

NASHUA CHILDREN'S HOME EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

2026-2027 Program Handbook



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Table of Contents

Contents

MISSION STATEMENT	4
THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	4
CONFIDENTIALITY	4
ADMISSIONS.....	5
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ADMISSION.....	5
CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION	5
PREPLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS	5
CRITERIA FOR DISCHARGE.....	5
TUITION REIMBURSEMENT	6
ACCESSIBILITY TO EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL	6
ATTENDANCE	6
ABSENCE.....	6
EARLY DISMISSAL	7
DOCUMENTATION	7
BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT PLAN AND POLICY	7
INTRODUCTION:.....	7
OVERALL GOALS:.....	7
UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOR & EMOTIONAL SUPPORT:.....	8
SAFEGUARDS RELATED TO BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION:	11
SAFEGUARDS AGAINST INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS:	13
BULLYING AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT	16
CELL PHONES/ ELECTRONIC DEVICES.....	16
CHILD ABUSE	17
COMMUNICATION	17
DRESS CODE	18
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN & FIRE DRILLS	18
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN	18
FIRE DRILLS.....	18
GRIEVANCE POLICY	19

TEACHER MISCONDUCT	19
GENERAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE.....	19
BULLYING COMPLAINTS:.....	20
TEACHER MISCONDUCT:	20
TUITION REFUND COMPLAINTS:.....	20
COMPLAINTS REGARDING USE OF CHILD RESTRAINT (RSA 126-U)	21
ANTI-RETALIATION	21
HEALTH & MEDICAL CARE.....	21
HOMEWORK.....	22
LUNCH	22
MARKING SYSTEM.....	23
PHOTOGRAPHY AND AUDIO- OR AUDIO-VISUAL RECORDING	23
RECESS.....	24
RECORDS	24
SCHOOL SCHEDULE	26
TRANSPORTATION	26
WEATHER: DELAY/ CANCELLATION	27
VISITOR CODE OF CONDUCT	27
DISRUPTIVE VISITORS.....	27
RESTRICTED ACCESS TO SCHOOL GROUNDS BY CONVICTED OR REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS	28
APPENDIX.....	31

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MISSION STATEMENT

Nashua Children's Home is committed to providing care and stability to boys and girls who are unable to remain with their families, special education services for students who have not been successful in public school settings, and supportive housing for youth who have "aged-out" of care.

THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The Educational Program provides services to students with educational disabilities in grades 1st through 8th. Three self-contained classrooms, each with up to eight students, are supervised by a certified special education teacher and an aide, offering a favorable teacher-to-pupil ratio and close interaction.

The Educational Program is designed for students who cannot be appropriately educated in less intensive programs within the public schools. These students need services that go beyond academic instruction and include counseling and structured social and recreational activities during the school day. Under staff supervision, each group of children engages in activities inside and outside the classroom to learn the social, behavioral, and academic skills necessary for their reintegration into the public school system.

As in all NCH programs, families are partners with us. Reintroducing a child to public school, where the family will be the primary source of support, will be successful only with such a partnership.

The Educational Program is certified by the New Hampshire State Department of Education. Further information and/or inquiries for placement of a student should be addressed to the Educational Director.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Nashua Children's Home adheres to the Confidentiality of Information regulations set forth in the NH Rules, the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 20 U.S.C. 1232G, (FERPA) and its implementing regulations in 34 CFR Part 99 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004; 34 CFR 300.610-627).

ADMISSIONS

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ADMISSION

Referrals to the Educational Program may be made only by school districts within commutable distance of Nashua, except in those cases involving a youngster in the Residential Program. Grade levels admitted are first through eighth grade; applicants, with rare exception, must carry a special education identification. It is assumed that all other in-district options have proven inadequate before referral. Students in grades 1st through 8th are eligible for admission to the Educational Program of Nashua Children's Home.

CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION

For admission to the Educational Program of Nashua Children's Home, identified students must carry a primary special education identification of either Emotional Disturbance (ED), Specific Learning Disability (SLD), Other Health Impaired (OHI) or Developmentally Delayed (DD). Students can also be enrolled who do not carry a special education identification.

PREPLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Documents necessary for admission consideration include: Individual Educational Plan (IEP), psychological evaluations, academic and achievement evaluations, intelligence testing, and behavioral records, along with abstracts of the cumulative file and anecdotal records from teachers, and a completed program application. Records/reports confirming immunization status are also required, as students will not be considered for placement without documentation of immunization compliance.

CRITERIA FOR DISCHARGE

If Nashua Children's Home believes it can no longer implement a child's IEP or provide FAPE, Nashua Children's Home will immediately convene or request the convening of the IEP team to review the program's concerns and to amend the IEP and placement, if necessary.

Review the child's current placement; and an IEP meeting convened under Ed 1114.12 shall:

- Review the child's needs;
- Determine whether the current IEP meets the needs of the child and, if appropriate, propose changes to the IEP;
- Determine whether the placement can fully implement the child's IEP and provide FAPE.

However, NCH reserves the right to discharge a student at any time, without prior notice, if; NCH determines it can no longer implement the IEP of the student; NCH determines that it cannot meet certain academic, behavioral, emotional, or mental health needs of the Student; NCH determines that continued placement is detrimental to the health, safety, or stability of its students, staff, or programs.

Nashua Children's Home endeavors to not suspend students and exercises its discharge policies, heretofore referenced.

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

For those students who are discharged from the program, tuition shall be prorated through the student's last date of attendance. The sending district shall be reimbursed for any prepaid tuition covering instructional days beyond the effective withdrawal date. Reimbursement shall be calculated on a per diem basis, unless otherwise specified in a placement agreement.

ACCESSIBILITY TO EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

Educational materials, in addition to those generally provided by Nashua Children's Home, may be requested. Nashua Children's Home, in its sovereign authority, will determine its capacity to provide the requested materials, considering factors of cost, availability and accessibility.

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to grow and develop the skills and knowledge necessary for success. While there are legitimate reasons for being absent from school, repeated absences places students at a disadvantage. NCH encourages parents and guardians to ensure that their child is in school and on-time for each school day.

ABSENCE

If a student is to be absent, a parent/ guardian must contact the school via phone or email on the morning of (or night before) to report the absence.

Parents/guardians are expected to notify the school regarding all student absences and provide appropriate documentation explaining the reason for the absence. Short-term absences may generally be excused with a parent/guardian note, email, or phone call. However, absences of three (3) or more consecutive school days due to illness require documentation from a licensed medical provider verifying the reason for the absence and confirming that the student may return to school. The school reserves the right to request additional documentation in cases

involving frequent, excessive, or patterned absences in order to support student attendance and academic progress.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Parents who wish to pick up their child from school prior to the regular dismissal time should notify the school in writing (via assignment book or email) at least one day before the dismissal. Parents must understand that every endeavor will be made to have their child ready at the designated dismissal time, but circumstances may lead to the process taking longer than expected. Thus, the school advises parents to ensure they have scheduled sufficient time for pick up if they are going to an appointment.

Parents picking up their child early should park in the lot and report to the front office.

DOCUMENTATION

All absences, tardiness or early dismissals must be excused, in writing, by the parent/ guardian of the child involved.

BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT PLAN AND POLICY

INTRODUCTION:

Nashua Children's Home (NCH) strives to create learning environments for the children we serve and to support the development of skills that build and strengthen resiliency and well-being. Establishing quality relationships between staff and the children we serve provides the foundation for a safe and nurturing environment. Working with children in residential and special education settings is both rewarding and challenging. Children in special education and residential care often encounter a range of difficulties and adversity in their lives that can present a challenge in terms of harmful and/or dangerous behaviors. In such circumstances, NCH has a duty of care to respond to prevent serious harm from occurring. NCH is mindful of creating an environment that cultivates:

- Engagement.
- Partnership.
- Holistic approaches.
- Nurturance.
- Respect.
- Hope.
- Self-direction.

OVERALL GOALS:

Behavioral and emotional support at NCH is designed to maximize the growth and development of children with the context of their individual treatment plans and/or IEPs. The ultimate objective of NCH is to help children successfully return to a home and successfully access and participate in the learning process as soon as possible. Prior to arriving at NCH, many children have learned ineffective, inappropriate, and sometimes disruptive methods of dealing with their difficulties. These types of behaviors are counter-productive in daily living and academic situations where the ability to focus energy and form positive relationships is so important. Therefore, consistent support is as necessary as counseling, recreation and remedial instruction.

UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOR & EMOTIONAL SUPPORT:

The behavioral and emotional support system in place at NCH is more extensive than that of most traditional home settings and public schools. This results from the fact that many children at NCH lack sufficient internal control over their own impulses and behavior. Therefore, NCH provides the external control necessary to insure the child's living and learning situations are conducive to individual growth.

Consistent use of external controls is expected to lead children to develop their own internal controls. For external support to be successful, it must always be justified in terms of objective criteria and must be fair, consistent, and in the best interest of the child. Administering external supports should be done firmly but kindly, demonstrating to the child that they are a human worthy of respect. Effective behavioral and emotional support protects children from their own impulses and from dangers in the environment, ensures stability and security for the group, teaches a spirit of justice and fair play, and expresses adult concern for the child's welfare and future. Behavioral and emotional support should be neither too permissive nor too rigid. If children are to learn to internalize their own controls, they must have the means of determining their own behavior. The staff should not be so controlling that children are prevented from making mistakes and learning from them. Appropriate expectations should be set, neither too low nor too high for particular children's capabilities.

Even with support there are times when children served in the educational program may demonstrate signs of negative emotions including fear, anger, frustration, or pain that could lead to unsafe behaviors. All NCH staff working directly with the children are trained to recognize and respond to these behaviors through various interventions, such as changes to the physical environment, sensory-based calming strategies, engagement in meaningful activities, redirection, active listening, and approaches that have been effective for the individual in the past.

The behavioral and emotional support measures that are described throughout these plan/policies/procedures are designed to reduce children's negative behavior and work towards the development of positive behavior and coping mechanisms. Positive behavior is encouraged at NCH through rewards, modeling, and direction. Praise for making progress in mastering one's problematic behavior and experimenting with more appropriate action and reaction

requires staff to be alert. Children often imitate and identify with adults whom they respect. Therefore, the behavior of staff offers children a model for their own behavior.

- Behavioral and Emotional Support Approaches:

First and foremost, the safety and well-being of the children we serve is our priority. Children attending NCH's Educational Program may be admitted into the program with a previous Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) or other pertinent behavioral information on their IEP. Utilization of this information will help guide different approaches used with individual children. The following approaches are used at NCH with careful consideration for each individual child:

1. *Safety Plans.* Within the Residential Program, safety plans are generated with the children at the time of their admission. Safety plans are completed by the children under the guidance of their CFT. Once completed the safety plan accompanies the child to their respective unit to help offer guidance to the staff in recognizing triggers and responding appropriately. Safety plans are updated quarterly.

2. *Trauma-Informed Approach:* NCH recognizes the importance of understanding the physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma on the children we serve. The Trauma-Informed practices utilized by NCH seeks to:

- ✓ Realize the widespread impact of trauma and understand paths for recovery;
- ✓ Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma in children and families;
- ✓ Integrate knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices; and
- ✓ Actively avoid re-traumatization

Staff are trained in Trauma-Informed approaches including but not limited to the ARC Framework (Attachment, Regulation and Competency, *Kinniburgh & Blaustein, Training Center at JRI*); Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (Crisis Prevention Intervention, *Crisis Prevention Institution, Inc.*); and Ukeru Systems (*Grafton Integrated Health Network*).

3. *Sensory Regulation:* Sensory regulation strategies help with regulation and support co-regulation. The longer-term goal would be that the child could self-regulate using the strategy. Sensory regulation strategies utilized by NCH includes but are not limited to a fully interactive sensory room located at our main building, fidgets, weighted blankets and/or toys, brushes, and sand trays.

4. *Child and Family Therapists:* At admission into the Educational Program, a CFT is assigned to the child and their family (if applicable). The child's CFT will meet with the child at least one time per week. More meeting times are determined on an individual need basis and are child-centered insofar as the CFT being responsive to the child requesting more frequent meeting times.

5. *Adjunctive Activities*: Adjunctive activities are supplemental and enhance programming for children at NCH. Adjunctive activities can be goal-oriented however are not required to be. Adjunctive activities utilized by NCH include but are not limited to summer camp; music therapy, art therapy, gardening, running club, and participation in organized sports.

6. *Behavioral Interventions*: Behavioral interventions are designed to reduce children's negative behavior and/or when a child is struggling to regulate themselves. NCH ensures the implementation of individualized, caring, and compassionate interventions.

- Behavioral Intervention Approaches:

All staff involved in the direct administration of behavioral intervention approaches receive competency-based training by qualified instructors upon hire, quarterly and annually. The training addresses circumstances under which a behavioral intervention is indicated, interventions to be used, individual interventions, team interventions, signs of physical distress of the child, physical risks, psychological risks, and debriefing. Staff will not participate in physical intervention until receiving appropriate training. Behavioral interventions include:

A. **SUPPORTIVE APPROACHES** (used to convey to the child that staff realizes that something is amiss, offers to help, offers support and calms the anxiety of the rational child).

B. **DIRECTIVE APPROACHES** (used when children are challenging staff directive, irrational, defensive...limits conveyed offer the irrational child clear choices).

- *Verbal redirection*. Used when the child is initially being disruptive, not following directions, etc.
- *Time-out*. Used when the child continues to be disruptive, continues to not follow directions, or who exhibit certain behaviors such as swearing, threatening, etc. Provides neutral, calming atmosphere for children who are over-stimulated.
- *ARC/UKERU*
-ARC (Attachment/Regulation/Competency) and Ukeru Systems are trauma-informed approaches to behavior, emphasizing safety and well-being. Ukeru Systems also employs blocking systems in response to children's physicality toward staff that is hands-off and thus restraint-free.

C. **PHYSICAL INTERVENTION** (offers physical safety and security for the acting-out child).

- **Handle with Care (HWC)**. HWC's holding methods are engineered to be definitive, safe and secure.

1. Employs physical escort, which is used to move children to a neutral area when they have been unable to move themselves,

and whose continued presence within the group compromises the safety of the group.

2. Employs methods of physical intervention, which are used to manage children who are hurting themselves, hurting others, or damaging property.

3. Employs holding techniques for smaller children and holding techniques for larger children.

- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (CPI)

1. Staff learn to recognize the stages of escalating crisis and utilize verbal intervention techniques to appropriately de-escalate a child.

SAFEGUARDS RELATED TO BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION:

Note: All physical intervention procedures used at NCH are in compliance with applicable Federal and State law, including NH 126-U and Ed 1200

1. The Program Director or their designee must be notified as soon as possible after the beginning of any physical intervention. The Program Director or their designee will visually assess the intervention as soon as possible to ensure the safety of the child. If unable to go to the scene in a timely manner, the Program Director or designee will assign the task of reviewing the matter to a staff member not directly involved in the intervention. If the Program Director or their designee initiated the intervention, they shall assign the observation and review to another on-duty staff.

2. In the rare circumstance that the physical intervention is greater than 15 minutes in duration, the Program Director or designee will come to the scene of the intervention at 15-minute intervals for continued observation until the physical intervention has concluded.

3. After the intervention concludes, the Program Director or designee will visually and verbally check for injuries sustained by either the child or the staff. In the event of apparent or suspected injury, the Program Director or designee will arrange for the child or staff to be medically evaluated.

4. Every episode of physical intervention is documented. A Physical Intervention Report is completed, along with an Incident Report. The Physical Intervention Report, as defined by NH DOE, includes the child's name, date, time of episode, antecedent events, precipitating events, de-escalation interventions tried by staff, behavior that prompted the use of physical intervention, the intervention used, the duration of the intervention, post-debrief with the child (*

see Appendix), and supervisory observation including observation of injury. Notifications are made to parents, guardians, and other team members legally involved with the child within 24 hours of the episode and in writing within 5 days of the episode. The report is signed by the staff member involved in the intervention and reviewed by the Program Director.

D. UTILIZATION OF RESET ROOM AND PROCEDURES

When children experiencing behavioral difficulties disrupt the living/learning environment of the other children, it may be necessary to move them to a less stimulating environment. In consultation and with the approval of the Program Director or their designee, a child may require separation utilizing the Reset Room (RR). When possible, other areas may be utilized as well (administrator offices, Sensory Room, dining room, recreation room). Other times, children may be brought to the RR to afford the greatest, most secure supervision possible to prevent them from placing themselves or others at risk. For example, repeatedly absconding.

A child brought to the RR should be given a clear set of expectations with respect to what they need to do in order to return to the classroom. Often times, the expectation involves a child displaying “settled” behavior for a specific amount of time.

Staff who utilize the RR are responsible for filling out the RR Log noting the date, time, child, length of time in the RR, if the child requested to go to the RR and the staff supervising the child.

E. SECLUSION

NCH defines seclusion in duplicate of the State of New Hampshire Statutes 126-U:1 as:

“the involuntary placement of a child alone in a place where no other person is present and from which the particular child is unable to exit, either due to physical manipulation by a person, a lock, or other mechanical device or barrier. The term shall not include the voluntary separation of a child from a stressful environment for the purpose of allowing the child to regain self-control, such as when such separation is to an area which a child is able to leave. Seclusion does not include circumstances in which there is no physical barrier between the child and any other person, or the child is physically able to leave the place. A circumstance may be considered seclusion even if a window or other device for visual observation is present, if the other elements of this definition are satisfied.”

Nashua Children’s Home does not utilize seclusion.

SAFEGUARDS AGAINST INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS:

1. Physical punishment of any kind is never permitted under any circumstances. This injunction also applies to physically restraining a child in a way designed to induce discomfort or to force a child to engage in any physical exercise as a means of discipline.

1. Verbal abuse of a child (ex. taunts, sarcasm, mimicking, etc.) is never permitted, whether spoken in front of the child or in front of others. Corporal punishment and verbal abuse destroy the bond of trust that must exist between children and staff. For children who often have a history of being abused, such behavior only reaffirms their negative view of themselves and their negative expectations of the adult world.

3. Deprivation of food is never permitted. This includes regularly scheduled meals and snacks. A child may, however, be separated from the group at meal or snack time due to inappropriate or disruptive behavior. Children will never be forced to eat against their will or be held accountable for food that is served but not eaten.

4. Under no condition is a child ever placed in a locked room or restrained by a mechanical device.

NCH makes every effort to ensure that its Behavioral and Emotional Support Plan Policies and Procedures are thoroughly understood and implemented by its staff. All staff receive regular training and supervision on the approaches used at NCH. All staff have a duty of care and the expectation of professional judgement. The different approaches used cannot prescribe what staff are to do in every given situation. Staff often are in a position where they need to exercise judgment without the benefit of extensive time to support their decision-making. Professional judgment should always be exercised in the best interest of the child.

When negative behavior can be anticipated, proactively utilizing the Behavioral and Emotional Support Plan will help to improve both the child's behavior and the child/adult relationship.

BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES:

NCH COMMUNITY MEMBERS ALWAYS:

1. MAINTAIN ATTITUDE OF RESPECT AND DIGNITY.

- a. Politely greet, welcome, and acknowledge efforts of all others.
- b. Calmly request space if emotionally overwhelmed.
- c. Apologize for any possible offense on others, including accidents. *

2. USE LANGUAGE AND BODY RESPONSIBLY.

- a. Avoid offensive words, including those of a racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual nature.
- b. Refrain from using language or body to intimidate or injure.
- c. Calmly ask for explanation of any confusion, disagreement, conflict or concern.

3. PROACTIVELY COOPERATE.

- a. Seek opportunities to assist others, and avoid opportunities to embarrass or undermine.
- b. Gratefully acknowledge authority of leaders.
- c. Treat all members as teammates, regardless of personal feelings.

4. CAREFULLY ATTEND TO HEALTH AND SAFETY.

- a. Alert an adult to any physical pain or danger.
- b. Control body movement such that self or others are not injured.
- c. Wear activity-appropriate clothing.
- d. Keep body properly groomed (e.g., daily bathing, teeth brushing, etc.).
- e. Take good care of all furniture, equipment, facilities, and environment.

5. HONESTLY GIVE BEST EFFORT.

- a. Calmly communicate all perceived offenses.
- b. Earnestly participate in just resolution of dispute.
- c. Put education, wellness of self and others, and responsibility to community ahead of personal image and interests.

Apology

Apology is about caring for each other. It is about reminding each other that even though we did something wrong, we want to have good relationships. The closer we are, the more important it is for us to remind each other of that. If we live together, it is very important. Mistakes and wrongdoing are a natural part of being human. That makes apology something everyone must do.

To apologize, we need to do three things:

1. **Understand what we did wrong** - without believing it “was nothing” or it was “the worst thing in the world”
2. **Say “I am sorry”** - and really mean it!
3. **Make restitution** - which is how we attempt to “repay” whomever we hurt, and fix or replace whatever we damaged.

We can do the first two steps by ourselves, so we may find them easy. The third step is often very difficult, because it forces us to try to satisfy whomever we may have hurt. So, in a way, they have some control over us. This can make us feel afraid, sad or angry.

But it's hard to really apologize when we feel afraid or angry. Because, when we feel that way, we think of ourselves first, and try to protect ourselves, and don't focus enough on others. Even if we try to apologize, when we are feeling sorry for ourselves, we usually blame someone, or something else for what we did. But, if we blame anyone or anything else, even just a little, we are not really apologizing.

If when we do something wrong, we can be strong, and really think of others, and really apologize, we can feel good about ourselves and know that we are an irreplaceable part of our healthy positive community.

BULLYING AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Nashua Children's Home Educational Program is committed to providing students with an educational environment which promotes an atmosphere of mutual respect, in a setting that is safe, secure, and peaceful. Such an environment must be free of sexual harassment and bullying.

Sexual Harassment may include but is not limited to: sexual innuendo, verbal harassment; including epithets, derogatory comments or slurs; physical harassment, physical interference with movement of work, or visual harassment such as derogatory cartoons, drawings, posters, or graffiti.

Bullying for the purposes of this policy is defined as: insults, taunts, or challenges, whether verbal or physical in nature, which are likely to intimidate or provoke a violent or disorderly response.

Any student who believes (s)he has been the victim of sexual harassment or bullying shall immediately report the incident to the Educational Director, teacher, or therapist. Employees are required to immediately report any disclosure of a potential violation of this policy or any suspicion of a violation to the Educational Director.

The Nashua Children's Home will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual harassment or bullying, and take such action as is reasonable and prudent to address and resolve the issue.

CELL PHONES/ ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The school is committed to providing students with a learning environment that is free from distractions. Use of personal communication devices (cell phones, laptops, tablets, smartwatches, music/ gaming devices, etc.) for nonacademic means often leads to disruptions in the learning environment. Students are not permitted to use any electronic device to record audio or video or take pictures of any person without permission of the individual and school staff. Student use of personal electronic devices is strictly prohibited. If students bring devices to school, they must be stored by the classroom teacher until the end of the school day, unless other arrangements have been made with the Educational Director.

Violation of this policy will result in confiscation of the device, and will require parent/ guardian pick up of the device from the school office.

Permission for personal electronic device use by individual students for specific purposes on a case-by-case basis may be granted by the Educational Director.

CHILD ABUSE

In compliance with New Hampshire laws, it is the policy of the Nashua Children's Home that any employee having reason to suspect that a student is being or has been abused or neglected shall immediately report his/her suspicions to the appropriate state officials at the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Division for Children, Youth and Families. Per direction from NH DCYF, notification to parents or guardians will not be made prior to making abuse or neglect reports.

COMMUNICATION

NCH believes that strong communication between school and home is essential to student success. Our students are issued an "Assignment book" in which the classroom teacher will provide a brief comment regarding the student's daily performance. We ask that parents/guardians review and sign this book each day. Parents/guardians may also use this book as a means of relaying information to the school. The responsibility of getting the book signed and returning it to the teacher each day falls on the student. Our school is committed to keeping families informed and involved through regular newsletters, classroom updates, phone calls, and email. Teachers and staff are available to discuss student progress, answer questions, and address concerns. Families are encouraged to check backpacks daily, review school notices, and review the student assignment book in order to stay updated. Open, respectful communication helps us work together to support each child's learning and well-being. We encourage parents/guardians to contact the school at any time should they have any questions or concerns.

It is the policy of Nashua Children's Home to maintain regular communication with referring district LEAs, along with parents/guardians, in order to incorporate their input into service planning. It is also the policy of Nashua Children's Home to conduct discharge planning, the discharge decision as well as transitional processes, in conjunction with these parties as well as other involved agencies. Despite efforts of all parties to conduct a planned discharge, discharge may be unplanned or due to an emergency.

Planned discharges arise out of recommendations agreed to at IEP Team meetings. Nashua Children's Home may work with the referring district LEAs and parents/guardians to provide transitional services or supports.

A child may be removed from the Educational Program without prior notice by a parent or school district. In such instances, Nashua Children's Home will formulate recommendations for future planning to be forwarded to the referring district.

An unplanned discharge may arise if a child is endangering the physical health and safety of himself and/or others. Nashua Children's Home would work to ensure a smooth transition to the next educational placement and would meet with the referring district and parents toward this

end. NCH would attempt to maintain the child within the program until another placement can be identified.

DRESS CODE

NCH students are expected to dress appropriately for a learning environment. Clothing should be clean and in good repair. Clothing that distracts from the learning environment are not allowed, including, but not limited to; overly revealing clothing, including tanktops, or clothing that includes graphics/ language associated with vulgarity, depictions of violence, alcohol, and/ or drugs. NCH reserve the right to determine the acceptability of any particular article of student clothing. Closed toe shoes must be worn for physical education.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN & FIRE DRILLS

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

NCH is committed to maintaining a safe and secure learning environment for all students, staff, and visitors. To support this commitment, the NCH maintains a comprehensive Emergency Response Plan (ERP) that outlines procedures for responding to a variety of emergency situations.

The ERP is developed and maintained in accordance with guidance and best practices established by the New Hampshire Department of Safety and the New Hampshire Department of Education, as well as applicable federal laws and nationally recognized school safety frameworks. The Plan incorporates principles of coordinated emergency management and supports collaboration with local emergency responders when appropriate.

School personnel receive training on emergency procedures, and NCH conducts periodic drills to promote preparedness. NCH also reviews and updates its emergency procedures as necessary to remain consistent with current state guidance and safety best practices.

FIRE DRILLS

Periodic emergency drills are scheduled throughout the school year, including fire drills. Teachers and staff will provide direction to students during these drills. Fire drill evacuation routes are displayed in each room. Students are expected to report to and remain with their assigned teacher after leaving the building. Everyone must leave the building, report to their assigned area, and comply with the directions of the Building Commander.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

NCH is committed to helping children with a complaint successfully resolve the matter. NCH recognizes children's rights to air their complaints with all appropriate persons. Children are free to make a complaint without fear of retaliation. Parents, guardians, and other professionals may also address a complaint with the Educational Director and/or with the LEA/agency responsible for their placement.

TEACHER MISCONDUCT

Nashua Children's Home Educational Program, per NH Code of Administrative Rules, Ed 403.01, requires that all staff follow the NH Department of Education *Code of Conduct* and *Code of Ethics*. *Code of Conduct for NH Educators* (Ed 510) includes the following areas:

Principle 1- Responsibility to the Educational Profession and Education Professionals

Principle 2- Responsibility to Students

Principle 3- Responsibility to the School Community

Principle 4- Responsible and Ethical Use of Technology

All program staff are required to report possible incidents of misconduct. Students, parents, or legal guardians should report their concerns or incidents to the Educational Director. The Educational Director is available to answer questions and assist any individual who is unsure whether misconduct has occurred.

The Educational Director will discuss the report with the Executive Director, and appropriate action will be taken, including any reports to the NH Department of Education and Law Enforcement, if required, as mandated by Ed 511.01.

GENERAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Step 1 – Informal Resolution (Encouraged)

Whenever appropriate, concerns should first be discussed directly with the staff member involved. If the matter is not resolved informally, a formal complaint may be filed.

Step 2 – Formal Written Complaint

A written complaint should be submitted to the Educational Director and include:

- Name of the complainant;
- Description of the concern;
- Relevant dates;
- Names of individuals involved (if known); and
- Requested resolution.

The Educational Director will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 school days.

Step 3 – Investigation and Written Determination

The Educational Director will investigate the complaint, which may include interviews and review of documentation. A written determination will be issued within 10–15 school days, depending on the nature of the complaint.

Step 4 – Appeal

If dissatisfied with the determination, the complainant may submit a written appeal to the Executive Director within 5 school days. A final written decision will be issued within 10 school days.

BULLYING COMPLAINTS:

Complaints of bullying will be addressed consistent with applicable New Hampshire law.

Reporting:

Bullying may be reported verbally or in writing to any staff member or directly to the Educational Director. Staff receiving a report must forward it to the Educational Director by no later than the end of the school day.

Investigation:

An investigation will begin no later than 2 school days of receiving the complaint. Findings will be documented. Parents/guardians of involved students will be notified consistent with confidentiality laws.

Retaliation Prohibited:

Retaliation against any individual who reports bullying or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited.

TEACHER MISCONDUCT:

All staff are required to comply with the NH Department of Education Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics (Ed 510).

Reporting:

Concerns regarding educator misconduct should be reported to the Educational Director. If the complaint involves the Educational Director, it shall be directed to the Executive Director.

Investigation and Mandatory Reporting:

The Educational Director will review the complaint within 2 school days. If required under Ed 511, the school will report to the New Hampshire Department of Education and/or law enforcement.

All investigations will be documented. The complainant will receive written confirmation that the matter has been reviewed and addressed, consistent with personnel confidentiality laws.

TUITION REFUND COMPLAINTS:

For those students who are discharged from the program, tuition shall be prorated through the student's last date of attendance. The sending district shall be reimbursed for any prepaid tuition covering instructional days beyond the effective withdrawal date. Reimbursement shall be calculated on a per diem basis, unless otherwise specified in a placement agreement.

Districts/Parents/Guardians may file a grievance regarding tuition charges or refunds when a student withdraws voluntarily or is discharged.

Procedure:

A written request for tuition review must be submitted within 10 business days of withdrawal or discharge. The school will review placement and financial agreements, as well as attendance records.

A written determination will be issued within 15 business days. Appeals may be submitted in writing to the Executive Director within 5 business days of the decision.

COMPLAINTS REGARDING USE OF CHILD RESTRAINT (RSA 126-U)

Parents/guardians who believe restraint procedures were improperly used may file a complaint with the Educational Director or Executive Director.

Review Procedure:

The incident report and required documentation will be reviewed. Staff involved may be interviewed. Compliance with RSA 126-U requirements will be evaluated.

Written findings will be provided within 10 school days. If a violation is substantiated, corrective action will be implemented.

Nothing in this policy limits a parent's right to file a complaint with the New Hampshire Department of Education or other appropriate agencies.

ANTI-RETALIATION

No individual, including student, parent, guardian, or staff member, shall be subject to retaliation for filing or participating in a grievance resolution under this policy.

HEALTH & MEDICAL CARE

As there are no medical personnel on staff, NCH must be extremely conservative in medical matters, and all physical complaints or injuries are taken seriously. The Educational Director must be notified of every situation in which there is a question as to the advisability of any medical attention *whatsoever*. The Educational Director or designee will generally consult the child's parents before proceeding.

In the case of a clear medical emergency involving a student, NCH shall contact Emergency Medical Services (EMS via 911) first, and will then relay the information to the parents/ guardian as soon as possible.

Any student who is required to take medication during the school day will be assisted by the Educational Director or designee only under the following conditions:

1. A written statement must be received from the prescribing practitioner who prescribed the medication detailing the amount and method of taking the dosage and the time schedule to be followed.
2. A written authorization must be sent by the student's parent or guardian indicating the desire that the school assist the student in carrying out the instructions set forth by the prescribing practitioner. This must be accompanied by a "hold harmless" release which must be signed by the parent or guardian. These communications must be filed with the student's health record.
3. Medications are locked and administered only by staff that have had documented training in medication administration.
4. Non-prescription medication is administered only upon authorization by the student's parent or legal guardian; such authorization being required in every instance of non-prescription medication administration.

All program staff receive training in First Aid and CPR.

Nashua Children's Home ensures that when a child has an illness that is contagious or poses a health threat to other children enrolled in the program, Nashua Children's Home immediately notifies the child's parents, the sending LEA, the Department, and the Bureau of Communicable Disease Control of the Department of Health and Human Services.

HOMework

Though research indicates the value of homework relative to student progress it is the experience of NCH that homework can often be a source of increased strife, angst, and conflict in the home. Consequently, NCH does not regularly assign homework to students. Parents or students can request homework, and there are times when school assignments require some level of homework. Additionally, homework may be a reasonable consequence of not completing daily school work due to poor behavioral choices. Homework shall be returned to the classroom teacher on the due date. Misplaced/ lost homework will be treated the same as non-completion of work.

Students preparing for a return to middle school or high school need to develop good study habits and engage in the kind of academic customs for which they can expect upon their transition. In such circumstances it may be good practice to assign homework to develop good study skills, responsibility for completion of tasks, and practicing time management.

LUNCH

A hot lunch program is available daily at the school. Each class will eat as a group under supervision of the teacher or aide. Children are asked to use the social skills they have acquired at home and at school. A monthly menu will be sent home and students always have the opportunity to bring a lunch from home. Applications for free and reduced meals will be sent home, and you will be notified about eligibility by the Educational Director or their designee. Students will receive billing for lunch, and payment arrangements can be discussed with the Educational Director. Special payment schedules may be arranged for monthly payments.

Students who chose to bring a lunch may use the school refrigerator to store their lunch during the school day. It is the responsibility of the student to ask their classroom staff to store their lunch.

SNACK

Each group has a 10-minute morning break for snack. Healthy choices are provided at no charge to the students.

MARKING SYSTEM

Progress reports are generated four (4) times per academic year. The progress report will address the major areas developed on the Individual Education Plan (IEP). Teachers will review progress reports with students individually and explain areas of success, as well as areas needing improvement. The report will explain whether you have not met, met, or exceeded the objectives for a particular quarter with a narrative explanation. Progress reports will also include a narrative report from the Child & Family Therapist, as well as other service providers.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND AUDIO- OR AUDIO-VISUAL RECORDING

Students and visitors are not permitted to use electronic devices to record audio or video or take pictures of any person without permission of the individual *and* school staff, during the school day/ school events, including during bus rides.

Observation of children by student interns, visiting guests, representatives of public agencies, attorneys, etc., may only be done with the express consent of the Educational Director. Photographing children for media purposes is allowed only with written consent of the parent or guardian. Using children for research purposes or as subjects for undergraduate or graduate testing/ research is expressly not allowed.

RECESS

Recess is naturally a time when children are provided with the opportunity to release physical energies in a constructive manner. Safety rules regarding playground and gym equipment use will be reviewed at the beginning of the year. Any type of destructive, disruptive, or unsafe behavior that demonstrates disrespect for fellow students, adults, or school property will not be accepted.

RECORDS

ACCESS RIGHTS

Nashua Children's Home permits parents to inspect and review any education records relating to their children that are collected, maintained, or used by the Nashua Children's Home, including:

- Complying with a request without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an IEP, and in no case more than 45 days after the request has been made.
- The parent's right to a response from the Nashua Children's Home to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records.
- The parent's right to request that Nashua Children's Home provide copies of the records containing the information if failure to provide those copies would effectively prevent the parent from exercising the right to inspect and review the records; and the right to have a representative of the parent inspect and review the records.
- Nashua Children's Home will provide copies of records to parents or authorized representatives as requested. Nashua Children's Home will charge \$.25/page for these copies, but may elect, in its sovereign authority, to waive all charges.

Nashua Children's Home may presume that the parent has authority to inspect and review records relating to his or her child unless Nashua Children's Home has been advised that the parent does not have the authority under applicable State Law governing such matters as guardianship, separation, and divorce.

All records and reports are kept in the child's folder in the Educational Director's office in a locked file cabinet. Use of a child's record is allowed only in this office, and records may not leave that area without the express consent of the Educational Director. The information contained within the records is confidential. In order to communicate the content of records in written or verbal form to an outside individual, one must first ascertain express written authorization from the parent or legal guardian.

RECORD OF ACCESS

Nashua Children's Home keeps a record of parties obtaining access to education records collected, maintained, or used, including the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records.

RECORD ON MORE THAN ONE CHILD

If any education record includes information on more than one child, the parents of those children have the right to inspect and review only the information relating to their child or to be informed of that specific information.

CONSENT

Nashua Children's Home obtains parental consent before personally identifiable information is disclosed to parties, other than officials of participating agencies unless the information is contained in education records, and the disclosure. Parental consent is not required before personally identifiable information is released to officials of participating agencies.

Parental consent, or the consent of an eligible child who has reached the age of majority under State law is obtained by Nashua Children's Home before personally identifiable information is released to officials of participating agencies providing or paying for transition services in accordance with 34 CFR 300.321(b)(3).

SAFEGUARDS

Nashua Children's Home protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages.

Nashua Children's Home ensures that all persons collecting or using personally identifiable information has received training or instruction regarding the State's policies and procedures pursuant to 34 CFR 300.623(c).

Nashua Children's Home maintains, for public inspection, a current list of the names and positions of those employees within the program who may have access to personally identifiable information.

The Nashua Children's Home employee who is responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information is the Educational Director.

PERMANENT RECORDS

Nashua Children's Home does not accept the student's cumulative file from the referring LEA, but rather is provided selected copies of that file. In accordance with Ed 407.01, Nashua Children's Home Educational Program shall maintain a permanent record for each student that includes at minimum:

1. Student's full legal name
2. Date of birth
3. Names of parent(s)/guardian(s)
4. Last known address of parent(s)/guardian(s)
5. Dates of enrollment
6. Grade level completed
7. Courses taken
8. Final grades or progress toward completion
9. Credits earned (if applicable)
10. Date of graduation or withdrawal
11. Diploma awarded (if applicable)

Permanent records shall be retained indefinitely.

Permanent records may be maintained in secure electronic or physical format, with safeguards to prevent loss, damage, or unauthorized access.

RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION RECORDS

Nashua Children's Home does not accept the student's cumulative file from the referring LEA, but rather is provided selected copies of that file. Per NH RSA 186-C, upon a student's graduation from high school, his or her parents may request the local education agency in writing to have the student's records and final individualized education program destroyed at that time or request that the records be retained until the student's twenty-sixth birthday. The parents may, at any time prior to the student's twenty-sixth birthday, request, in writing, that the records be retained until the student's thirtieth birthday. Absent any request by a student's parents at the time of graduation, the local education agency shall destroy a student's records and final individualized education program within a reasonable time after the student's twenty-sixth birthday, provided that all such records be destroyed by the student's thirtieth birthday.

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

School begins at 9:00 a.m., and dismissal is at 3:00 p.m. Teachers will be on duty from 8:30 to supervise children as they arrive on their buses. Students should hang up their coats and bags in the designated areas.

TRANSPORTATION

Buses, vans or private cars provided by your school district will transport the student to and from school. The transportation vehicles are considered an extension of the school program; therefore, the same rules apply on the vehicle as in the school. Any behavioral issues created on the way to school will be reported to the office that morning. Behavioral issues on the way home may result in the bus returning students to Nashua Children's Home until the parent can

pick them up. Any questions regarding transportation or schedules should be directed to the school Educational Director.

The regular daily class starting time is 9:00 a.m. and dismissal time is 3:00 p.m. Buses should arrive between 8:30 and 9:00 in the morning and 3:00 in the afternoon. On occasion, buses and parents have left student off at school prior to 8:30 a.m. Students left at school this early do not have adequate supervision, as school staff are not required to be present until 8:30.

Students will not be allowed to enter the building without supervision prior to 8:30 a.m. Parents must take the necessary action to ensure that students do not arrive at school prior 8:30. Students that do arrive early should be supervised by the driver of the vehicle until the school staff can provide adequate supervision for these students. Exceptions to this policy may be made through prior arrangement with the Educational Director.

WEATHER: DELAY/ CANCELLATION

The Educational Program operates on the Nashua Public School calendar. As colder weather arrives and the chances of severe weather conditions increase, adverse weather conditions may necessitate the delay or closing of school. This decision is made by the Nashua Superintendent of Schools and is publicized between 6:00 and 7:00 a.m. Notification of a delay or cancellation can be found by consulting local media organizations, including WMUR TV, local radio stations, and online at **wmur.com**. Also note school delay/ cancellation in your home district, as students are not expected to be transported to NCH if the sending district has cancelled school.

VISITOR CODE OF CONDUCT

Members of the NCH school team will treat parents, guardians, and others with respect and dignity, and expect the same in return. The school must be free from disruptions and prevent unauthorized persons from entering the grounds. Accordingly, this policy promotes respect, civility, and orderly conduct among staff and visitors. We encourage positive communication and discourage volatile, hostile, or aggressive verbal/ and or physical behavior or actions.

Nashua Children's Home is within a Safe School Zone. As such the possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco products, combustibles, weapons (real or fake), are expressly prohibited of students, staff, and visitors.

DISRUPTIVE VISITORS

Any visitor who, in the opinion of NCH staff, disrupts or threatens to disrupt school operations, threatens the health and/or safety of students, staff, or others, or willingly causes property damage, or uses loud/ offensive language will be asked to leave the property immediately.

Failure to comply with requests to leave will be construed as trespass and the Nashua Police Department will be contacted to remove the individual(s).

RESTRICTED ACCESS TO SCHOOL GROUNDS BY CONVICTED OR REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a safe learning environment for students and staff in compliance with New Hampshire and federal laws. This policy establishes time, place, and manner restrictions for convicted or registered sex offenders to be on Nashua Children's Home (NCH) property while recognizing their rights to access their own children's education and participate in other lawful activities under the specific conditions set forth here.

Policy Statement:

Convicted or registered sex offenders are prohibited from being on NCH property unless expressly permitted under the terms and conditions outlined in this policy.

Definitions:

1. **Convicted or Registered Sex Offender:** An individual required to register as a sex offender under state or federal law or who has been convicted of a sex offense as defined by New Hampshire law, that has not been otherwise annulled.
2. **NCH Property:** All property owned, leased, or used by NCH, including buildings, vehicles, playgrounds, athletic facilities, fields, parking lots, and any other locations where NCH school-sponsored activities are undertaken.
3. **Authorized School Activity:** An NCH school-sponsored event or meeting where attendance is permitted with prior approval as defined by this policy.

General Prohibitions:

1. **Prohibited Presence:**
Convicted or registered sex offenders are prohibited from entering or remaining on NCH property except under the conditions specified in this policy.
2. **No Unauthorized Contact:**
Convicted or registered sex offenders are strictly prohibited from initiating contact with students, staff, or other individuals while on NCH property without prior approval of the Executive Director, Educational Director, or their designee. At their discretion, the Executive Director, Educational Director, or their designee, may grant verbal-only authorization for access due to specific and extenuating circumstances. The convicted or registered sex offender's own children are exempt from this requirement unless otherwise legally prohibited.

Exceptions to General Prohibitions:

Convicted or registered sex offenders may only enter NCH property under the following circumstances:

Access to Parental Involvement in Legitimate Educational Interests:

Convicted or registered sex offenders who are the parent or guardian of a student may, with the pre-approved written permission of the Executive Director, Educational Director, or their designee, access activities legally protected by CFR 34, Part 99 - The Family Educational Privacy Act. These include the following activities:

1. Parent Teacher Conferences
2. Special Education Related Meetings (e.g., IEP Meetings)
3. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Sect. 504 Meetings
4. Enrollment or Registration Events
5. Student disciplinary meetings with school administration
6. Other FERPA legally protected meetings / events

In such exceptions as noted above, access by the sex offender will be scheduled to occur in a manner minimizing contact with other children/students (e.g. virtual participation etc.). In any circumstance where the offender is permitted physical access to NCH property, the convicted or registered sex offender shall be supervised and/or escorted at all times when on NCH property.

Conditions for Authorized Access:

Convicted or registered sex offenders seeking to access school grounds under an exception must submit a written request to the Executive Director, Educational Director, or their designee no less than seven (7) business days prior to the intended visit. At their discretion, the Executive Director, Educational Director, or their designee, may grant verbal-only authorization for access due to specific and extenuating circumstances.

Approval will include time, date, and specific areas of NCH property the convicted or registered sex offenders may access along with any requirements for an escort and/or supervision.

1. Supervision Requirement:
 - A designated staff member must supervise and/or escort any on-campus presence of the convicted or registered sex offenders to ensure compliance.
2. Identification and Notification:
 - The convicted or registered sex offenders must present valid identification upon arrival on NCH property and comply with any required check-in procedures.
 - Relevant staff (e.g., front office, Primary Supervisor, school staff) will be informed of the approved visit and any restrictions or requirements for escort and/or supervision.

Violations:

Trespassing: Any unauthorized presence on NCH property by a convicted or registered sex offender will be reported to law enforcement as criminal trespass under New Hampshire RSA 635:2.

1. Revocation of Access: The Executive Director, Educational Director or their designee may revoke access if the convicted or registered sex offender fails to comply with the conditions set forth in this policy.
2. Mandatory Reporting: Any violations of this policy or inappropriate behavior must be reported to law enforcement and the New Hampshire Department of Education as required.

Notice and Dissemination:

1. This policy will be published annually in student handbooks and posted on the NCH website.

APPENDIX

EPA Asbestos Statement:

As required by the Environmental Protection Agency, Nashua Children's Home, in accordance with Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act regulations, has been inspected by Covino Environmental Consultants of Woburn, MA to identify all locations of friable and non-friable Asbestos-Containing Material (ACBM). ACBM was detected in four (4) of the thirty-three (33) samples taken. The Management Plan developed by Covino recommends removal of ACBM only in the basement area and semi-annual inspection of specified floor areas on the first and second floors. Removal of ACBM as recommended was carried out by Asbestos Technologies, Inc. of Nashua, NH on August 21-22, 1989.

The Management Plan is available for review at Nashua Children's Home or at the New Hampshire Department of Education.

USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the State or local Agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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