

Open Letter to Families and Friends of Residents

The purpose of this letter is to help the families and close friends of the residents of Loving Hands Ministries understand the position of the Loving Hands staff regarding contact between family members/friends and the resident during his stay in the program.

We begin with the understanding that no matter how much you love and care for another person, you can't fix them when they are broken. (No one, nor even a program can. If you could have, you would have fixed them long ago. They would not have seen the need to come to Loving Hands for help, nor would you have seen the need for them to enroll in the program.) Sin is the root of addiction. Sin in the heart says, "I want to live life my way, and will do what makes me feel happy." It is selfishness and has little or no regard for God or others. Jesus Christ is the only One who can forgive and cleanse us from sin. Once a person repents and his heart is right (changed), he needs to learn and apply God's word in order to change his way of thinking. He can then learn to apply God's thinking to his daily life. This almost always requires separation (for long periods of time) from former people and places, including immediate family members. (In many cases they are the primary enablers.) In some cases family members are also addicts. Based on more than 35 years of experience in working with people who have life controlling/addiction issues, we've learned that it is necessary to isolate them, for an extended period of time, from familiar people, places, and the ungodly influences of our society. Furthermore, Jesus Christ is the only One who can totally redeem and change a life. Loving Hands is a place of isolation from the old lifestyle and associations. We also provide a Christ-centered environment where the person who is sincerely ready to change can do so and, in time, find the God-given purpose for his life. We do not make claims that we, the staff or the program, can change anyone. We believe that we are able to provide a spiritual environment where a man can position himself to hear and respond to Jesus Christ, if he chooses to do so. We are fully aware and trust that loved ones of the residents are also aware that almost all drug addicts are sheer masters of manipulation and deception. The root of some of the contributing factors related to addictive behavior are mental and emotional due to the chemical effects the drugs have on the brain. The above stated beliefs and other unmentioned factors are the reason that we have the following rules and policies in place. Please note the following and read our Resident Handbook thoroughly for additional rules and policies not mentioned in this letter.

Letters to and from residents are limited to staff approved persons only. Only two letters per week are permitted. Letters received should not contain information that may influence the resident adversely. All letters coming in and going out are screened. Portions may be blacked out at staff discretion. Residents may submit requests to write and send approved letters after 30 days if there are no discipline issues. Letters may be denied at times at staff's discretion and may or may not be related to the resident's behavior. Correspondence, written or vocal, must not relay information about former friends and certain relatives whether male or female.

The initial visit is after 13 weeks and in some cases longer. Visits do not include wives, girlfriends or anyone not considered a close relative. Visits may be monitored by staff. Request are not accepted prior to the Monday after completion of at least 13 weeks.

Please note: The first visit may possibly be more than 13 weeks before it is scheduled. The resident is the one who must submit the request for the visit, not the family. Also please note: The second, third and all visits may very well not be scheduled the exact number of weeks apart as the handbook has them listed. (The reason for a change in the listed time may or may not be related to the resident's behavior.)

Once the resident is eligible for off property visits, a staff member must accompany the resident on all visits. Please note: There are limitations on where a resident may be allowed to go during a visit. (No movie theaters,

beaches or places where alcohol is served.)

Calls from residents to staff approved persons are permitted after a minimum of 60 days. All calls are strictly limited to 10 minutes. A resident may submit a request on the Monday after 60 days in the program have been completed, if there are no discipline issues remaining at that time. Calls are staff monitored and may be stopped at staff's discretion at any time. No information sharing regarding former friends and certain relatives, male or female is permitted. Also, no discussion regarding future plans are permitted unless Executive Director has granted approval in writing. We also respectfully request that family members refrain from calling the staff to check on the resident more than once each month. (That should be only if you have not had any information about him or contact with him during that period.) Please understand that the staff is busy in working with the residents and administrative duties.

Your cooperation is deeply appreciated and needed if we are to see the outcome we all desire, a changed life! Please read II Corinthians 5:17 and I Peter 4:8.

Footnotes: A changed heart will bring about a transformation of the mind. (A change from stinking thinking to godly & wholesome thinking.)

As one develops godly character, (which occurs as a person seeks and obeys God) his habits change over time. (The time required for the new lifestyle to become permanent will vary according to the individual.)

There is a difference between giftings/talents and character. Because of certain talents and skills a person has, he may appear to have changed, when in fact he is learning to behave differently as a result of his abilities rather than the content (character) of his heart. A man of godly character may fall, however instead of wallowing in what he falls into, (by the grace of God), he will get back up.

Family Member's Name & Relationship

Resident's Printed Name

Family Member's Signature

Resident's Signature

Printed Name of Witness

Date

Signature of Witness