



EXCHANGE POLICIES

Services may begin once the enrollment process is complete. The enrollment process is not complete until both parties have completed their intakes, provided all documentation and paid their intake fees. The intake paperwork remains on file and active for six months. After six months, if services have not yet begun, the intake process would have to begin again to start services. This includes completing the intake interview, providing any updated documentation

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. An intake interview with each parent must take place before the initial exchange. Each parent is responsible for his/her intake fee regardless of who is ordered to pay for the exchange.
2. Any change of address or phone number, home or office, must be reported immediately.
3. It is the responsibility of the clients to keep the Center informed of court dates and modifications made to the exchange schedule made by mutual agreement or by the Court. Clients are required to provide the Center with copies of their orders.
4. Parents must accompany the child(ren) inside the facility and are required to sign-in as well as sign-out upon arrival and departure. *You must sign in the **actual time** you are picking up or dropping off* at the Center, not the time the exchange was scheduled.
5. If you wish to have concerns, events or comments documented for your file, you may put these in writing and we will make sure it goes in your file. Staff will not document anything they did not witness firsthand.
6. Parents should call if they are going to be late. Failure to call can result in the cancellation of a scheduled exchange.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS

1. No child will be released to a parent who appears to be under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or appears to be experiencing emotional problems.
2. Clients will not discuss issues of divorce, separation, or litigation with their child(ren) or the Center's staff during an exchange with children present.
3. No abusive language will be tolerated on the premises. Do not argue with staff. If you have a concern, address it before the next exchange with office staff Monday-Friday between 9:00 and 5:00.
4. You may not interrogate your child about bruises, bumps, scratches, etc.

5. No weapons of any kind are allowed on the Center's premises.
6. **The Center's staff will not pass verbal communication between parties, therefore all communications with your co-parent need to be in writing, on a Parent Form. Contents should be in regard to the child(ren)'s needs. *If the contents are harassing in nature, personal, or regarding child support, staff will not pass along the written communication, but it will be made part of the record.* All notes need to be written before coming to the Center. Parents are responsible for their own copy. A charge of \$1 per copy will be assessed for any copies that are requested.**

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

1. Unless there is a protective order, the party delivering the child will deliver the child(ren) 15 minutes prior to the designated hour of visit and pick up the child(ren) 15 minutes after the designated hour of return.
2. Unless there is a protective order, the party picking up the child will arrive precisely at the designated hour of visit and return the children precisely at the designated time of drop off.
3. You must accompany your child(ren) inside Guardian House.
4. **If you are late and we do not received a call at your scheduled time , exchange will be cancel an a \$65.00 cancellation fee will be add to your account. Parents who are running late will be charge an additional fee of \$10.00 for every 15 minutes.**
5. A **\$10.00** Fee will be added for all exchanges that are not scheduled in advance with our staff.
6. Clients are not to drop off their child(ren) early for an exchange. You will be asked to stay with the child until the scheduled drop off time. In addition, you may be subject to an additional charge.
7. Special/different arrangements may be made for infants (children under 18 months of age) or special needs children.
8. **Clients are required to leave the Center's premises and surrounding area promptly after pick up and drop off times. You may not be in the vicinity (i.e. parked on the street, waiting outside) or on the premises of the Guardian House prior to or following your scheduled time of service.**
9. The party dropping off the child must remain accessible by phone for thirty minutes after the drop off time in the event of cancellation by the co-parent.

SCHEDULING/CANCELLING AN EXCHANGE

1. Exchange schedules should be discussed with a Case Coordinator at the Center, and need to be arranged during the week. Exchanges will not be scheduled during the weekend. Clients are not to arrange exchanges with the exchange staff or weekend staff.

A) REQUESTING PARENT: It is the responsibility of the parent getting the child for a visit to contact Center staff to request an exchange.

- WEEKDAY REQUEST: If the exchange is anytime Monday through Thursday, the requesting parent must call at least two (2) business days in advance to request an exchange.
- WEEKEND REQUEST: If the exchange is anytime Friday through Sunday, the requesting parent must call the Center no later than **Wednesday by 6:00 PM** if they wish to have an exchange that weekend.

B) CUSTODIAL(DROPPING OFF): Staff will begin attempting to contact the custodial party to confirm the exchange once a request has been received by the requesting parent.

- WEEKDAY REQUEST: If the exchange is during week, the Custodial party must confirm at least 48 hours before the requested exchange.
- WEEKEND REQUEST: If the exchange is on the weekend (including Friday), the custodial party must confirm the exchange no later than **Thursday by 5pm**.

2. Cancellations must be made at least 48 hours in advance. **Failure to call and cancel within 48 hours** may result in the responsible party being charged a **fee of \$65.00** unless an emergency situation can be documented by a physician or hospital.

3. If the exchanging parties decide to conduct the exchange at another location, the Center will not coordinate that exchange.

4. Exchanges may be cancelled by the Center if either parent has not called or arrived within fifteen minutes of the scheduled time. The responsible party may be subject to additional fees unless an emergency situation can be documented.

5. A doctor's statement may be requested when a child is sick and unable to have visitation with the co-parent.

SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION OF SERVICES

1. Regardless of what is stated in a court order, the Guardian House has the right to suspend and/or terminate client services for any of the following reasons listed below:
 - a. A consistent pattern of late or early arrival by either parent which violates the other parent's right to visitation or forces parent-to-parent contact.
 - b. Hostile, belligerent, or abusive behavior, use of foul language, or threatening behavior toward any staff member, the other parent, the child(ren) or other clients.

- c. Any parent breaking one of more rules set out by the Center, or otherwise threatening the stability of the environment and safety of the staff and clients.
- d. Failure to pay for services rendered.
- e. The case is placing undue demands on the Center's resources (to be determined by Executive Director).
- f. The involved parties agree that they can manage visits/exchanges without assistance, providing that this does not violate their court order.
- g. Parents who have been suspended may be reinstated after the terms of their suspension have been met (case specific). Failure to meet the terms of suspension may result in termination.
- h. If it becomes necessary to suspend and/or terminate a client, Guardian House will notify that client and the client's attorney. The other party is notified of the suspension/termination, however because of confidentiality, we may not provide the other party with specific details of the situation.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Center's staff are impartial to both parents and do not favor either parent.
2. **The Center will summon law enforcement when a client becomes verbally or physically abusive or threatens an employee or other individuals present. In addition, the client's attorney and the court will be properly notified of the client's behavior. Services will be suspended or terminated. In order to be reinstated after suspension, clients must complete another intake meeting to go over policies and will be required to pay another intake fee.**
3. The Center will take any stated or implied statement regarding "child snatching" or physical threats seriously. **All incidents will be documented**, and the appropriate officials notified.
4. The Center staff will not administer medication to a child. All medications related to a child are to be given directly to the Center's staff at the time of arrival. Explicit directions for medication must be written by the client and these directions will be given to the co-parent. The co-parent is responsible for administering the medication.
5. The Center is not responsible for valuable items brought on the premises.
6. The Center is not an investigative service and does not physically inspect children. Only obvious injuries or child-initiated reports are noted and/or investigated.
7. The Center cannot limit whom a parent may designate to pick up children unless that individual is inappropriate, abusive, or specifically prohibited by the court order.

8. The Center will not be utilized as a site to exchange pets or other items. Pets are not allowed on the premises.

RELEASE OF RECORDS

1. **Client files may not be released to clients.** Copies of Records will only be released to an attorney after the Center receives a subpoena and payment for copies.
2. Records will be released to a therapist, or other professional, if appropriate Release of Information forms are signed and the fees for copying have been received.
3. The Center requires three (3) days notice to prepare copies of records from client files. **There is a \$25 administrative fee for copies in addition to 25 cents per page.**

FINANCIAL POLICIES

1. All accounts for exchanges must be kept current. You may pay for each exchange as it occurs, or pay for a number of exchanges in advance. Failure to pay the bill in a timely manner may result in a late charge.
2. **A separate fee will be assessed for any extra services provided, such as Pre- or Post-Visit Interviews. Pre-and Post-Interviews cost \$5.**
3. **A fee of \$25 will be charged for checks returned for any reason.** Should a check be returned for insufficient funds, the original amount and the returned check fee must be paid by money order. All future payments should then be made by money order.
4. Upon subpoena, the Custodian of Records at the Center will testify or make depositions regarding observations made during exchanges. **A fee of \$50 per hour, minimum of four hours, will be charged to the parent serving the subpoena. This will be discussed further as needed. Payment must be made two days prior to the appearance of the Custodian of Records.**

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. This is a service related organization. As such, we reserve the right to refuse service to those who do not abide by our policies. Any alterations or additions to the policies will be provided promptly. Failure to comply with the stated policies and/or contract will constitute termination of services. If Guardian House finds it necessary to suspend or terminate services to a client, all attorneys involved as well as the clients will be notified of the decision and reason for which it was made.
2. This Agreement may be terminated by any party by giving notice in writing to the other parties; however, such a termination by a conservator may be contrary to a Court Order and legal advice should be sought prior to such action.
3. Visitation times are specific, and the conservators agree that they will be prompt in their observance. No person other than those named shall attempt to take possession of any child(ren) on behalf of any conservator, unless authorized by the conservator in writing

prior to the exchange. **Should the person required to deliver or retrieve the child(ren) to/from the Center fail to do so within one-half hour after the agreed hour set forth, that person shall be subject to a fine of up to \$50 to the Center.**

4. Should the conservator required to take possession fail to do so within three (3) hours, Guardian House shall, at its option, notify the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services and/or deliver the child(ren) to a children's shelter within Bexar County.
5. Conservators agree to release, hold harmless and indemnify the Guardian House for any claims arising from the performance of this Agreement. Should performance of the Center be interrupted by any occurrence which is beyond the control of the Center, the Center shall be excused from performance of its obligations and undertakings so long as such condition continues in existence.

Your intake fee is _____.

Your fee for exchanges is _____ per exchange.

None of the interactions, conversation, or activities at the Guardian House are confidential. You will be given a copy of these policies at intake to maintain for your records. You will be charged applicable copying fees for any additional copies. It is recommended and your responsibility that you provide a copy of these policies to your attorney.

By signing below, I am indicating that I have read, understand, and will comply with the policies of the Guardian House.

Printed Name

Parent Signature

Date

Staff Signature

Date