



City and County of San Francisco

Shelter Monitoring Committee

Standard of Care-Complaint Investigation

Investigation Number: 101617ND-I
Complaint Number: 1021617ND

Site: Next Door

Date Complaint Submitted to Site: December 6, 2016

Date Investigation Requested: January 9, 2017

Date of Investigation: February 9, 2017

Alleged Standard Violations:

2) Provide shelter services in an environment that is safe and free from physical violence...

Investigation-Conducted by: Committee member G. McCoy, Committee staff H. Chen, J. Simbe

If applicable, staff interviewed: N/A

If applicable, number of clients interviewed: 42 out of 334 total clients (12.6% of the total client population)

The complainant alleged in her original complaint that Next Door was not maintaining a safe environment inside the on-site laundry room. The complainant alleged that she was drying her clothes when another client came into the laundry room and began going through all of the dryers looking for her clothes. The complainant states that when she tried to stop the other client from going through the dryer that she was using, the other client started screaming at the complainant and chased her out of the laundry room. The complainant stated that she reported this incident to shelter staff but nobody stepped in.

In the response, Next Door acknowledged that the complainant had reported the incident to shelter staff and stated that a supervisor spoke to the other client about what happened. The response states that the other client claimed that the complainant antagonized her and that she was only responding to the complainant's bullying behavior. The response also stated that shelter management may enter into Behavioral Contracts with clients instead of immediately resorting to denials of service in order to change behavior and to avoid being punitive towards clients.

The complainant requested an investigation because she did not believe that Next Door was taking the necessary steps to provide a safe environment for clients to do laundry in.

Shelter Monitoring Committee Member McCoy and Committee staff made an unannounced visit to Next Door on February 9, 2017 in order to survey clients about whether or not the site was maintaining a safe environment in the laundry room.

Findings

Committee staff surveyed 42 clients staying at Next Door regarding their opinion on if the site was providing a sufficiently safe environment in the laundry room. Clients were asked two questions:

Standard 2:

Question 1: Have you ever felt unsafe while doing laundry at Next Door? (Ex: Has another client ever threatened you while you were doing laundry/)

Responses:

*Yes: 14 Responses

*No: 23 Responses

*No Response: 5

Additional client comments:

**People monopolize laundry room. Staff take too long and favor some clients.*

**Intimidated by groups occupying laundry room. Staff don't de-escalate or resolve.*

**Threatened twice when trying to use it, pay for service across the street. Some people monopolize laundry room. Staff won't mediate when issues in laundry room and no staff in the basement.*

In order to determine compliance with Standard 2, Committee staff needs 34 clients (10% of the total client population) to indicate in survey responses that they have/have not ever felt unsafe while doing laundry at Next Door. Committee staff received 14 responses from clients (4% of total clients) which that that they have felt unsafe at some point while doing laundry at the site. There were 23 responses from clients (7% of total clients) which indicated that they have never felt unsafe while doing laundry. Neither response received the required 10% of client responses for the Committee to determine compliance from this question.

Standard 2:

Question 2: Do staff respond quickly to conflicts and arguments between clients? (Ex: Do they step in and break up any arguments or fights between clients?)

Responses:

*Yes: 34 Responses

*No: 8 Responses

Additional client comments:

**Staff step back, don't get involved just observe*

**They could do better*

**Staff don't step in for arguments, wait till fights break out*

**Always something happening and it's not safe*

**Staff don't communicate well.*

In order to determine compliance with Standard 2, Committee staff needs 34 clients (10% of the total client population) to indicate in survey responses that they do/do not believe that staff respond quickly to conflicts and arguments between clients. Committee staff received 34 responses from clients which indicated that clients do believe that staff respond quickly to conflicts between clients, or 10% of the total client population. As a result, the Committee finds that the site is in compliance with Standard 2 of the Standards of Care.

Recommended Actions for Next Door:

*Please review all client comments

*Please remind shelter staff working near the laundry room area to monitor clients for potential arguments and conflicts. Though the Committee did not receive sufficient responses to Question #1 that would result in the site being out of compliance with Standard 2, approximately 1/3 of surveyed clients indicated that they did not feel safe while doing laundry at Next Door.

As a result of the Shelter Monitoring Committee completing the investigation into the complaint, this case is now closed.