



# **Student Handbook, Rules & Guidelines**

**Georgetown, Ms. 39078**

**02/10/2018**

**Real Change Is Really Hard.**

**"For nothing is impossible with God." (Luke 1:37)**

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**Introduction:**      *Mercy House Teen Challenge is a minimum 14 month Christian discipleship training program. Phase 2 of our program will require at least 10 months to completion.*

All of our rules are guidelines for which we operate. At any time throughout your stay here it is the right for the **Program Director** or **Executive Director** to examine the situation and the student on a case by case basis to determine the consequences of any infringement(s) of the violation of the rules and/or behavior.

## **Why Do We Have Rules?**

It is not our desire to greet new students with a book of rules, but guidelines are a necessary part of life. The purpose of Mercy House rules are:

1. To help us learn and show courtesy toward fellow students, staff, and others with whom we come into contact.
2. To keep the Mercy House property clean.
3. To keep the program running smoothly, as a whole.
4. To teach self-discipline, and to learn to stop and think before making decisions.

We firmly believe that God directs Mercy House and its rules (Rom. 13:1-14). You may not agree with or understand these rules, but learning to follow rules is necessary for success in every part of society and for the Christian life (Ps. 1:1-6). We want to teach you a different way to live than how you were living before. Hopefully we can challenge you to live a life of excellence in every area of your life.

In most cases, **if you break a rule, you will get discipline. This may happen even if you are unaware of the rule.**

**It is your responsibility to be familiar with these rules.**

Therefore, if you are unsure, ask a staff member. It is not acceptable to assume something is ok, and then claim ignorance (Pr. 3:5-6). The purpose for discipline at Mercy House is not merely to punish, but to grow and strengthen areas of weakness. We want to teach proper behavior, and make it clear that there are consequences to our actions (Gal. 6:7).

Although there are many rules in this book, unforeseen incidents and/or situations will arise. When unforeseen incidents and/or situations do arise, discipline will be handed out with new rules being added for such cases. Also, when a staff member tells you to do something, do it. Consider it a rule. You are here, in part, to practice common sense, and to learn how to speak and act as a Christian man.

Our primary goal is to teach you the right way to live. It is truly not our desire to merely discipline you for wrong doing. We also wish to encourage you and challenge you to adhere to these rules and guidelines **even when a staff member is not present.** This will provide you with a more comfortable stay at Mercy house and give you a good start toward a successful future.

## Transparency

We come from a pattern of life, as addicts, that seeks to control problems. We understand the baggage of multiple, untold secrets and stories. All of that changes, however, for those who are in Christ. Through Christ we have been made new creations. The old man is gone and the new has come (2 Cor. 5:17). Because Christ has made all things new, we must see things as **He** would see them and do things as **He** would do them. What we mean by transparency is that we expect honesty in all your interactions with staff and other students. It also means being clear in your intentions, or sharing your reasons or motivations towards any given action. Finally, it means you are free to share your feelings and concerns, thereby, transparency lightens our spirit and opens the door for healing. Transparency unlocks our ability to be vulnerable to the Holy Spirit, who guides us into all truth (John 16:13). To allow Mercy House to help us restore our lives, we must play our part. If we are to be the new man that Christ wants us to be, transparency is essential.

## Reverence and Roll Call

Students must participate in all scheduled activities, and order must be maintained. So, when a staff member or designated senior student exclaims, "Reverence!", **all students must become silent**, cease all activity and movement, and await instructions. **Anyone calling reverence outside of staff's permission is in violation and is exhibiting a lack of self-control.** Reverence is called before every activity so that roll may be checked. Reverence also occurs spontaneously at times when unscheduled announcements must be made by the staff. If a student is not present at the time that "Reverence" is called that student is consider **tardy**, regardless if his name has not been called. Even if you are sick, you must attend the breakfast roll call. Roll calls are mandatory for all meal, praise and worship, classroom , and chapel services. Students must stand, be still, and be quiet for the duration of the roll call and/or announcement.

## **Permanent Schedule**

**SEE SEPARATE SCHEDULE**

## Discipline/Free Time/Privileges Guidelines

### DISCIPLINE

Discipline assignments are given to individual students by staff. The purpose of these assignments is to help the student learn and grow in a specific behavioral area (Heb. 12:11). These assignments will be worked on only during free time or specially designated discipline time.

1. Students on discipline are restricted from all free time privileges (**Ping Pong, Pool table, Gym, Weight Room, or any other recreational activities**). **This includes visitation and passes.** All discipline must be done and turned in 24 hours prior, for any visit, pass, or excursion to be granted. **All visits will be monitored, and/or taken away if a student does not complete the assigned schoolwork given to him.**
2. **All Phone calls will be restricted while on discipline unless an exception is made by staff.**
3. You cannot graduate while you are currently on discipline.
4. Students on discipline will be required to do dish duty after every scheduled meal until the discipline is completed.
5. It is never permitted to work on discipline during journal, class, chapel, guest speaker, or learning videos. **If caught, discipline may be restarted or tripled!**
6. No working on discipline during study hall unless by permission of the **staff** member on duty.
7. Students who are on discipline may not talk to each other during discipline time.
8. Students may not listen to music of any kind while working on discipline.
9. It is not required that the students work on discipline on Sunday, but priveleges are still restricted, as stated

above.

10. During discipline time (**4:30 a.m. – 5:30 a.m. and 5:45 - 6:45 p.m.**), students who are on discipline are only permitted to be in the designated discipline classroom working on discipline. Any student who does not stay in the designated discipline area may be subject to more discipline. Any student who refuses to do discipline may be subject to dismissal.
11. Discipline may be appealed to the program director, but can be doubled, if lacking merit.

### **FREE TIME**

**Sunday through Saturday**– Free time is any time after a student has finished eating at mealtime until the next scheduled activity begins, or when announced by the staff member on duty.

### **PRIVILEGES**

1. Students (**not on discipline**) may have access to the weight room and the recreation room during free time **with** accountability. Any student that is lifting weights **MUST** have a spotter present. Any student that is caught lifting weight without a spotter can lose his weight room privileges and/or be given written discipline.
2. No first phase students are allowed on the baseball field without a second phase student or a staff member.
3. All students may have access to the recreation room. All food is forbidden in the recreation room unless authorized by staff.
4. When on campus, Second Phase students do not need accountability anywhere. However first phase students need accountability everywhere.
5. Unless authorized by staff, all drinks must be in a covered plastic container only.

## **Academic Success / Growth Development**

### **Effective April 21,2014 GSNL academic growth development will be as follows:**

**If you turn in your Study Guide and it is incomplete the student will:**

- A) Have a study guide returned with the Student Manual to be completed
- B) Will be mandated to GSNL Classroom Monday-Saturday 5:45pm-6:45pm until completed
- C) Will be under **all restrictions of discipline** until study guide is completed (be sure to turn in to staff).
- D) All classroom guidelines are in effect during this time.

**If you fail a test because of memorizing scriptures the student will:**

- A) Write the assigned scripture 50 times each (NIV,ESV,NASB, KJV, or NKJV versions only)
- B) Will be under all requirements of discipline ( no outside activities, visitations, etc.)
- C) Will be mandated to GSNL classroom Monday-Saturday 5:45pm-6:45pm until completed
- D) All classroom guidelines are in effect during this time

You will be given time in class & study hall to read your student manual& complete your study guide

**AFTER YOUR SCRIPTURE WRITING IS COMPLETE, IT WILL BE FACTORED IN ,AT FULL CREDIT, WITH YOUR TEST RESULTS. IF YOU STILL HAVE NOT RECEIVED A SCORE OF 70% OR BETTER, YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO WRITE THE STUDENT MANUAL ONE TIME. YOU WILL REMAIN ON ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE UNTIL IT IS FINISHED. ONCE COMPLETE, YOU WILL HAVE SUCCESSFULLY PASSED THAT CLASS.**

## Letter Writing/Phone Calls/Visitation/Excursion& Pass Guidelines

One of Mercy House's main goals is to restore families. For this reason, communication with your family is encouraged, (Job 42:16).

### The following individuals qualify upon consideration by the director:

- Wife and Children
- Father and Mother / Stepfather and Stepmother
- Brothers and Sisters /Stepbrothers and Stepsisters
- Grandparents
- **One** Girlfriend (year long relationship)
- Probation Officer
- Father-in-Law and Mother-in-Law
- Pastor
- Attorney

### Letter Writing

Letter writing is permitted from the start of the program. Staff will read and inspect the incoming and outgoing mail of all students. Outgoing mail will be dropped off at the Med Room in the foyer/recreation room. **Staff will read and inspect all mail, incoming and outgoing. All letters must be addressed according to your approved contact list.** Any mail coming into the facility from those that are not on your approved contact list will be returned to the sender. No mail is to be sent to or received from a Correctional facility unless it is immediate family member and on approved contact list. The return address on your outgoing mail must read as the following example:

**Example:**  
**John J. Doe**  
**c/o Mercy House Teen Challenge**  
**P.O. Box 266**  
**Georgetown, MS 39078**

### Phone Calls

Phone calls are permitted after the first 30 days have been completed. Calls are limited to one 10 minute call every seven days. A staff member or an appointed student servant must be present **During 1st Phase the speaker phone must be on during all calls.** 2nd Phase students are **not** required to use the speaker phone. A maximum of five contacts may be listed on the phone call contact sheet. Students in 2<sup>nd</sup> phase and students in first phase with **2 or more children** are entitled to **two ten minute phone** calls per week. A Phone call list will be posted each Monday. You must sign-up to use the phone. Students on the E-Team will be allowed multiple phone privileges per week still with the presence of a staff member or appointed student servant.

**If a student is on written discipline phone call privileges are restricted until the discipline is completed.** Any changes to the phone call list must be approved by staff, providing there is adequate time. **The phone call must be made on the day of the residents scheduled time and if missed – they forfeit that weeks phone call. The exception is if the individual was on a ministry trip or E-Team Rally.**

### Contact with One Girlfriend

Contact with one girlfriend will be permitted only if the relationship has lasted for one year or more. When the girlfriend visits, **a student's parent or staff-approved family member must be present with her and the student , at all times.** If the student and girlfriend have children together, the details of the contact will be determined by the director. If these visitation rules are violated, this privilege will be ended, and may only be

reinstated at the director's discretion.

### **Visitation:**

Visitation may take place after 60 days in the program. A visitor request form must be filled out and submitted to staff no later than one week (7 days) prior to the visit, and it must be approved by the director. Visitors will be turned away without approval, or proper identification. Visitors should call the office to confirm that they are coming to visit. In accordance with the student's wishes, other students may only briefly be introduced to visitors.

Visitation areas are the dining room, the foyer/recreation room, the GSNC classroom, and the campus grounds. The Prayer room is also permitted with accountability. The weight room is off limits. Student rooms are **always** off limits.

On graduation Sunday your family is allowed to come to church, but are not allowed to sit with students. Afterwards they may stay and eat. **You may not have visitors until after your 60 days is up.**

### **STUDENT AND VISITOR COMPLIANCE AGREEMENT**

#### **Attention Students and Visitors:**

**Due to contraband being brought in, we the staff at Mercy House feel it would be in the best interest of the students that everything be brought through the office to be checked. Also, all bags for students, boxed items, food containers, baby bags, etc... , are subject to inspection. If a student is suspected to have contraband, that student and his belongings will be checked. There are no purses or cell phones allowed.**

**Dress Code:** No dresses or short shorts or promiscuous clothing to be worn. No skull or alcoholic beverage logos are allowed.

**We are a tobacco free environment – No cigarettes, Vaping or Dipping Allowed!!!!**

#### **Visitation may take place one weekend a month.**

Students may receive visitors on that **Saturday** from 8:30 – 4:45 P.M. On Saturday, visitors may eat lunch provided by the kitchen , or visitors may bring lunch to the student. Food and drink may only be brought to the center for either the individual student or for the student body as a whole.

**Sunday** visitors may attend church services. If the family wishes to attend Sunday morning church service, they need not come to the center, but should call for directions to the church that the student will be attending. Once there, the visiting family will sit with the student on the first row behind the student body. When church services have ended, the **student is required to leave immediately with the student body**. The visiting family may then follow us back to the center and resume visitation until precisely **4:00 p.m.** The student's next visit must be 30 days from the previous visit. Exceptions may be made at the director's discretion.

#### **Visitation Rules**

1. Students **may not** bring **any** visitors into the dorm rooms, and are never allowed to be in private or secluded areas with females. This includes family members such as wives, girlfriends, mothers, sisters, daughters, etc.
2. Students are not permitted to pick up any children other than their own children **EVER**.
3. Students are not permitted to sit in any vehicles on property anytime during visitation.
4. Before the student receives any personal items or gifts, these items must be brought to the office for approval. This also applies to items brought back from excursions. No movies allowed without prior approval.
5. Students may only direct approaching vehicles of visitors or guests to the Administration Office. Students are not allowed to personally approach a moving or stationary vehicle without staff approval. Only if the driver intentionally asks for guidance, is a student to speak or interact with arriving visitors or guests.
6. All visitors **MUST** enter and exit through the office and sign in and out, accordingly.

7. Student families may only leave once to get food and other things needed by the student. **The staff on duty must be notified**, and visitors must come back in through the office for any additional inspections that may be required.

I have read and understand the Visitation Rules and agree to acknowledge them during any permitted visitation on campus or off campus event. Events off campus pertaining to Mercy House Teen Challenge and residing students apply the same way.

**\*\* All visitor / student contact must be first approved by the staff on duty. \*\***

\_\_\_\_\_

**Print Student Name**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Student**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date signed**

**Visitor Acknowledgement**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Print Visitor Name**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Visitor Signature**

## **Off-Campus Excursions**

Upon the student's sixth month, he is eligible for off-campus excursions with approved family members. Just like visitation, off-campus excursions are from 8:30 A.M. – 4.45 P.M. Students may be picked up any time after 8:30 A.M., but must return promptly by 4.45 P.M. Excursions may take place on Saturdays, only. *\*Only married couples will be allowed an extra day but need to be returned to the campus by 4:00pm on Sunday.* Approved family members must sign the student out and sign the student back in. Warranted or random drug, alcohol, and nicotine screenings will be administered upon return.

**Getting married, obtaining any body piercings or tattoos is strictly prohibited on any passes or excursions.**

### **Passes**

After a student has been in the program for 8 months, he is eligible for a 5-day pass. **He may apply for the pass after completeing memorization of Romans 6.** After the 12<sup>th</sup> month, he will be allowed a 10-day pass **after completing memorization of Romans 8.** You may schedule your pass when you are within 10 verses from completion. **Only an approved family member can pick up the student on the appropriate day.** The student must return with an approved family member by 5:00 p.m. on the sixth day during his 5-day pass, and by the same time on the eleventh day of his 10-day pass. The only consideration, for travel time that is more than a 5 hour drive, may be given at the discretion of the Executive Director, Program Director, or Assistant Program Director.

### **Holidays**

**Excursions & Passes will not be allowed on Holiday Weekends,** ie: Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup> Independence Day, Thanksgiving etc. **NO** passes or excursions will be granted between the days of **Dec. 23 through Jan. 2.** The Student is required to return by no later than 5:00 pm. Any one arriving after 5:00 pm must call in advance and seek approval from either the Executive director, program director or Assistant Program Director. Anyone who fails to do so will be given discipline.

### **Praise and Worship/Journal/Class/Study Hall/Chapel (Proverbs 8:10)**

#### **DRESS CODE: Defined – Presentation of ones clothing or garments**

- Collared shirt tucked in at all times.
- Pants with belt loops and belt.
- Shoes/boots – no sandals or open toed shoes.
- No hats, sunglasses or any other clothing adornments.

#### **POSSESS: Defined – on your person, reach, or control**

- Bible, notebook, and 2 pens (black or dark blue only) are required **NO BOOK BAGS/CASES**
- Books for specific event i.e. study guides & student manual for GSNC
- May have water only in clear container with spill-proof lid

#### **COMMUNICATION: Defined – talk, hand gestures, facial expressions, unnecessary sounds**

- Upon entering classroom, chapel etc. **ALL** communication will cease
- Hands/flags must be raised and permission granted before speaking
- Upon your name being called for roll you will answer “HERE” or “PRESENT”

#### **NOTES/JOURNALS/CLASSWORK: Defined – required work expected from student for event**

- ALL** work is to be written legibly – name and date at top right of paper.
- Study guides to be completed fully

Notes to be taken in detail – (PSNC class book standards for everyone)

Journal a *MINIMUM* ½(half) page 8 ½” X 11” sheet

Journal less than 8 ½” X 11” - a single journal shall complete the page

(No journals less than 5” X 8 ½” will be accepted)

No work outside of the scheduled attended event may be in possession of student

### **EXPECTATIONS: Defined – How the student shall conduct themselves**

Restroom privileges are during free-time and breaks only.

No candy or food allowed on student or in their possession.

Area must remain in a clean and orderly fashion.

Students are to remain seated at all times, facing forward with both feet on floor.

Chairs will be lifted and not scooted or slid on the floors.

Sleeping or the appearance of sleep is not permitted.

Heads must remain off arms, hands, desks, walls and student shall be attentive.

Students will be seated at the call of “REVERENCE” or be considered “LATE”

No one is dismissed until the teacher/leader/pastor has announced it.

### **PERMISSION MUST BE GRANTED FOR ANY EXCEPTION TO THE PROCEDURES PRIOR TO VIOLATING THEM**

#### **Dorm Room Guidelines (1 Cor. 14:40)**

1. No items will be left out cluttering the front of dorms. Students will not leave any personal items out on the campus or in class rooms such as clothes, shoes, or books. If left out, items will be appropriated by staff member. Shoes may be placed behind the gym to dry and air out. No shoes are to be left out in front of dorm rooms are on the roof.
2. **Absolutely there is to be no food in the room whatsoever unless it is individually wrapped candy (hard) and peanuts without shell. Other peanut mixes may be approved by the Directors.**
3. There is a **limit of 5 pairs of shoes** in the dorm room, **plus 1 pair** of shower shoes. All shoes must be paired up neatly against the wall, in the drawers, or in the shelf provided.
4. Students must keep their rooms neat and clean. **Nothing but shoes and hampers are to be on the floor.**
5. **Beds must be made at all times**, to staff specifications.
6. There is to be nothing between beds except for one laundry basket per student.
7. Students may not leave personal belongings on beds unattended.
8. Clothes not hanging must be either in drawers, **or neatly folded** and placed inside of cubby-holes.
9. Do not leave any items unattended on top of bed-shelves.
10. Students may not hide belongings by covering shelves.
11. Students may not store any belongings in the AC closets.
12. There are to be nothing on the walls **except “4x6” family photos,(limit 10)**, posted with clear tape only. **1 cross per student** can also be placed in the room above the bed or over their hanging clothes.
13. There is to be nothing in the windows.
14. All folding chairs must be placed behind room door when not in use.
15. There are to be **no suitcases in dorm rooms**. All suitcases are to be labeled with students’ name and placed in gym under bleachers. Only students who fundraise out of town will be allowed to keep a suitcase in their room.
16. Students may not lie down at any time between wake-up and 4:30 P.M. **Monday through Friday**. On **Saturday** students may lay down after assigned work details are completed. On **Sunday** students may lay down at any time when other scheduled activities do not exist.
17. Lights out at 10:00 P.M. on **Sunday through Thursday** and at 11:00 P.M. on **Friday and Saturday**. No talking is allowed after lights out;
18. Any more than 2 toilet tissue is considered excessive.
19. There are to be no rugs greater than **2 feet by 3 feet** and must be clean and orderly.

20. Room lights and all electrical **devices must be turned off in room when leaving.** Any lights left on or fans left on are subject for removal until such time disciplines can be maintained.
21. **Only 1 fan and 1 calendar is allowed per room.** Extra fans can only be approved by staff in extreme circumstances.
22. Clothes hamper is not to be overflowing. Nothing hanging over the outside of hamper.

### Updated Dorm Room Policy for the New Bunk Bed Rooms

1. All cabinet doors must be closed at all times.
2. No towels, hats or clothes are to left hanging on the bed or the cabinet doors.
3. All clothes hampers are to keep behind cabinet doors along with all shoes paired neatly in the closet. No suitcases are to be in rooms, under the beds or in the closet. Overnight bags and back packs are allowed for those going on overnight fundraisers only.
4. Study tables are to be kept tidy with nothing left out on top of them with the stool sunder the table when not in use.
5. Inside of your cabinet will adhere to the same tidiness rules that apply to shelves not hidden by a door. Keep you space organized and clean in case a they are open for inspection at any time.
6. All beds need to be wrinkle free and bed covers tucked under the mattress.
7. Lights and fans are to be turned off when leaving. **ONLY 1 fan per room.**
8. Tile floors and rugs are to be kept clean daily. 1 broom per room. Mopped 1x per week.
9. All prior Dorm Room Guidelines are to be followed where appropriate ie: photos, calendars etc.

### AC/HEATER GUIDELINES

It is our responsibility to be good stewards (1 COR 4:2). Not only with the money that the Lord blesses us with, but also the other things the Lord blesses us with, such as air conditioning and heaters. Our main purpose is to please God and tend to the Lords business. The following rules are guidelines that can't be changed or altered without staff approval.

**Regular schedule time for AC/heater to be turned on is 5:30 pm. But there are situations in which this time will vary:**

1. Air conditions will be turned on between 4:30 – 6:30 only if temperatures during the day is 90 degrees or greater and/or at night, 80 degrees or greater.
2. Air conditions will not be turned on if temperatures during the day and/or night are 75 degrees or less.
3. Heaters will be turned on according to staff discretion.
4. Students are not allowed to open windows. Window blinds must be down and closed. No visibility from the inside out or the outside in is permissible.
5. If a student is caught or is determined that he altered the AC/heater controls in any way, whether turning air conditioning on or off without permission or changing the temperatures for any reason without permission, discipline will be given.
6. **Any student that is caught complaining because ACs has been turned off will receive discipline for complaining.**

### Grooming/Dress/Appearance Guidelines

1. **Students will be clean shaven at all times.** Moustaches are permitted, but must be trimmed at the corners of the mouth. Sideburns are permitted, but must be trimmed to the bottom of the ear.
2. **All shirts must be tucked in when not in dorm rooms. This means during work detail and all scheduled events at Mercy House or when leaving property for church or fundraising events.**
3. Hair must be off the ear and trimmed above the collar.
4. Students are not permitted to shave their legs or arms at any time while at Mercy House.
5. Students **may not** get any piercings or tattoos, (Lev 19:28), nor dye their hair while on pass or at any other time during the program. (I Cor. 6:19 & 20).
6. Haircuts **must be approved by staff** and residents are not allowed to cut/shave heads completely bald.

- All hair lengths must be at least ¼”.**
7. (Under Directors Discretion) Haircuts and standards must be realistic and in compliance with other rules concerning hair within this manual.
  8. Tank tops may be worn in dorm rooms and the weight room **ONLY**. An over-shirt must be worn upon leaving the weight room. While on work detail or during chore assignments, tank tops may be worn only when authorized by staff and when not in view of front office. **SHIRTS MUST BE TUCKED IN DURING WORK DETAIL.**
  9. Pants are to be worn to the natural waistline. Sagging pants are not permitted. **Belts must be worn if pants have belt loops.**
  10. Bandanas or any gang colors or any gang signs, which includes do rags, are not permitted at Mercy House.
  11. Students must be fully dressed when not in their dorm room - always wearing a shirt, pants or shorts, socks, and shoes. **The only time when socks are not necessary is when students are traveling to and from the shower room.** All students are to be fully dressed by the time roll is called for Journal. This includes but is not limited to: Jeans, slacks, khakis, shorts, and collared shirts. If a student wears a pull-over sweater, he could be subject to be check for collared shirt. No Sleep pants are to be worn after journal in the morning.
  12. All clothing is to be neat and tidy, not worn or threadbare. Any clothes with holes, including jeans, will not be permitted, and sleeveless shirts will only be allowed during work details as long as student is out of view of the office. The staff may request any clothing not to be worn, and the garment may be subject to confiscation and/or sent home at the student's expense.
  13. Hats must be worn **straight forward** on the head at all times not backwards. No hats are to be worn in the Dining hall.
  14. Students are required to shower **daily**. Shower time is from 4:30 P.M. until lights out, **and is not to exceed 5 minutes in length. ABSOLUTELY NO SHOWERS AFTER FIRST ROLL CALL OF THE DAY.**
  15. Sleep-pants and sleepwear will only be allowed after prayer time and during breakfast, providing no visitors are present on campus.
  16. All students are required to have a collared shirt on when in a classroom setting. This includes praise and worship and journaling. It also includes any nighttime special speakers and chapels given by staff and rule readings.
  17. **Sunglasses are Not** allowed to be worn on campus. Exceptions include travelling on fundraisers or on work detail that students are working in direct sunlight.

### **Dining Hall Guidelines**

1. New students for the first three days and dish crew are to be first in the serving line.
2. **Cook must be responsible for ensuring that food tray/plate is set-aside for designated staff on property that eats meals with students. If Staff is not present to eat – their plate is to be placed in the fridgerator covered.**
3. The dining area is restricted to students until 15 minutes before mealtimes.
4. Students are required to use their own personal cups for all meals. Only Exception will be coffee in the morning.
5. Students are allowed only one trip to the serving window.
6. Students are not permitted to stick their heads through the window of the serving line.
7. Students will be served condiments at the serving line window by the kitchen crew. Kitchen crew will choose which condiments will be served with each meal. Students may not request additional condiments.
8. Students must eat what they are served. If a student would like a smaller portion of food, he must either inform the server at the window. **No food will be wasted.**
9. Due to sickness, students are not allowed to share their food with another student. **NO EXCEPTIONS**
10. After eating, students must clear their tray into the trash can, and then return it to the window.
11. No drinks or food may be brought down from the kitchen. This includes drink mixes, sodas, tea, milk, coffee,

- cakes, cookies, etc. No Food may be taken from kitchen without permission.
12. Monday through Saturday, at breakfast, each student is allowed one cup of coffee only. One student may not give his cup of coffee to another student.
  13. Each student must be mindful and not leave a mess behind at the table.

### **Work Detail and Chore Guidelines**

1. Students will perform listed daily duties at the specified times.
2. It is the student's responsibility to check the cork board at Student Services for work assignments.
3. At the scheduled times students must be waiting and ready to depart for chores and off-campus work assignments on the walkway between the gymnasium and the Administration Office.
4. Students must always have accountability at all times while on work detail, including cleaning crew.
5. Students must follow all directions given by staff or staff appointed senior students.
6. Any student who signs out a tool from the Mercy House tool room will be held responsible for returning that tool immediately after the student is finished using the assigned tool.
7. Any students who signs out any kind of key will be held responsible for returning that key.
8. On work detail or chore assignments, sleeveless shirts are allowed only when authorized by staff and when not in view of front office.
- 9. Students doing on campus chores may not enter their dorm rooms without permission.**
10. Students must maintain a polite, eager, and helpful attitude to our sponsors and the general public.
11. Students may not be idle after completing a chore or work assignment but must report to staff on duty for further instruction.
12. Break time is between 2:45 and 3:00 pm.
13. No one is allowed to get tools unless they are assigned by the work coordinator or part of their scheduled job.
- 14. ALL STUDENTS LEAVING THE FACILITY MUST TAKE A RIGHT TURN OUT OF THE DRIVEWAY, THEN TAKE ANOTHER RIGHT. NO EXCEPTIONS!**
- 15. SPEED LIMIT OF 25 mph IS TO BE OBSERVED WHILE DRIVING IN TOWN.**
16. **Work Stations:** - Students MUST remain in all designated areas during work detail. Anyone caught wondering around or leaving their station without permission by the supervisor or work coordinator will be given discipline.
17. **The Restroom must be used during break time unless for an emergency or a medical condition.**

### **Church Guidelines (Lev. 19:30)**

1. Students must be fully dressed and waiting for staff to call roll.
2. No candy or nuts will be eaten on the way to or from or while at church. There is to be no candy at all in church services – and anyone found doing so will have privileges taken away.
3. Students must walk from the bus to the church building as a group in a single file line (no more than arms-length apart from each other).
4. The restroom may be used before and after church. Staff will direct students as a group to the restrooms upon arrival. Afterwards students must use the restroom in an orderly manner. Students must go the restroom in individual pairs, as to not over crowd restroom, so that other church-goers may have their turn.
5. No flyers, pamphlets, or literature of any kind may be taken without consent from staff.
6. Students must enter the sanctuary as a group, and sit as a group, filling every pew, starting from the front without skipping any seats, as directed by staff on duty.
7. **There will be no talking or the appearance of talking during church service.** Students must read their Bibles until church service starts.
8. Students may not walk around freely and have fellowship at will. Students are to politely avoid casual contact with church goers. Students may not solicit handshakes. Students may not leave their seats unless it is to participate in altar call.
9. Students may not lay hands on females in prayer. They may not hug any non-family members of the opposite sex, whatsoever. To avoid the appearance of lust or disrespect, there will be no looking at any non-family members of the opposite sex longer than 3 seconds.

10. **At the end of the service, students must remain seated until staff gives further instructions.**
11. **Students must walk back from the church building as a group in a single file.**
12. Students may not sit with their families at church, unless it is their visitation weekend.
13. Bibles must be brought to church, and notes are required to be taken during all church services.
14. There are no saving seats in vans prior to roll-call for departure.
15. All sermon notes need to be turned in to staff on duty. Staff on duty will deliver to Academic Co-ord. mailbox.
16. There is no sleeping or appearance of sleeping in the church, Sunday school or waiting to attend either one.

### **Church Dress Code**

1. On Sunday morning, students must wear a collared dress shirt and dress slacks with dress shoes. **No tennis shoes are allowed.** Clothing should not be wrinkled.
2. Students must always wear a belt.
3. Any time you are attending a church service of any kind you are to wear dress pants and a dress shirt unless directed by staff.

### **Kitchen/Dish Crew and Chapel Set-up Guidelines (Luke 16:2)**

1. Staff-appointed crew chief only is allowed to authorize entry into kitchen area.
2. Kitchen crew is responsible for washing all dishes used in food preparation before serving time.
3. After serving, the kitchen crew is only responsible for putting food away, and delegating responsibility to dish crew.
4. Food may **not** be consumed in the kitchen at any time. This includes the dish crew. Cooks may only taste for flavor. Only water may be drunk while in the kitchen. No exceptions.
5. Kitchen crew must come into the dining area for roll call and saying of grace.
6. Kitchen breakfast crew must be in the kitchen no later than 4:40 A.M. to prepare the meal.
7. Kitchen crew must be excused from other scheduled activities one hour before lunch time and two and a half hours before dinner time, unless otherwise directed by staff.
8. Second helpings are not to be served. Leftovers will be served on Sunday nights.
9. Meals will be prepared on time unless otherwise directed by staff.
10. No one is allowed into the kitchen prior to dish duty. Nor should any personal dishes be washed in the kitchen before or after meals.
11. **Kitchen crew must return kitchen keys immediately after mealtime clean-up.**
12. Kitchen crew will be held responsible for any incomplete tasks;
13. The kitchen/dish crew is also responsible for setting up for chapel according to staff specifications.

### **Dish Crew Guidelines**

1. \*Students on discipline will be required to be on dish duty until their discipline is completed.
2. Cooks are to determine the duty each member of the dish crew will perform.
3. Dish crew will be allotted 20 minutes to eat their meals before they must begin cleanup.
4. Dish crew is not responsible for washing dishes used in food preparation, except for prep dishes that have been re-purposed for serving.
5. **All members of the dish crew must stay until the entire cleanup chore is complete and approved.**
6. Dish crew must follow instructions given by the kitchen crew.
7. Dish crew is responsible to keep stairs to dining area swept and mopped.

### **Accountability**

Holding your brother accountable is necessary so that we can emphasize to one another our mutual expectations, and to support each other in our mutual desire, as brothers, to raise our standards of behavior. For this reason the students at Mercy House are required to keep each other mindful of the rules in the spirit of **Matt. 18:15-17**. If a brother does not understand a rule, come to him one-on-one with gentle correction and encouragement. If the problem persists, take another brother who has knowledge of the issue with you as a witness. Still, if the brother does not understand the importance of complying with the rules of Mercy House, take the matter to a staff member (**Ecc. 4:9-10**).

## Conduct Guidelines

1. Students must hold fellow students accountable for their actions.
2. The possession or use of any drugs or alcohol at any time will result in immediate dismissal from the Mercy House program.
3. Students may not smoke or possess tobacco of any kind at any time at Mercy House.
4. Any act of physical violence committed will result in immediate dismissal from the Mercy House program, and criminal charges will be brought against the student.
5. Any defacement or destruction of Mercy House property by a student will result in immediate dismissal. Damages will also be charged to the student.
6. Students may not verbally threaten or physically abuse any staff members or any other students at any time. Students must submit to the staff's authority.
7. Students may not talk of street life, drugging and drinking, or reminisce about past sinful behaviors.
8. It is forbidden for a student to mock or call another student names.
9. No cursing, profanity, off-color language, or body gestures are permitted.
10. Horse play is not permitted at Mercy House.
11. Any sexual relationships or promiscuous behavior will result in immediate dismissal from the program.
12. Students may not chew or possess gum. Chewable or soft candy is not permitted at Mercy House.
13. Secular music, instrumental or vocal, may not be performed at Mercy House.
14. Students will perform daily duties at specified times.
15. For all scheduled activities students must be on time for roll call.
16. Students must participate in all scheduled activities, such as class, prayer before meals, chapel, church, work, or any mandatory e-team or choir practices, etc.
17. Students do not work on Sunday, except for kitchen and dish crew.
18. Any student who signs out any kind of key from the office will be held responsible for returning that key.
18. Students may not be idle after completing a chore or work assignment, but must report to staff on duty for further instruction.
19. Students must refer to any or all persons by putting the title, "Brother" or "Sister" before their given name, no exceptions.
20. Students should report all complaints regarding statements or actions of staff members or interns to the program director, executive director, or assistant program director, and not to other students in the program.
21. If a staff member tells you one thing, do not run to another staff trying to find one who will tell you what you want to hear. **(NO STAFF SHOPPING!)**
22. There is to be nobody in the gym, playing the piano are making any loud noise before 8 am.

## Boundaries (Matt 7:14)

1. Anytime off campus, if an individual student has a need to separate from the group, that student must receive permission from a staff member and have another student hold him accountable. For places on campus that do not require accountability see the PRIVILEGES section on page 6.
2. Students may not leave the premises without a staff member.
3. Students must be in authorized areas at all times, which are in direct eye-sight of the back office door. If a student does not know whether an area is restricted, it is the student's responsibility to ask staff.
4. Students may only direct approaching vehicles of visitors or guests to the Administration office and are not allowed to personally intercept an approaching vehicle. Only if intentionally asked for guidance is a student to speak or interact with arriving visitors or guests.
5. If students wish to communicate with staff in the Administration Office, they must first find staff on duty outside. From there, staff will call over to the Administration Office with the reason for the request. If the request is considered valid, the student will be invited to come over to the Administration Office for a conference on the matter. **Talk to your counselor for any and all needs you may have.**
6. Students may not enter any restricted area without first knocking and receiving authorization for entry. This even includes situations when doors are opened.
7. Students may not stand in the dorm doorway or enter into a dorm room other than their own.
8. Students may not knock on a staff member's room door, unless there is an absolute emergency.

9. Students are restricted from using the restrooms in the gym foyer.
10. The dugout behind the gym is restricted - unless otherwise indicated by staff.
11. Except during meal times, the kitchen and dining room are off limits (unless students are assigned to kitchen crew, dish duty, or special work details).
12. It is not permitted to loiter in the breezeways around the Administration Office as well as the backdoor of the Administration Office or in front of the main building or in areas marked off by red paint.
13. **Any student who is sick must report to staff before or at breakfast roll call.** Students will be excused from daily activities only if throw up is visible and/or running a fever. No exceptions unless authorized by doctor. In this case bed rest will be warranted. The student will be restricted to his bed for the duration of the day, and all meals will be brought to him in the form of broth or soup. If the nature of the illness requires medical attention, Mercy House will not be responsible for the payment of any psychiatric, dental, or medical expenses incurred.
14. You are warranted 3 sick days in a 12 month period. If you go over 3 days sick every day after that will be taken from your excursion or pass days.
15. After lights out, students may only be found in the gym foyer for the purpose of getting water.

### **Wood Shop**

No one is allowed in the wood shop unless assigned by the work coordinator. Any student who is not assigned to the wood shop must have a written permission slip by a staff member in order to enter, and must report directly to the assigned shop leader, or will be subject to strict discipline. **Anyone entering the wood shop must wear safety glasses and ear plugs - NO EXCEPTIONS!!**

### **Possessions and Contraband (Matt 6:19-21)**

1. Mercy does not allow any mood altering medications of any kind on the property. This includes Benadryl, narcotics, psychotropics, sleep-aids, etc.
2. Students may not possess any personal radios, televisions, cassette tape/CD players, or media players of any kind. Students may not possess cell phones or electronic devices of any kind. If electronic devices are used, they must be approved by the director and/or the intake director.
3. Students may not possess any non-Christian books or music. Only staff approved movies are permitted.
4. No student may use any other student's property without consent.
5. Random drug tests will be conducted. If you fail a test a \$10.00 fee will be assessed to your account. If you have to send your urine off for analysis and it comes back positive you will be charged \$100.00 for the test.
6. No jewelry except: wedding bands, a wristwatch, a chain with a cross (must be appropriate and in good taste).

### **Laundry/Blessing Room/Hygiene Products (Matt 6:28-30)**

#### **Laundry Service:**

Students' clothes will be laundered once weekly by a student assigned to that chore by staff. Each dorm room will be assigned a day of the week (posted outside the laundry room). Laundry must be dropped off on the tables outside the laundry room in the gym foyer **by 6:45 A.M.** on the assigned day. Students must pick their clothes up that evening. If students wish to have their whites bleached, they must label their clothes and combine them ***into one load per dorm room***. All clothes except for underwear should be neatly folded and put in the basket it came out of. Laundry room will be opened after med call in the mornings. All washing is to be finished by 4:30 pm. Student on duty is to follow proper work detail checklist regarding area requirements.

#### **Blessing Room:**

Any student who lacks towels, bedding, clothes, or shoes can fill out a request form for the needed items, have it signed by staff, and then take it to the blessing room. If students do not have a blessing room request form, the blessing room attendants are not allowed to provide the needed items. The blessing room will be open from **12:30 – 1:00 and 5:30 – 6:00 P.M., Monday through Saturday.**

### **Hygiene Products**

Any student who lacks dental care or shaving and hygiene products may request those items in person at Student

Services during hygiene/med call. Toilet paper may be picked up at Student Services only on Tuesday morning at med call. One roll of toilet paper is permitted per student, per week. If a student fails to pick up his toilet paper at the appointed time and still tries to claim it, discipline will be issued.

### **Personal Money/Medicine/Physical Exam**

**Personal Money (1 Tim 6:7) Students** at Mercy House may not possess money, in any form, on their person. **All** money must be administered through Mercy House.

1. If any students at Mercy House receive any kind of income, such as Social Security, Unemployment, Disability, etc., that student will be given the opportunity to make a monthly donation to Mercy House Ministries. If there is any remaining income, those funds will be placed on the student's ledger or in that student's own personal bank account. Our curriculum fee is \$700 and must be paid in full first.
2. Students may not solicit or accept personal donations from individuals encountered while attending church services or anywhere in the community. These individuals must be encouraged to make a voluntary donation to Mercy House Ministries, as a whole.
3. Mercy House will offer certain items through a store that will run once a month. As directed by staff you will have your list turned in at the specified date given for that month.
4. It is not allowed for students to buy personal items for other students unless approved by the Director.
5. If the \$700 Curriculum Fee was not paid in part or full because of arrangements made by the Program Director, any money mailed to the students will be applied 25% towards the curriculum fee and 75% towards their personal account.

### **Medicine**

**\*\*A negative TB Test, Hep B-C and HIV test are required before acceptance into our facility!!!**

1. The following items will be kept in Student Services and distributed at med call: any and all prescriptions; cold, flu, cough, and allergy remedies; any pain relievers such as aspirin, Tylenol, ibuprofen, naproxen, etc.; anything in an aerosol can; as well as Pepcid and Tagamet, and any laxatives.
2. The following items may be kept in the student's dorm room: vitamins, salves, ointments, cough drops, Tums or Rolaids, alcohol-free mouth wash, powders, creams, and bandages.
3. Students must make requests to staff for prescription refills one week in advance.
4. Students themselves are responsible for keeping track of how many doses they have remaining.

### **Physical Exam**

Upon induction, Mercy House, will schedule only one initial physical exam at a Comprehensive Health Clinic and will provide transportation if available at that time. An HIV test and Hep-C test is also required. All Dr. visits are to be approved by the Director or Executive Director. Any and all other medical/dental and transportation needs must be provided by the student's own resources. A \$10:00 transportation fee will assessed for Copiah and a \$20.00 fee for all other locations. This includes medication refills, follow-up medical appointments, and any other procedures needed, if possible.

Dentist and Doctor's appointments will only be made when there is an emergency situation. Most if not all dental work should be and can be arranged on either excursion or approved pass. This is in effect for those that having support and family's members that provides account monies.

### **Student Rights**

You do not waive your rights as a citizen when you enter Teen Challenge. The right to confidentiality is recognized by our facilities and no part of this chapter is intended to neither contravene nor violate applicable federal, state and local statutes or ordinances pertaining to a person's civil and human rights.

Where a conflict exists between adopted student rights, policy procedures, and standards and applicable federal, state and local statutes or ordinances, statutes or ordinances shall prevail.

You have the right to a safe environment in which to grow and mature in Christ when you enter Teen

Challenge. You may file a grievance if you feel that your rights have been violated by being subjected to inappropriate behavior such as physical, verbal or sexual abused by another student, staff or volunteer. Such complaints and grievances shall be filed by using the following procedures.

Write out your grievance or complaint on paper within 24 hours of the incident indicating all the circumstances relevant to the complaint. (Students who cannot read or write are entitled to have an individual assist them in the process.) Hand the complaint to the staff in charge where they will put it in Executive Director, Program Director or Assistant Program Director for review. You will be able to meet with the Director or designee at some point in the investigative process to discuss the details of the complaint or grievance. This investigative process shall take place within 24 hours on week days and within 72 hours on weekends. Any action required on the complaint or grievance will be addressed within seven days of staff notification.

### **Resident Counseling**

In compliance with National Accreditation Standards counseling or spiritual guidance assessments for any one or more residents shall and will be done at least a (1) one time a month basis and shall do so in accordance with confidentiality laws and standards.

### **DEPARTURE REQUIREMENTS**

If at any time it is your decision to leave our facility in Georgetown, our policy is first to call your emergency contact or family member or both to inform them of your decision. If a family member or guardian cannot pick you up within 3 hours, a Mercy House Staff member will transport you to the Jackson Bus Terminal. **NO EXCEPTIONS OR VARIATIONS OF DESTINATION!!!**

If you leave the property at any time *without consent of a staff member* you will automatically be **DISCHARGED** from the program. You will also forfeit any money on your account along with any possessions you have at this facility. This option to leave this facility is inappropriate behavior and will not be tolerated and any possessions left will be considered a donation made to the ministry.

If you leave prior to graduation, any incentive money made while at Mercy House will also be forfeited.

### **Grievance Procedures:**

Mercy House Teen Challenge strives to provide an environment in which students and staff can enjoy open communication. In times that open communication is not possible, the following procedures shall be used to file a grievance:

- i. All staff and volunteers shall be required to know the provisions contained in the student grievance procedure and how to process a student complaint.
- ii. All complaints shall be acknowledged and documented within 24 hours (72 hours on weekends).
- iii. The student shall be informed of the findings and recommendations within seven calendar days.
- iv. Student grievance procedures shall be written in clear, simple language appropriate to the student population and shall inform the student of the following:
  - a. The right to seek remedy for any complaint.
  - b. Methods to be used to file a complaint.
  - c. The right to grieve directly to any staff member.
  - d. The right to have direct access (if necessary) to the Executive Director at some point in the grievance process.
  - e. The right to submit a complaint in writing and to have assistance in writing the complaint if they are unable to read or write.

**Mercy House Adult & Teen Challenge - Georgetown, MS**

**STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PROGRAM RULES**

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**ACCEPTANCE AND AGREEMENT**

**STATEMENT** – All Teen Challenge rules and guidelines are subject to deletion, suspension, modification or addition at any given time by approval of the Director or Director’s Assistant. These rules are set down as guidelines, and are not a contract for graduation or continuation in the program. Graduation or dismissal from Mercy House Adult & Teen Challenge is completely at the discretion of the Center, in conjunction with our purposes and goals.

**WHEREAS** – The signature below designates the student chooses to enter the Mercy House Adult & Teen Challenge program and we as staff have expressed a willingness to accept the student to assist in overcoming his or her life-controlling issues and to receive Christian discipleship through enrollment in it’s program.

**NOW THEREFORE IT IS AGREED** – By and between Mercy House Adult & Teen Challenge and myself, in consideration of the potential help offered to me by the Program, that I acknowledge having read, understand and agree to the program rules and the above statements as a condition of my stay at Mercy House Adult & Teen Challenge.

**PLEASE PUT SIGNED COPY IN APPLICATION (ADMISSION) PACKAGE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Staff Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**