



THE GRACE PERIOD

The Grace Period Handbook

2020

The Mission

At The Grace Period we believe that everyone who wants to work should have access to survival basics: food, water, clothing, and modest housing. Unfortunately, because of the economic situation in St. Charles County there is still a gap in the wages of the working poor and their ability to afford modest housing. The situation is especially challenging for the vulnerable populations of single parents, those with a history of evictions, or families living week-to-week in hotels who are unable to save money to change their situation.

The Grace Period has recognized this dilemma and its mission is **to move adults and families who cannot yet afford stable housing into self-sufficiency by utilizing transitional housing, high accountability, education, and goal setting in a family-like, faith-based team of staff and volunteers.**

The History

In January 2019 the cofounders of The Grace Period, Amie Littrell and Sara Chandler, were introduced to the ministry called Neighbor Helping Neighbor. Volunteer service coordinators began to walk alongside hurting and unsheltered individuals and families as they worked together to access community resources to better their financial situation and ability to support themselves. The greatest need for each hurting individual and family was transitional housing. There are currently no organizations in St. Charles County dedicated solely to transitional housing for adults and families over the age of 21. In addition, the waiting list for Section 8 is approximately two years and is currently not accepting applications. Even without the needed resources of its own transitional house, Neighbor Helping Neighbor has already moved a few families off the streets and into stable, affordable housing and is currently working with more hardworking individuals towards the same goal. Once the Grace Period is fully operational, this process will be more predictable and success for these families will be quicker and more attainable.

The Vision

The vision of The Grace Period is not to offer one meal to hundreds or thousands of individuals, but offer an invaluable development opportunity to only a few individuals. While TGP must begin small in scope, if it can initially move one or two families per year off the streets and into affordable housing, that will be a victory for the organization, the lives of the clients, and the entire community. The goal is **to focus on intensive adult development and move at least 20 families/individuals from being unsheltered into stable, permanent, safe and affordable housing by 2025.**

The Plan

Families can live in a fully furnished transitional housing unit that is rent/utility free three months or very low rent for six to twelve months. Families are required to attend weekly meetings, including case management, budget counseling, life skills and whole person development. Families will discipline themselves to live on needs and not wants as they save money to clean up debt and prepare to move into more stable housing when they graduate. All adult participants in the program must have full employment.

House Rules

No illegal activity of any kind will be permitted.

Use or possession of alcohol, firearms or illegal drugs is prohibited.

Curfew is 11:00 p.m. This is only flexible for work schedules which must be provided to TGP by the employer. Any guest must be off The Grace Period property by 10:00 p.m. Quiet hours are 10:00 p.m. through 7:00 a.m.

Children must be enrolled in the school district nearest The Grace Period or in the district your family originates from. They must attend school everyday.

No fighting of any kind will be tolerated.

No pets of any kind will be allowed. (Foster care available for some pets. Service pets need documentation.)

Smoking is not permitted inside any Grace Period property and is only allowed in designated areas of property.

Families must keep areas clean and neat.

All adults in The Grace Period program are expected to work at least 40 hours per week.

All adults must attend scheduled meetings & appointments with coordinators and house managers.

All adults must attend two of the School of Shalom adult development classes for the 7 dimensions of well being. (Finance is a required class.)

Pass drug test and background check.

Initials

House Checklist

(This is to be done once a week.)

Sanitize kitchen- counters, kitchen table, cabinets, Baseboards

Clean refrigerator- discard all opened food, wipe out inside and outside of fridge

Clean microwave, stove top, oven

Sanitize and clean bathroom- shower/ tub, counters, toilet, floor

Clean all rooms

Sweep, vacuum, mop all floors

Wash and replace bedding and towels

Clean all ceiling fans

Laundry

Degrease blinds

Take out all trash

Any outside maintenance- mowing, snow removal, windows

Initials

House Management/Community Living

During House Management each client will be going over a score guide that is based on budgeting, employment, respect, accountability, staff and volunteers, community living, and life skills as well as checking in with where you are and where you want to be. **House management/ community living is about managing your goals and your dreams and**

making what you want to happen with the grace of God and yourself. The house manager will be working with you as well as your NHN coordinator if you have one.

During this time we will be go over resources and choose a customized development plan that you feel is right for you. **The house manager will check in and go over the day-to-day expectations of the program, including any house rules that have not been followed, food planning, or anything that may be wrong with the house. The house manager will go over the score guide and see where you are during the program and how we can help you to get where you need to be.** This will be a scheduled visit. The Grace Period does have the right to stop in for surprise visits if they feel it is needed. House Management and Community Living is about how you are doing during your stay and is about how you are going to thrive in the community after your time at The Grace Period.

Budget Counseling

Budget counseling will be every other week and this is when you will get down to every single detail of your spending. This will be given to everyone and is required. You will go by a pre-planned spending budget and go over the bills that you will have in the future as well as the ones you pay now. **You will start a budget saving for your move-out date, report your income, and go over a personal finance curriculum throughout your whole stay.** After moving out, TGP will be involved for one month with budget counseling.

Life Skills/ School of Shalom

There are seven dimensions of well-being: emotional, financial, relational, occupational, mental, physical, and spiritual. There will be an assessment test for this to see what your well-being need is. During life skills you will be focusing on at least one or two of these 12-session modules. Each module will have its own instructor/volunteer working with each individual. The financial module is our budget counseling and everyone will be taking that.

Program Disclosure

I have read and understand that if I violate any one of these rules I may be dismissed from The Grace Period program. I agree to not hold liable The Grace Period Inc. and/or any other parties associated with the program in any way whatsoever, singly or collectively, from any blame or liability from injury, misadventure, harm, loss, inconvenience , or damage suffered or sustained as a result of participation in this program or in activities associated therewith. I give permission for information to be released about me and my children, by or to any doctor, social worker, counselor, employer, landlord, shelter,

agency, including the NHN database, or any other person deemed necessary by The Grace Period program is not a rental agreement, and that this is not a landlord/tenant agreement, but an application for temporary homeless shelter & support services provided by The Grace Period.

Applicant Signature: _____ **Date :** _____

Applicant Name Printed: _____

Co-Applicant Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Co-Applicant Name Printed: _____

House Management Signature : _____ **Date:** _____

TGP Director Signature: _____ **Date:** _____