

## General Must-Haves:

### Rules vs Expectations

Rules tend to have a negative connotation and can contribute to a punitive environment. Instead, shelters should create and utilize shelter expectations to communicate desired behaviors, which uses a more positive framework.

Fill your shelter with those that **need it the most**, not those that got there first or can "comply" with the rules.

### Keep it Short and User-Friendly

Expectations should apply to a diverse population of people. They should be clear, concise, and easy to read for most people.

### Maintain Housing and Safety Focus

The ultimate goal of shelter is to assist people out of homelessness and into permanent housing. Therefore, shelter expectations should center on keeping guests, staff, and visitors safe; and around the work to support people in obtaining permanent housing. Housing First shelter expectations should contribute to a low barrier environment and should not impede guests' ability to access shelter and obtain permanent housing.

## Ten Steps to Evaluating Your Shelter Rules:

Follow these steps to evaluate and improve your shelter rules. Work collectively with shelter leadership, direct-service staff, former and current shelter guests, and other community members and stakeholders to transform shelter rules into shared shelter expectations.

