

# Oxford House Welcome Packet, Rules & Fines

## **Welcome Home!**

We are very excited to have you in the house! This packet includes everything you will initially need to know and should answer many questions about the Oxford House system of operations.

This house provides an amazing opportunity for addicts and alcoholics to start over fresh, learn some living skills and rebuild our lives. This is usually our last chance and that is why this house is taken very seriously. If you follow the simple rules of this house, you will begin to see your life changing in many positive ways. A few things you will gain from this house are:

- \*Structure**
- \*Discipline**
- \*Sober living**
- \*Fellowship**
- \*Self-Respect**
- \*Self-Reliance**

Being able to acclimate with the flow of the house is very important. We must work for the house or the house will not work for us. This is not a place to lay our heads until we "figure things out," this is a place of changing and growing. We want you to understand fully what this house is all about because we don't have room for people who just need a place to sleep. We do have room for people who are willing to change and to grow. Are you willing?

We have no bosses in this house. **WE** share equally in the responsibilities and operation of this house for **OUR** benefit and personal growth. All house decisions are made by majority vote at the weekly business meeting. *No one individual is allowed to make a decision that affects the house.*

## **Equal Expense Share**

Payment is due on a specific day every week. We do not accept cash or checks; money orders or cashier checks only. One week delinquent and member may be placed on contract. Two weeks delinquent is grounds for expulsion. Everyone must pay their share. Remember, the house is **COMPLETELY** self-supporting.

## **Probation Period**

A 14-day probation period will be in effect for all new house members effective the day of move-in when curfew is met. Curfew is 10:30 PM on Sunday-Thursday nights and 12:30 AM Friday and Saturday. **NO** nights out. Breaking curfew is grounds for expulsion.

You are required to attend 4 meetings per week for the first 30 days and bring your signed meeting sheet to the weekly business meeting.

All house members are expected to read the Oxford House Manual and Oxford House Chapter Manual and refer to it when in doubt about issues. Members can also contact any chapter housing committee member or Oxford House, Inc. at 800-689-6411 for any reason.

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## Curfew and Nights Out

1. After 14 days, unless probation has been extended by a move-in contract, the curfew is Sunday-Thursday at 12:30 AM, and Friday & Saturday 2:00 AM. After these times is considered a night out. Members may spend the night out of the house provided they leave a phone number where they can be reached. If a member is gone 48 hours and the house does not know of their whereabouts, that member is considered to have relapsed and will be expelled.
2. In observance of Oxford House Tradition One which is to provide housing and rehabilitative support, you have to sleep in the house more than out of the house, which means a maximum of three (3) nights out per week, and not more than two nights in a row. Any exceptions must have house approval by majority vote at the house meeting.
3. If a member stays the night out, they must call the house the next day. If the member does not call they will be placed on contract.
4. Overnight guests are allowed three (3) nights of the week, if okayed with the house and roommate(s) if applicable. All guests should be in members' private area by midnight. These count as nights out. Guests are welcome until curfew or midnight, unless staying overnight.

## Jobs, Volunteering, or Aftercare

A lot of people come straight from a treatment center and attend intensive aftercare. If you do not attend aftercare, you can use the two week probation to look for a job (if you do not already have one) or find volunteer work. If you have not found a job or volunteer work by your third week in the house or following aftercare, you are subject to being placed on contract. If you have not found a job or volunteer work by the 4<sup>th</sup> week, you are subject to being expelled. This is not a flop house. Members must be moving toward work, school, treatment or anything the house deems productive. In other words, don't pay and lay, it's grow or go!! Generally speaking you should be productively occupied between the hours of 10am and 3pm every day.

Telephone and internet are a privilege. Do not abuse them and have respect for others. International, collect and 900# calls are strictly prohibited.

## Medications

It's a known fact that when alcoholics and drug addicts are clean and sober, we tend to not like taking the good drugs. It is important to take your medication as prescribed. Not taking meds correctly, IE consuming less or more than directed, can cause major mood changes and can lead to disruptive behavior, which can lead to expulsion. We are not Doctors. Changing our own medication would be self-medicating and is considered a relapse, which is grounds for expulsion. Sharing of prescribed meds is considered a relapse of all parties involved. Also, if your medication changes, you have to inform the house before you begin the medication. Certain medications may be denied in the house; i.e. pain relievers, adderol, ambien, etc. Addictive medication is best if not in house, but under certain circumstances it can be voted on by the house.

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## Disruptive Behavior

Disruptive behavior is grounds for behavioral contract or expulsion by a majority vote whether at a regular, special, or emergency meeting. Disruptive behavior includes but is not limited to: physical or verbal aggression toward residents or visitors; repeated infractions of household rules; unstable behavior, "old behavior" i.e. stealing, lying, cheating, being in another residents room without permission, not performing chores, making noise to the point of bothering others, etc; any violation of a disciplinary contract agreement; unknown whereabouts for an unreasonable period; etc. Generally, disruptive behavior is defined as "conduct counter-productive to a sober lifestyle to themselves or others" or that which disrupts the harmony of the house.

## Behavioral Contract

The house will go over what the contract will consist of. Usually the member will be put on probation and the house will decide on special conditions by majority vote.

## Confrontation

We can also say "carefrontation" ☺ It's very important to be able to confront others with your concerns. You just might be saving someone from relapse and you will gain respect from it. With other things like a member slacking on chores, being negative or appearing to be in "relapse mode," you should carefront that person individually or at the house meeting. The basis should always be to help that person to the next level of recovery as opposed to bashing them for the level they're at. Never try to work someone's program for them, but at minimum do not allow their behavior to be disruptive to the house.

## Relapse

Any member who is intoxicated or found by a majority vote of the House to have relapsed will be immediately expelled. This includes:

- a) Drugs not prescribed for residents by a physician are considered a relapse.
- b) Not taking prescription medication as prescribed is considered a relapse.
- c) Taking another member's medication is considered a relapse.
- d) Any member who knows of another member who has relapsed and withholds this information will be expelled.

Any member who is expelled from the house or leaves voluntarily may pick up their belongings the night of the house meeting or arrange a time and day at the houses available time. At least one member **MUST** be present when items are picked up. Belongings must be removed from the house within 30 days of departure. Any remaining articles will be donated to a local charity.

**NO ACTIVE ADDICTS OR ALCOHOLICS ARE ALLOWED ON THE PREMISES AT ANY TIME!!!**

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## House Business Meetings

### Officers

House officers are elected at the house business meetings. All officers are elected for a six month term and cannot succeed themselves but can be re-elected to the same office after six months have elapsed.

- House President-**
- a. Calls and leads weekly and special meetings.
  - b. Represents house at chapter meeting, or secures an alternate rep.
- House Treasurer-**
- a. Responsible for maintaining house financial records.
  - b. Keeps membership informed about financial condition.
- House Secretary-**
- a. Responsible for recording minutes of house meetings.
  - b. Files & holds applications and contracts.
  - c. Sends thank you notes to contributors.
- House Comptroller-**
- a. Records rent paid and reports to the house at the house meeting.
  - b. Responsible to Treasurer.
  - c. Balances books with Treasurer prior to each house meeting.
- House Coordinator-**
- a. Assigns chores.
  - b. Verifies that house chores have been done for the week.

Weekly business meetings are **MANDATORY!** The **ONLY** exceptions are aftercare or work. If you miss a meeting it must be approved by majority vote and it is your responsibility to read the minutes of the meeting to stay abreast of the house business. Missing a house meeting (unexcused) is grounds for contract or expulsion.

Any member has the right call an emergency meeting. If you feel something needs to be addressed immediately you may call one. As a general rule, emergency meetings usually pertain to financial crisis, a relapse situation, or a heavy confrontation. A majority of the house members must be present.

Any member has the right to call a Special Meeting. If you feel something needs to be addressed and should not be held off until regularly scheduled house meeting, you should post the meeting on the board 24 hours in advance.

Emergency interviews can be held if the house is in special need or if an applicant cannot attend the regular interview night due to treatment. Answering the telephone and returning calls is an important task for our recovery community. Your house might not have a vacancy but you can refer them to other houses. Remember what it was like when you were in treatment and were looking for a safe place to go.

### Chapter Meetings

New members are required to attend the first 2 out of 3 chapter meetings after moving in, unless there is a conflict with work or school. Chapter meetings are when all Oxford houses in a chapter meet at one of the men's or women's house once a month. Each house goes over the business of the house; i.e. bills, vacancies, and an overview of how the house is doing. This gives you a chance to really understand your house and what Oxford is all about. We highly recommend that you attend these meetings, it is important to get involved and it is also a great chance to do some service work ☺.

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## Fines

Fines may be given by any member of the house and may also be disputed at the weekly meeting. If the member feels the fine is unjust, the issue is voted on. The guidelines for fines are:

- a. First offense, warning.
- b. Second offense, fine.
- c. Third offense, fine is doubled.
- d. Fourth offense, fine is doubled and member placed on contract.

### **NOTE: 3 FINES IN ONE MONTH RESULTS IN MEMBER CONTRACT**

a) Chore not being done -----	\$10.00
b) Leaving dishes in the sink -----	\$10.00
c) Leaving personal items in the common areas -----	\$10.00
d) Not cleaning up after yourself (kitchen, bathroom, common areas) -----	\$10.00
e) Bedroom not maintained (clothes or trash on floor, trash can not empty, bed unmade, rug not vacuumed) -----	\$10.00
f) Smoking in the house -----	\$50.00
g) Eating other members food -----	\$10.00
h) Leaving clothes in the washer or dryer, lint in dryer -----	\$10.00
i) Leaving entryway doors unlocked or left open -----	\$25.00
j) Leaving electrical appliances on after using in the common areas and bedrooms (i.e. TV, radio, lights, etc.) -----	\$10.00
k) Adjusting house thermostats from agreed settings -----	\$10.00
l) Late to house meeting, unexcused -----	\$12.50
m) Missing house meeting, unexcused -----	\$25.00
n) Not performing officer duties as detailed in the Oxford House Manual (to include not delegating duties if unable to attend) -----	\$25.00
o) Unannounced night out -----	\$25.00
p) Unannounced guest in room without being posted on board -----	\$25.00
q) Late on agreed payment of equal share of expenses without house approval (and member is subject to being placed on contract) -----	\$25.00

**NO LOUD MUSIC, TV, HAMMERING, LOUD TALKING OR NOISE AFTER 10:30PM EVERY DAY INCLUDING WEEKENDS.**

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## Chores and Cleaning

Each member is assigned a chore at the weekly meeting by the chore coordinator. You must keep up with your chore all week. Choose a day (preferably not the last minute before the house meeting!) and super clean your area. Chore not being done is grounds for a fine. Do not start cooking while someone is cleaning the kitchen and try to vacate rooms in which they are trying to clean out of respect for their chore time. The house trash is everyone's responsibility; your dishes are your responsibility. Clean tub / shower / sink after use so they are free of hair, toothpaste or splatter. Helping around the house when you can is greatly appreciated and respected, considering that this is your house too. Bedroom areas are private and should be respected, and they should be kept neat and clean at all times. This house is meant to teach us structure and discipline, living in a mess is old behavior. The bottom line is: have respect yourself and your housemates, keep it clean!

## Chores

1. Living Room:
  - a. Dusting
  - b. Windex glass and T.V., coffee table glass surface
  - c. Sweep and swiffer, shake out door mat
  - d. Organize coffee table and sofa cushions
  
2. Dining Room/ Kitchen
  - a. Sweep/Mop (sweep carpet under table)
  - b. Wipe down counters with 409 (including behind appliances)
  - c. Clean soap dish and rubber mat beneath dish rack
  - d. Pledge table & chairs, empty trash
  - e. Microwave (clean inside & out)
  
3. Computer Room/ Laundry Room
  - a. Sweep/swiffer and dust computer room
  - b. Wipe down and dust electronics
  - c. Mop Laundry room and wipe down washer and dryer
  - d. Sweep and mop hallway
  
4. Bathrooms #1 and 2
  - a. Wipe down surface areas, rinse shower walls, and clean bathtub
  - b. In #2 rinse majority of bathroom including floor, wash floor towel
  - c. Clean toilet and sink and bathtub with comet, clean under toilet
  - d. Sweep and mop, empty trash.
  - e. Windex mirror
  - f. Put floor mats in washing machine and dry
  
5. Yard
  - a. Mow, weed eat, use blower on porches. Use weed killer if needed.



# Oxford House Member Contract for Disruptive Behavior

House:

Member under Contract:

This contract is designed to help you help yourself. As your housemates, we have observed the following behaviors and/or patterns that are disrupting the smooth operation of this House.

Disruptive Behaviors:

1.

2.

*use additional paper if necessary*

The House is asking that you modify your behavior in the following ways in order to best facilitate your recovery and the recovery of everyone in the house.

Specific Behavior Changes:

1.

2.

3.

*use additional paper if necessary*

This contract will be reviewed at each regular house meeting for its' duration and may be modified at any time by a majority vote of the House membership.

Thirty days from the beginning of the contract, the House membership will vote to either:

1. conclude the contract satisfactorily and retain the member
2. expel the member for disruptive behavior
3. extend and/or modify the contract and continue it

I acknowledge and accept full responsibility for my plan of recovery as outlined in this contract. I understand and accept that this contract may be modified by a majority vote of the membership and that failure to comply with the terms of this contract may result in my expulsion from this Oxford House.

Signature

Date

*We your housemates and brothers/sisters in recovery are willing to go to any length with you, but not for you.*

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

OVER →

Signature	Date
Signature	Date

Week 1 Review:

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Week 2 Review:

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Week 3 Review:

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Week 4 Review:

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Contract ended on Date:

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Action Taken:

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Additional Comments: