

This information package tells you about SASHA operations and your rights and responsibilities as a client. If you have any questions, please talk with the staff.

Purpose

Southern Alberta Self - Help Association (SASHA) is a non-profit community organization whose mission is to promote independence and community integration for adults with severe and/or persistent mental illness. Transitional and long-term supportive housing programs are person centered and strength based, with a focus on achieving improved quality of life and recovery outcomes. Services include supports for co-occurring addictions issues.

Service Agreement

A service agreement is signed upon your intake that describes the SASHA program and conduct we encourage from participants. You should carefully read all documents and discuss any questions with the staff before you sign.

Service Fees

A source of income needs to be in place before you will be accepted at SASHA. You pay a fee to SASHA for the provision of support services, supervision, and accommodation, which is referred to as service fees. These fees are due on the first day of each month. Service fees include rent, weekly groceries, telephone calls, internet, cable, utilities, some recreation activities and/or supplies, transportation to appointments, if necessary, and support services from staff.

You will be given three months' notice of any service fee increases. If you are asked to leave SASHA for concerns related to conduct before the end of the month there is no refund of service fees. A Third-Party Payment Agreement can be arranged with AISH, Alberta Supports, or a Trustee to ensure service fees are automatically paid to SASHA.

One calendar month notice—on the first day of the month—of your intention to leave SASHA in writing. Exceptions may be made to facilitate changing treatment options.

Accommodations

You will reside in a shared room within one of SASHA's three residential homes. Your room will be furnished with a single bed and dresser equipped with a locked drawer to secure valuables. You are provided with bedding, a pillow and towel. You may also bring your own. The homes are located close to downtown Lethbridge. Staff offices are located in two of the homes.

Staffing

Staff support is available 24 hours daily. Staff visits the homes several times daily to provide support. Emergency numbers are posted in each house if needed.

House Meetings

Staff will facilitate a short house meeting every Monday evening where you will have the opportunity to voice concerns, suggest activities, plan meals, and review the weekly chores list. You are asked to attend these meetings. SASHA values your input, and we want to hear from you. Your feedback will help us continuously improve the quality of services provided.

Individual Service Plan (ISP)

Your Individual Service Plan (ISP) is based on the information received on your application, from talking with you and reviewing your needs with your treatment team. The staff will meet with you every three months to review your goals and update your ISP. We want to support you to achieve the goals that are most important to you.

Confidentiality

All staff, students, and volunteers sign a Statement of Confidentiality which ensures confidentiality of all information. To provide the best assistance possible, staff may discuss your situation with other SASHA staff. You will be asked to sign a 'Consent to Collect and Disclose Personal Health Information' so that we can share information about your stay at SASHA and the services provided with other health professionals and agencies that are involved in your care and treatment. This will ensure continuity of services. Confidentiality may have to be broken if the staff believes you are at significant risk to harm yourself or someone else, if there are concerns that a minor is being abused, or if the courts subpoena a client's records.

When you receive health service of any kind, some personal information must be shared with your service provider so that the right care or treatment can be provided. The personal information you are asked to give is collected under the authority of the Health Information Act (HIA) and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy ACT (FIOP). If you have any questions talk to the Executive Director.

Medications

We ask that you take your medications as prescribed. Let staff know if you receive any medication changes. Old medications should be turned into staff for disposal at a pharmacy. Staff may assist you with monitoring your medications if you are having difficulty.

Money

SASHA does not provide in house trusteeship services. This means that individuals monitor their own finances. SASHA recommends that you do not keep large amounts of cash in your room. SASHA does not lend money to clients. Client lending/borrowing is strongly discouraged.

Personal Belongings

You are responsible for your own belongings. SASHA recommends you do not keep money or items of considerable value in your room. You may request to have them locked up. You are permitted 2 boxes of storage in your room and 2 boxes in SASHA storage. Your belongings shall be searched on admission for safety purposes. Your room may be searched if it is suspected that there is alcohol, an illegal substance, a dangerous object, or a weapon in your possession. A search is done with 2 staff in your presence: if not possible, with your knowledge.

Tenant insurance

If you are concerned about your valuables, you can purchase tenant insurance through an external provider, which protects your property and the contents of your room. It also provides you with liability coverage if you cause damage to the facility or another person. Tenant insurance is optional and is your responsibility.

Family Involvement

You are encouraged to maintain contact with your family/significant others. SASHA staff will ask you during the admission process for your consent to collect and release information pertinent to the supports you are receiving at SASHA with your family members.

Cultural and Spiritual Connections

SASHA strives to create an environment of cultural and spiritual inclusiveness. Please inform staff if you identify with a specific cultural or spiritual group and how staff can support the continuing connections with your group.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome between the hours of 10:00 to 21:00*. They should remain with you while visiting. Guests for meals are permitted for special occasions, please ask for staff approval prior. Your guest is not permitted to be in your bedroom. Intimate sexual relations with other clients or guests on the premises are not permitted.

**Pending any Public Health restrictions set in place from AHS or GoA.*

Personal Affairs

SASHA will work with your Trustee and/or Guardian representative—if you have one—to ensure processes are followed for making decisions. You are encouraged to inform staff if you have a personal directive or enduring power of attorney so SASHA can provide the best care possible. There are several legal options to protect your interests. You can learn more about Guardianship, Trusteeship, and other decision-making options on the government website: www.humanservices.alberta.ca

Activities

Staff do wake-up rounds at 9 am on weekdays and 10 am on weekends. You are also encouraged to participate in daily programs. Evening and weekend activities may be offered by SASHA, based on client interest. We ask that you participate in making suggestions for some of these activities.

Gift Giving

While it is understandable to want to show gratitude towards SASHA staff, staff are discouraged from accepting gifts from clients. Clients are encouraged to express gratitude in non-monetary ways such as a poem or drawing. Gifts valued under \$10 may be received by staff as a group rather than individually. Our annual Christmas gift exchange (by drawing names) is an opportunity to give a small gift (under \$10) to one staff or client at SASHA.

Appointments and Advocating

Staff may help you maintain and attend appointments. You are encouraged to inform the staff of any appointments so they can be posted in the staff office(s). Reminders will be given the day of the appointment to ensure attendance. Staff are available to advocate for you, and assist you as needed. Support is available for medical, dental, and eye appointments as well as psychiatrist and therapist.

Chores

All participants are assigned daily chores. Chores are rotated weekly, at house meetings. Staff will assist depending on individual need.

Laundry

All participants are given a designated laundry and room clean day once per week. Washers and dryers are located in each house and free of charge. Laundry soap and fabric softener is provided. If you have allergies, you may bring your own supplies. Staff will provide reminders and assistance depending on individual need.

Meals

Clients are encouraged to prepare their own breakfast and lunch each day. You get to choose one supper meal each week to prepare for all participants of the house. Staff assistance is available when cooking suppers. Supper is to be served no earlier than 5 pm. No use of the oven or stove is permitted after 9 pm.

Hygiene

SASHA staff do not provide any personal care (showering, dressing, etc.). We ask that you maintain good personal hygiene through daily self-care including showering or bathing, washing your hair with shampoo, washing your body with soap, putting on clean clothes, using deodorant, brushing your hair, and brushing your teeth. Staff will provide reminders and any outstanding concerns will be addressed with you in private. Homecare services can be arranged if additional care is required.

Telephone

The house telephones are available for your use. Long distance calls in Canada are free of charge, and 1-800 calls may be made. Time restrictions may be applied as needed. Please use appropriate telephone etiquette.

Computers

Each house has a computer which is provided and maintained by SASHA. We ask that clients respect these computers and report any problems with them to staff. Time limits may be set to ensure equal access. Please speak to staff if you would like to use your personal laptop or desk top computer.

Cell Phones

You are encouraged to have a cell phone for emergency purposes. You are responsible for care and expenses associated with the cell phone. We ask if your cell phone has video or recording capabilities that you respect others privacy. Taking pictures, filming, or recording people without their consent will not be tolerated.

Television

Each house has a communal television with basic cable. The television is not to be turned on before 4 pm on weekdays unless other arrangements have been made with staff. Clients need to share the television and watch appropriate programming. Time restrictions may be applied as needed.

Transportation

SASHA wants to promote the greatest level of independence of each of their participants which includes getting to your appointments independently when able. Staff may transport you to appointments or help you find your way around if you are new to Lethbridge, such as learning how to use public transportation if you desire.

You may have your own vehicle while living at SASHA, however there is limited street parking available.

Absences

You are expected to inform staff when you are leaving SASHA property and when you are planning to return. This is for safety purposes. If the staff are not available to speak with, please leave a message on the answering machine or leave a note. Please include when you are leaving, where you are going and when you will return. If you are planning to be away overnight, please notify staff where you are going, your contact number and date of return. If you are absent for more than 24 hours without notice, we will attempt to contact your emergency contact(s) or CTO worker (if applicable) to locate you. Further action may be taken based on the length of your absence and any concerns for your safety will be notified to the police. If you are gone for two weeks without notice or any communication with staff, you will be considered discharged from the program.

Security

The houses are always locked. A security check is done every night. You should always have your key with you. You will be given a house key and drawer key, each time you need a replacement key, you will pay \$5.00.

Emergencies

Emergency numbers are posted in your house and should be used as needed. Emergency procedures are reviewed regularly. Staff conduct monthly fire drills as well as other emergency drills to help individuals feel better prepared in case of a real emergency. Staff will respond and take appropriate action in the case of an emergency or disaster.

Smoking

There is no smoking or vaping permitted in any part of SASHA buildings. Smoking may be done in designated areas outside. It is important to clean up your own cigarette butts and garbage to keep the grounds in good shape and reduce risk of fire. SASHA supports smoking cessation and will assist you in finding a program that works for you. You are not permitted to borrow/lend cigarettes as it causes many issues between participants. Smoking or vaping of cannabis is not permitted on any SASHA property.

Alcohol and Drugs

You may not use any drugs or alcohol on any SASHA property. If you have any alcohol, cannabis, or illegal drugs while at SASHA it will be confiscated and breaking this rule may be grounds for immediate discharge without a refund of service fees.

Behaviour

Please do your best to act in a respectful manner to staff, clients, and visitors and not to put yourself or others at risk. A good rule to follow is to treat others how you want to be treated. Any disruptive or aggressive behaviour toward yourself or others will not be tolerated and may be grounds for immediate discharge without refund of service fees.

If you are having feelings to harm yourself or others, you are strongly encouraged to speak to the staff. Staff will provide supports and resources that may be beneficial to your situation. The safety of all participants is one of SASHA's top priorities.

Bed Bugs

Your belongings will be searched for bed bugs upon intake. Staff conduct regular bed bugs checks and can provide you with bed bug education if you are unfamiliar. Please report any suspected bed bugs to staff right away.

Concerns Resolution

You have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Should you have a concern or complaint with respect to the services provided, speak with the Program Supervisor. If you feel that this fails to address the concern, speak with the Program Director of SASHA. If that fails to address the concern, speak with the Executive Director. Should that fail to address your concern or complaint, any Board Member may be contacted. Housing First participants may appeal through the Housing First Specialist, by contacting the City of Lethbridge, if they are not satisfied with SASHA's response. Concerns will be addressed in a timely manner. A response will be communicated to the client within one week. Protection of Persons in Care information and reporting line 1-888-357-9339.

Leaving SASHA

Upon leaving the residential program at SASHA, you are responsible to clean your room, including stripping the bed, washing the bedding, cleaning the floors, and removing any garbage from the room. At that time your house key and dresser key are to be returned and you will be refunded your key deposit. You will need to change your mailing address before you leave and notify your treatment team as well as your pharmacy. Any items left in your room or in storage for longer than one month after you have left will be discarded.