

**Cottonwood, Inc.  
Policies and Procedures**

**SECTION:** Residential

**POLICY NO:** 30-020

**SUBJECT:** Staff Accountability to Maintain Safe,  
Healthy, and Private Environments

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 1987

**Policy:**

It is the policy of Cottonwood, Inc. to promote a safe and healthy environment for all consumers while recognizing an individual right to experience natural consequences. Staff will provide necessary assistance to consumers to maintain living environments that are clean and safe and to practice personal safety skills. Additionally, staff will support consumers in identifying and minimizing safety risks when using non-provider controlled, community-based settings.

**Procedures:**

1. Consumers will be encouraged to participate as fully as possible in the daily management of their home.
2. Staff will provide assistance as needed to ensure that the site is clean and safe.
3. Residential Coordinators will inspect 24-hour and daily living sites on a monthly basis. SIL sites are inspected regularly based on consumer consent, staff involvement, and landlord concerns.
4. If a consumer chooses to live in an unsafe or unhealthy environment or frequents unsafe community settings, the consumer's team will meet to conduct a risk assessment and consider options.
5. Staff failure to maintain a Cottonwood, Inc. owned or leased environment in a safe manner or to report an unsafe condition at these sites will result in supervisory follow-up or disciplinary action.
6. Staff failure to report unsafe conditions or to ameliorate unsafe conditions as possible in non-Cottonwood, Inc. owned or leased sites will result in supervisory follow-up or disciplinary action.
7. Staff will review personal safety practices with consumers. Topics may include common sense security measures, appropriate times to call 911, preventing potential physical harm, protecting valuables, and review of emergency phone numbers. Reviews will be documented on the Emergency Drill Log.

8. First Aid supplies will be inventoried monthly to check for missing or expired supplies. Replacement items will be requested by completing the Standing Orders/Supplies request form or a PO Request form as necessary.
9. Staff will respect and preserve the right to privacy of persons served.
  - a. Staff will knock on closed bedroom doors and wait for permission from the occupant prior to entering the room except in cases of suspected emergencies. Persons served may lock their bedroom doors unless this poses a safety risk. This must be documented in the individual's support plan.
  - b. Staff will ensure that privacy is maintained while providing personal care. Persons served may lock the bathroom door if desired.
  - c. Staff will suggest a private space away from housemates and visitors should an individual want privacy while using the telephone, internet, or other personal communication device.