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# OPERATIONAL POLICIES & GUIDELINES SECTION III

June 2015

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# SECTION III

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## General Guidelines of Operations

### Whispers Hours of Operation

- Thrift Store Hours – Open Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. & Saturday 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Community Kitchen – Open Monday to Friday – 9 a.m. – noon
- During the months of Nov 1 – Mar 31<sup>st</sup> (during the months that BETHS is open), the community kitchen will be open at 8:00 a.m. for coffee and continental breakfast.

### Thrift Store Operations

Whispers of Hope thrift store, fosters volunteer involvement while also supporting those in the community with greater accessibility to clothing and household goods at affordable prices. The thrift store provides an avenue for those less fortunate or who may be disadvantaged to purchase goods that they otherwise might not be able to afford elsewhere. Whispers endeavors to make efforts to empower people by creating a culture of giving. Whispers would never turn anyone away who might be in great need of food or clothing.

Donations brought into the store are sorted, cleaned, organized and labeled by highly dedicated volunteers before being hung on the racks and displayed on shelves. Items are priced low and made affordable for individuals and families who might not otherwise be able to afford to purchase household wares and clothing. Whispers offers a culture of ‘give us a donation when you can’ for those who may be downtrodden—giving them a sense of acceptance through empowerment and dignity while respecting where that person may be at in their life at the moment.

Profits made from the thrift store go towards providing healthy and balanced meals for the homeless and disadvantaged in the community. This being said, the following polices are to be used as guidelines to ensure smooth running of its operations. In order for the organization to be able to operate its day-to-day business effectively, it is expected that staff and volunteers adhere to the guidelines set out.

- a. Exceptional customer service is expected at all times. This is the most important responsibility given to ALL staff and volunteers: Greet the customer when they come in the door. Smile and let them know through your greeting that you are available to assist if needed by being professional and courteous.
- b. Cash Floats – Cash floats are provided at the beginning of the shift to the staff/volunteer working the cash register, and it is their responsibility to count the cash before using it. Monies shall be reconciled at the end of the day with the receipts from the till. For the safety of staff and volunteers, two people shall be present when cashing out.
- c. Theft – Any person caught stealing shall be subject to disciplinary action or immediate dismissal for just cause. (See Personnel Policies)
- d. Volunteers may be requested to help out in the kitchen when required.

- e. Staff and volunteers are required to keep the store tidy and organized and free from clutter. When not busy, take the time to straighten things out, organize displays, dust and clean. Take time to look beyond the surface, and take responsibility to share in the workload.
- f. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to use discretion while eating and drinking while working.

## **Kitchen Operations**

Preparation of the meals is provided by employees and volunteers. Only those working in the kitchen may be allowed in the kitchen while preparations and handling of food is being prepared. All others who are not involved in the cooking, preparing or cleaning shall not be allowed access. To do so, violates Foodsafe practices and Interior Health regulations.

- a. Consumption of Food - Staff and Volunteers are welcome to a meal while working during their shift. Pastries and treats must be consumed on-site and not taken home.
- b. Any leftover food from the day may be distributed as approved. (Guests, volunteers, staff etc.)

FOOD-HANDLING POLICY – See Guidelines attached

Check all freezers and refrigerators

- Temperature – check and record temperatures of the freezer and refrigerator according to the Interior Health regulations (safe zone)
- Cleaning of the refrigerator to be done on a monthly basis and rotate with cleaning of the freezer on a bi-monthly basis or as needed

## **1.0 THRIFT STORE POLICY**

Whispers shall have in place a Thrift Store Committee to review donations to deem appropriateness.

### **1.1 Thrift Shop Acceptance & Distribution Policy**

Donated items shall only be accepted and distributed if they meet the criteria outlined in the following guidelines.

Scope of Responsibility

This policy intends to reach a broad audience of volunteers and staff and is in place to ensure that no one individual can make the decision to accept or not accept donations based on their own personal religious or ethnic biases or personal beliefs. Whispers is an all-inclusive organization with the potential to cast it's net far and wide to all people regardless of their ethnicity or religious beliefs.

Any item that comes into question shall be determined suitable or not suitable by a committee so as to eliminate any biases.

#### **General Information**

- Clothing will only stay in the building for no more than three months. It will be tagged at the beginning of the month AT FULL PRICE and be hung for one month, then go to half price for two

weeks, and \$.50 for two weeks, and then if not sold by the end of the month, the items will either be stored until the next season, or shipped out and donated elsewhere or disposed of.

- Whispers will accept men's, women's and children's clothing, footwear, books, magazines, movies, games, household goods and small appliances.
- Items can include baby & toddler wear; children's clothing, men's and women's clothing including but not limited to: pants, shirts, socks, underwear, bras, mini-skirts, leggings, dresses, bathing suits, shorts, and seasonal clothing and outerwear.

### ***Acceptable***

This policy includes all items including clothing, books, magazines, movies, games, decorations and household items.

- Items that display religious or cultural beliefs may be accepted, without discrimination
- Holiday & seasonal themes such as Christmas, Valentine's Day, Halloween, St. Patrick's Day, Easter etc.

### ***Not Acceptable***

This policy includes all items including clothing, books, magazines, movies, games, decorations and household items.

- Items will not be accepted that display or depict illegal activity (i.e. Drugs, pornography etc.)
- Items that displays or depicts witchcraft or a cult will not be accepted
- Items that display obscene, offensive or rude language or pictures

### ***PROCEDURES***

- The Thrift Store Committee shall determine appropriateness if items become scrutinized as questionable.

## **2.0 CENTRE POLICIES**

Staff and Volunteers are expected to abide by the policies of the organization and carry out the duties as outlined.

### **2.1 Dog Policy –**

- a. Dogs are not permitted in the kitchen or dining area at any time. Dogs are to be secured outside the building at least 3 meters away from entryways. (Leashed to the fence or kenneled if available.)
- b. Dog owners are responsible for picking up after their pets. Failure to do so may result in being barred from the premises.

**2.2 Keys –** All keys will be kept and administered by the Centre Coordinator. Keys shall be tracked and logged, and anyone who is the holder of a key is required to sign-off. Keys shall be returned when the staff / volunteer is no longer in need of the key.

**2.3 Cell phone usage –** Cell phones may only be used during work time for emergency calls only. Regular cell phone use for texting or making calls is prohibited and other personal calls are to be done during break periods. Playing games on cell phones is strictly prohibited while working. This policy pertains to both paid and unpaid staff.

**2.4 Schedules** – Staff and volunteers are required to start and finish their shift according to the time they are scheduled. There may be times when it is slow that an individual will be given the option to leave early.

**2.5 Smoking** – Smoking is prohibited inside the building at all times. Smoking is only allowed in designated areas outside the building and at least 3 meters away from any entry/exit doorway of Whispers.

**2.6 Counselling** – Providing support and offering a listening ear is good, however, at no time shall extensive support or lay counselling be allowed by any staff member or volunteer. Special qualifications and licensing is required before professional counselling can be enacted. Referrals may be made and/or other resources may be available to guests requiring support.

**2.7 Conducting Personal Business** – Staff and Volunteers are requested to conduct all personal business on their own time.

**2.8. Booking Rooms** – Not available at this time.

**2.9 Equipment Usage** – Only staff / volunteers who have been given permission to use society equipment may have access. (i.e. Photocopier, telephone, facsimile, cash register, kitchen equipment etc.)

**2.10 Media** – Designated individuals only shall be the spokespersons of the organization. At no time shall any staff member or volunteer be allowed to speak to the media unless prior approval has been granted. The Chair of the board and/or the Centre Coordinator and/or designate are responsible for media relations.

**2.11 Meal Breaks** – Staff and volunteers shall be given a half hour break when working a 5-hour shift and coffee breaks may be provided as determined.

**2.12 Conduct** – All staff and volunteers are required to behave appropriately and professionally at all times. Misuse of language (swearing & profanity) is not appropriate and will not be tolerated. (See Personnel Policy)

**2.13 Dress code, hygiene and personal appearance** - All employees and volunteers of Whispers shall be required to dress appropriately and have a clean personal appearance in the work environment. (See Personnel Policy)

**2.14 Discrimination, harassment or bullying** will not be tolerated at any time and may be cause for disciplinary action or dismissal. (See Personnel Policy)

**2.15 Taking product / clothing** – It is common practice for staff and volunteers to see items that they would like to take home. This can become a problem if the volunteer or staff member thinks they can just take it—which could be considered ‘theft’. To reduce the chances of this happening and to alleviate the concern all together, Whispers will provide a 30% discount off full price items to its staff and volunteers.