.

The staff of Nativity House is required to establish by-name relationships with each person seeking service. The effect of those relationships in part is discussed above – to manage behavior, but it also allows for the effect discussed in the CPTED territorial reinforcement strategy. By knowing each person using services, it creates an environment where someone new, a stranger, and a potential offender of the rules can be easily identified.

As discussed in the Nativity House Rules, if an individual has violated a rule, they will be banned from the property and neighborhood for a specific amount of time. When intervening in a situation that requires banning someone, trained staff, including but not limited to the security guard, will implement violence de-escalation techniques to diffuse the situation. Consequences from that violation of policy will then be applied. If a situation arises where these techniques do not work, 911 will be called to intervene in the situation. In the event that someone who is banned refuses to leave, the police may be called and forms may be completed for criminal trespass. If a banned individual returns after that time or any time during their ban period, the police will be called and the person will be arrested for criminal trespass. They will also receive an additional ban or be indefinitely banned from Nativity House.

When enforcing policy, it is important to recognize the difference in behaviors that are conscious decisions to threaten or exploit others (grounds for an indefinite ban) and behavior that is part of a chemical dependency, mental health imbalance, or relational issue. For our guests in this second group of individuals, as part of proactive intervention before their behavior escalates to a violation of policy, drug and alcohol counselors or professional mental health providers will be contacted to intervene, including but not limited to the Comprehensive Mental Health Outreach Worker or the Mental Health Crisis Team.

At the end of each day, the staff and the safety officer will debrief, discussing any issues from the day, arrests, bans, or infractions of policy. The time will also be used to update each other on the behavior patterns of individuals and to strategize on how to attend to them. Daily debriefing sessions constitute ongoing training for staff. It will also be used to share information on the progress of guests, names, descriptions, and

discussion of new guests to Nativity House, and ongoing relationship building between staff.

III. Plan for Neighborhood Cleaning

Nativity House is committed to doing our part in maintaining a clean neighborhood. The duties in accomplishing that are split between daily and weekly procedures.

On a daily basis, Nativity House will first attend to the interior and exterior of our building. Every day after closing, the staff and guest-volunteers will thoroughly clean each room in Nativity House. The design intent of the building and the materials chosen for construction allow for both durability and ease of cleaning. All highly traveled and potentially unsanitary rooms (kitchen, bathrooms, gathering hall, smoking room) are equipped with floor drain units, where a pressure washer may be used.

The design of the building includes a well ventilated, and floor-drained room in the southeast corner of the main floor for recycling and garbage collection as well as the storage of biohazard containers. This room will be locked during hours of operation. The garbage and recycling collection units will be wheeled to the sidewalk the night before garbage collection and returned within the building after collection. Bio-hazardous materials will be collected and disposed of by the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department upon request.

The designs include both hot and cold-water access in the southeast corner of the main floor and on the back of the building in the alley. The access will be in a locked unit either flush or affixed to the exterior of the building. They will be used to clean or pressure wash the sidewalk in front of the building on Jefferson Avenue, the alley, parking area, and 23rd Street when needed.

On a daily basis, Nativity House staff and guest-volunteers will pick up litter and bio-hazardous material on the property owned by Nativity House.

As volunteers are available, Nativity House will pick up any litter and bio-hazardous material found in the total area defined as both sides of Jefferson Avenue from 23rd to 25th, the north side of 25th Avenue, both sides of Fawcett Avenue from 23rd to 25th and both sides of 23rd Avenue from Jefferson to Fawcett Avenues. Additionally, cleaning services for this area will be provided through agreement with the assigned community liaison officer from Tacoma Police Department.

Nativity House will partner with the Hillside Development Council and the community in continuing to hold the City of Tacoma responsible for the clean up and maintenance of their property bordered by South 21st and 23rd Streets and Jefferson and Tacoma Avenue South.

Nativity House Rules

Welcome to Nativity House. These rules have been established to assist in making this a safe and comfortable place for everyone.

- **No alcohol or drugs**
- **No drug dealing (selling or facilitating) or drug use**
- **Using or selling drugs in the neighborhood will be treated the same as using or selling drugs at Nativity House (See the Policy Enforcement Zone)**
- **No drug paraphernalia**
- **No exchange of money or other goods**
- **No discussion of money**
- **No violence or threats of violence**
- **No weapons**
- **No prostitution**
- **Talk and act in a respectful manner**
- **Smoking in the smoking room only, not in the main room or in front**
- **You need to be either in the building using services or out of the neighborhood defined by the Policy Enforcement Zone**
- **No loitering outside the building, or in the parking lot**
- **No sitting in your car in the neighborhood**
- **No loitering in the neighborhood (See the Policy Enforcement Zone)**

Anyone who violates Nativity House rules will be banned for a specific amount of time as follows:

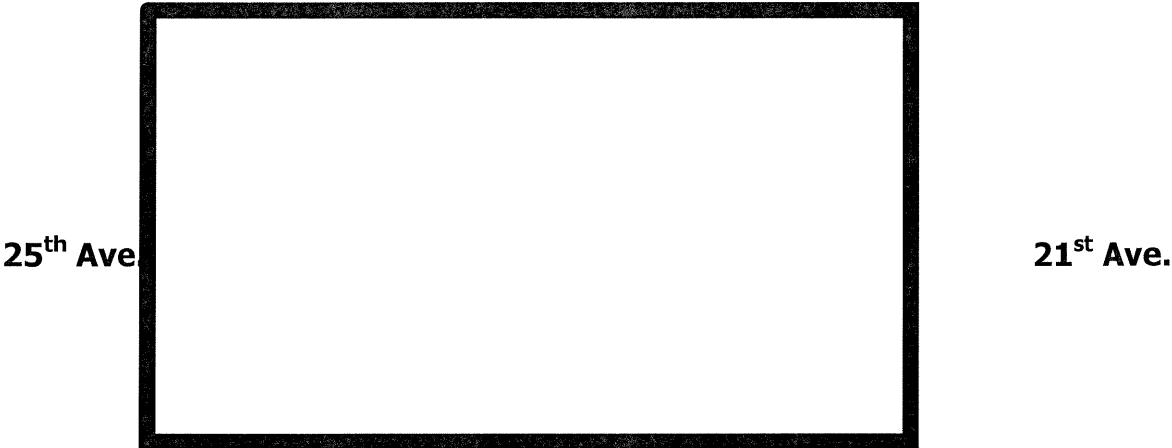
- **First offense: 30 days**
- **Second offense: 60 days**
- **Third offense (or serious offense): indefinite amount of time**
- **Depending on the severity of the offense, a person can be banned for 30 days, 60 days, or indefinitely at any time.**

If you have been banned, you will need to make an appointment and meet with the Program Director or staff of the Nativity House to determine whether you may return. You can not return until you have met with one of these individuals.

The Nativity House Neighborhood

Policy Enforcement Zone

West – Tacoma Avenue



East – Jefferson Avenue

Ban Policy

Any individual breaking the listed Nativity House Rules will be banned according to the following ban policy:

1. First offense: 30 days
2. Second offense: 60 days
3. Third offense (or serious offense): indefinite ban (minimum 90 days). This allows for the possibility for that person to make needed changes and be able to be a responsible and respectful member of the community. Formal steps must be documented to address the behavior for the specific reason for the indefinite ban (i.e. successful completion of an anger management class for violence infraction). The person banned must meet with the Program Director or staff member who banned the individual before being considered for reinstatement.
4. It is important to note that depending on the severity of the offense, a person can be banned for 30 days, 60 days, or indefinitely at any time.

Staff may also give the person a temporary 24-hour ban to allow for the staff of Nativity House to consult with each other and the safety officer before making a final decision on the length of the ban. The guest will be told to return the next day of operations to meet with the staff person to be either banned, warned, or to continue receiving any services.

For minor infractions, such as patrons yelling at each other, using disrespectful language, staff may give a warning or ask them to leave for 24 hours.

When a staff person bans someone, the rest of the staff is responsible to back that person up, even if they may not agree with him or her. When debriefing the situation with other staff and the safety officer and listening to the entire story, opinions may be shared. If a different decision is made, it is up to the staff person who made the original decision to explain any change in the ban to the guest.

If someone is banned and they refuse to leave, the police may be called and forms may be completed for criminal trespass. If they return after that time, the police will be called and the person will be arrested for criminal trespass. They will also have an additional ban or be indefinitely banned from the Nativity House.

All Nativity House staff and security can ban individuals from the premises or the neighborhood.

Ban Procedure

1. The guest will be told they are banned for a specific amount of time – or indefinitely.
2. The person's name and description will be maintained on the Ban List.
3. The remaining staff will be notified.
4. The person's name and description may be shared with other social service agencies and the police.
5. If the person returns during their ban, the police may be called and the person may be arrested for criminal trespass. This will result in their ban time starting over or escalate to an indefinite ban.

Sharing Ban Lists:

We reserve the right to share ban lists with other social service programs such as but not limited to the Hospitality Kitchen, Martin Luther King Center, and the Tacoma Rescue Mission. Out of respect for organizational integrity, the ban list will be used for information sharing only.

Police Relationship:

We will welcome, cooperate, and meet with the Tacoma Police when needed to assist in law enforcement in the neighborhood.

General Information

Neighborhood Involvement:

As stated several times in the safety and security plan, Nativity House is committed to being involved in the community. Nativity House is willing to attend, participate, or be involved with in any community association or group for the constructive benefit of the neighborhood.

Occupancy vs. Capacity:

The maximum capacity occupancy load for the new building based on square footage is for roughly 400 individuals. However, based on 29 years of experience with this population, there are between 70 and 250 people that use our services on any given day. Both during the summer and at the beginning of each month, the number of individuals is fewer than in the more severe weather months and at the end of each month. Those numbers of individuals using our services do not arrive and leave the facility all at one time.

Days & Hours of Operation:

Nativity House will be open 5 days per week: Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 11am to 4pm and Saturdays and Sundays from 9am to 4pm. Nativity House will be open on Monday Holidays from 9am to 4pm when the Hospitality Kitchen is closed. Nativity House is committed to coordinating with other social service providers in maintaining a continuum of services.