

FAMILY ORIENTATION GUIDE

2013, 2ND EDITION

Welcome Home!

This guide will orient you to life in the Fisher House and serve as a reference in addition to the check-in tour and orientation. Please refer to it often and if you have any questions, contact Management.

We are honored to have you stay with us. Our Veterans, military personnel and their families have given so much to our nation. It is our privilege to give something back to you.

We invite you to feel at home in Fisher House. This is a home shared in common with others. Just as your home needs rules, so does ours. With an average of 60



families staying each month, it would be chaos if every family operated entirely as they would at home. All decisions about policy, procedure and yes, even where items are stored, rest solely with Management. While everything in Fisher House will not be *exactly* as you would have it in your home, with a spirit of cooperation and understanding we trust you will be able to share this beautiful place in comfort with our other guests.

Safety and Security in Fisher House

Your safety is among our primary concerns. The Fisher House is a private residence. NO ONE is allowed in the house who is not a registered house guest or visiting with a guest. VA Police routinely walk through the facility. Other VA staff have access only on an as-needed basis.

Guest badges must be worn at all times and are your ID at the hospital.

NEVER ADMIT ANY-ONE to the house who is not personally known to you. This includes individuals with VA ID badges. All visitors must ring the bell

and wait for admittance by a staff member or volunteer. If no staff is on site call the **VA Police @ x62899** for assistance. If you ever see anyone in Fisher House who does not belong immediately notify a staff member or call the VA Police.

When calling the VA Police from a cell phone dial **206.764.2899**.

Tightly close exterior doors when coming or going from the house. Do not leave exterior doors ajar for any reason.

Keep your keys with you at all times. If your house or hospital key is lost notify

PATIENTS @ FISHER HOUSE

Patients are welcome to visit the Fisher House, provided they have the medical team's permission. Patients may NOT sleep or shower at Fisher House.

If your patient is discharged from the hospital but needs to stay in Seattle for observation or appointments your family must check out of Fisher House and go with the patient to lodging. Arrangements for lodging can be made through your Social Worker.

Fisher House Staff

Cecile Bagrow
Manager

206.768.5353 Office
206.288.9862 Mobile

Brad Bartnes
Steve McFadden
Housekeepers

OFFICE HOURS

M-F -7:30am to 4:00pm

Office is closed on weekends and Federal holidays.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Keeping it Clean</i>	2
<i>Mail Call</i>	
<i>Fisher House Gardens</i>	2
<i>Please Note</i>	
<i>Common Rooms</i>	3
<i>Guest Suites</i>	
<i>The Kitchen</i>	4
<i>Caring for You</i>	5
<i>Other Notes & Tidbits</i>	
<i>Guest Services</i>	5
<i>Important Phone #s</i>	

"FISHER HOUSE IS
TRULY A BLESSING.
WE'VE MET SOME
WONDERFUL PEOPLE
AND WILL CHERISH THE
NEW FRIENDSHIPS AND
THE EMOTIONAL
SUPPORT WE ALL
SHARED".

-CLARISSE AND JANE

MAIL CALL!

Guests may receive mail at Fisher House. It should be addressed thusly:

Your Name & Room #

c/o VA Puget Sound
Fisher House

1660 S. Columbian Way

Seattle, WA 98108

Mail is delivered in the afternoon. Outgoing mail may be placed in the box outside the Management office. Staff deliver mail and packages directly to the rooms.



Keeping it Clean

Fisher House is a home, not a hotel. Guests are asked to clean up after themselves in the common areas of the house, as well as in their rooms.

Fisher House is not a medical facility but because our guests are back and forth between the hospital and the House certain hygiene practices are expected in order to prevent the spread of illness or infection:

Do not leave out cooked foods longer than 45 minutes. Correctly store all food. Label opened containers and leftovers with the date.

Wipe counters during and after cooking.

Used utensils should not be shared among guests. **PLEASE do not leave coffee spoons on the counter.**

All dishes, cookware & utensils must be cleaned in the dishwashers.



Regular hand washing is essential. Everyone should wash their hands:

- Before and after using the bathroom
- Before and after meals
- Before, during and after cooking
- Before and after interacting with patients and other guests of the house
- After touching your nose, eyes or mouth or after sneezing
- Before and after using the computer
- If your hands are visibly soiled

Cleaning Tools & Supplies

The kitchen cupboard above the right hand sink contains dishwashing soap (and a first aid kit).

A vacuum and mop are located immediately inside the laundry room; a broom is in the laundry room broom closet. (Imagine that!)

Basic cleaning supplies are located in the guest rooms for your convenience. Please see one of the housekeepers if you run out.

Extra paper towels and garbage bags are in the laundry room.



The Gardens

Guests are welcome to tend, harvest, weed, pluck & prune in Marianne's Garden, the first organic garden installed at a Fisher House. In season, a basket of gloves & hand tools is kept in the Family Room.

Relax & refresh in our peaceful Healing Gardens or let the kids play in the Children's Garden surrounding the Crooked House.

Enjoy the peace of nature in the midst of the city.



Please Note:

Smoking is not permitted in the House or within 50 feet of the outside of the House. There is a designated smoking area for Fisher House guests, with an ash can, near the entrance to our parking lot.

Guests may entertain visitors during their stay. Visitors are the responsibility of the guests and bound by the same rules.

Occupancy of rooms ranges from 2 to 4 people. You may not exceed the occupancy limit for your room. Fisher House staff must be advised prior to the stay of any over-night guests and badges will be issued to those individuals.

No alcohol or weapons are allowed on federal property, including Fisher House.

Living Room

Library books are donations. If you are in the midst of a gripping tale when it's time to leave, feel free to take the book with you.

The toys are all donations and children who fall in love with a special friend may take it home with them.

Please return Playstation games and controllers to the drawer after use.

Guests are invited to make a scrapbook page for our "family album" at the craft desk.

The computer is connected to the Internet, a printer and has a camera for Skyping.

Dining Room

All food and beverage must be consumed in the dining room (or kitchen/family room area).

Wipe down placemats and table after meals.



No open flames (candles, votives) are allowed in Fisher House.

Family Room

Wii and Xbox systems are hooked up to the big TV. Games and controllers are in labeled drawers. Please return games to jewel boxes and stow controllers after use.

DVDs and videos may be borrowed for viewing in guest rooms.

If you eat or drink in the family room please clean up after yourself.



Yes, that popcorn machine works and yes, you may use it.

Laundry Room

Laundry soap and fabric softener are provided for guests. (If you prefer another brand you are invited to purchase it for yourself). The machines are high efficiency so you need only fill the detergent dispenser to the first line.

Please do not leave laundry unattended; if you start a load, stick around until it is completed. Clean lint traps after using dryer.

Do not use dryer sheets as they can damage the machines.

Guests may **not** do patient laundry in Fisher House.

GUEST SUITES

Most guest suites have a computer with Internet access. Strict policies govern the use of computers and violations will result in eviction. **Do not** download software to Fisher House computers or rearrange the desktops. Guests assigned a room without a computer may check out a laptop from the Management office.

Dial "9" before making local calls from any house phone. Guest room phone numbers are listed in the Guest Book in your room. Phone number may be given out to family, friends or VA staff who may need to contact you.

The Guest Book explains house rules in detail, outlines emergency procedures and offers a listing of nearby services.

Only water is allowed in guest

rooms. Absolutely **no** other food or beverage is allowed outside of the dining room & kitchen/family room.

Climate control in guest rooms is adjustable only within 3 degrees. Guests may request additional bedding if they are too cold at night.

Please do not leave windows open if you are not in your room.

Each room is supplied with basic cleaning products, either in the closet or a cupboard of the bathroom. A vacuum cleaner is available in the laundry room.

Housekeeping staff picks up trash on a regular basis, during business hours and at the request of Management. Management may also enter rooms as need dictates. Staff will

always knock first and announce our presence, then enter the room with our keys if there is no answer.

The teddy bear in the room may go home with you.

CHECKING OUT

During business hours, please turn in your keys to the Management office.

If checking out when staff is unavailable leave keys in guest room. Fill out the form on the front of your check out packet and slide under the office door. We need to know you have left so that we can prepare the room for the next guest.

HOUSEKEEPING

NOTE:

WE ASK THAT
GUESTS NOT GIVE
ORDERS OR
DIRECTIONS TO
HOUSEKEEPING
STAFF. PLEASE
SEE MANAGEMENT
WITH ANY SPECIAL
REQUESTS OR
NEEDS.

The Kitchen: The Heart of the Home

Guests are responsible for their own meals while staying at Fisher House. From time to time volunteer groups provide meals. We always announce these events in advance. Check the chalk board on the counter for important house updates!

Please observe the following kitchen policies:

Clean up after yourself when preparing meals. Wipe counters and rinse sponges. Do not leave dirty dishes in the sink or on countertops. (This includes coffee spoons!).

All dishes and cookware are run through the dishwashers. If you put in the last dirty dish, please start the washer. If you take out the first clean dish, please take a few minutes to unload everything.

Basic pantry items are available for guests in the kitchen cupboards and drawers. The 3rd fridge (labeled "House") and the freezer in the laundry room also contain food for all. We cannot accommodate every taste or dietary need and aren't always able to get to the grocery store so if you cannot find a particular item you are responsible for providing it for yourself. If you wish to purchase food as a

donation for the house please see the Management office to receive a donation form for tax purposes.

Food in the House is for the guests of Fisher House. If you are entertaining visitors or regularly making meals for your patient it is expected that you provide

signed fridge for storing perishables. Anything that does not fit in your basket should be labeled with your **NAME** and stored elsewhere in that assigned fridge. Anything not labeled is for the use of all guests. Anything labeled with only a number will be tossed during the weekly fridge fling.

Do not reorganize, stack or remove empty fridge baskets to make more room for your food. People are checking in all the time and those baskets must be available for new guests.

Please note that you are sharing fridge space with other families. If you have more food than can be stored in your basket it's time to eat it up or fling it. Remember that you do not need to buy groceries in the same quantity as you would if you were at home.

Staff conduct regular "flings" of all fridges and freezers to keep them clean and organized. Food past its prime, unlabeled or marked with only a room number will be tossed with impunity. We do not go through guest baskets during these flings but ask guests to regularly check basket contents to help keep the fridges fresh and roomy.



the groceries for yourself.

Guests are assigned a cubby in the kitchen island for their own non-perishables. They do not lock so it is on an honor system. Parents of small children, please make sure your little ones stay out of other people's cupboards! A labeled bin for use in the guest freezer is stored in your cubby. If you do not have any freezer food please leave the bin in your cubby. Clean and return the bin to the cubby at check out.

Guests are also provided a labeled basket in their as-

"Amazing! This one gesture from a family years ago is a gift that will keep on giving for generations. What a present to all the VA families touched by the Fishers. Thank you so much".

-Nancy

Taking Care of the Caretakers

While at Fisher House it is important that you remember to take care of yourself. The stress of caring for a loved one in the hospital takes a physical and emotional toll on the caregiver. Remember to eat well, drink lots of water and get adequate sleep. We provide other opportunities for you to recharge your batteries and take care of YOU! We invite you to make the most of these opportunities when they are available.

EXERCISE

We don't have a gym at Fisher House but we do have the next

best thing: Wii Fit. Create your Mii avatar and then choose from a menu of fitness options, from balance games to cardio work-outs. The Wii is hooked up to the big TV in the family room.

Other options for fitness include a walking program (see the family calendar) and free passes to Columbia City Fitness (see Manager for a pass)

MASSAGE

Complimentary chair massage is offered to guests on an alternating schedule. Check the family calendar for details. Massages are offered courtesy

of licensed massage therapists through Touch of Relief.

TEA & YOGA

We are pleased to offer a calming hour of tea, chat, yoga stretches and breathing exercises led by our own personal trainer. This is a great way to relax and you will learn tricks to help you manage stress even after you leave Fisher House. Check the family calendar for schedule.



VA PUGET SOUND FISHER HOUSE ON THE WEB!

Website:

www.fisherhousevaps.org

Facebook:

We have our own Facebook page. Search for "VA Puget Sound Fisher House" and "like" us. This will keep you connected to other guests and on-going news and stories from the house.



Other Notes & Tidbits of Useful Information

Important keys hang around the neck of Pierre the Pig, who lives on the kitchen island. One is for the shed that houses the trash bin. Guests are responsible for taking out house trash on weekends. The other key is for the lock on the BBQ. Guests should unlock and move the grill, making sure that it is well away from all doors and overhangs to Fisher House when in use. Lock it up again when you are done grilling. Please clean the grill after use.

Children are the sole responsibility of their parent/guardian. Children under 16 years of age may not be left unattended in the house at any time.

The only animals allowed in Fisher House are certified service animals, trained to perform specific tasks for their

owner. The service animal must belong to the registered guest at Fisher House. Patient service animals cannot be accommodated. Animals must have registration papers and current vaccination records and must be crated at night. Service animals are not allowed on the furniture and must be fed and watered outside on the patio. Guests are responsible for cleaning up and disposing properly of animal waste outside the house. Comfort animals are not permitted to stay at Fisher House.

Quiet hours are between 9pm to 9am. Please take care to not bang doors, keep voices down and watch volumes on TVs in the guest rooms. When coming or going from the House during this time please use the front or family room doors to minimize noise.

FUNDING FOR FISHER HOUSE

No tax dollars went into the building of this Fisher House. The Fisher House Foundation relies on private donations to do their work on behalf of Veteran and military families. The VA Puget Sound Fisher House is supported by a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit, "The Friends of VA Puget Sound Fisher House". Appropriated funds from Congress pay for the salaries of staff and upkeep of the house. 99.8% of all donations received through the nonprofit go directly to support the programs of VA Puget Sound Fisher House.

"I can't say enough about how wonderful Fisher House is! The comfort I receive here—both emotionally and physically—made this time easier and allowed me to concentrate on my husband's health and nothing else"

-Julie

VA PUGET SOUND FISHER HOUSE

Guest Services

Copier

We have a copy machine for the use of guests. Please see the Management office for assistance.

Fax

Guests may receive and send faxes from VA Puget Sound Fisher House. The number is 206-277-1415. See the Management office to have a fax sent. Received faxes will be delivered to guest rooms.

Transportation

Fisher House is not able to provide transportation for guests however, there are some options for getting around:

Ride Sharing

Sign up on the board in the laundry room if you either need a ride or have a car and are available to help out a guest who does not.

Cabs

The Guest Handbook in your room has a listing of local cab companies. When giving directions to the dispatcher tell them that you are the VA Hospital at 1660 S. Columbian Way, at the Fisher House and add that Fisher House is across the street from the Radiation building. (The cabbies know that location but not all of them know about Fisher House). Make sure you are out in front waiting after you place the call.

Public Transportation

Two Metro bus lines come directly to the medical center: #s 60 and 36. More information about routes and times can be found at www.tripplanner.kingcounty.gov

There is a Link Light Rail station just 1 mile from the

Fisher House. The line runs north to downtown Seattle and south to Sea Tac Airport. To get there simply take the #36 bus (there is a stop on Beacon Ave, across the street on the golf course side) to the Beacon Hill station.

For more information go to www.soundtransit.org.

Parking

The lot directly behind the house is designated parking for guests of Fisher House. If you have a vehicle make sure it is registered with the Management office and that you are displaying a Fisher House parking permit. If your stay extends beyond the time of the original permit we will issue you a new one. Only one parking space is available per family.

Important Phone Numbers

The five digit extension may be used from any hospital or Fisher House phone:

VA Police x62899
(206-764-2899)

Call this number for any emergency when staff are not on station.



Fisher House Phones:

Management Office:	x63950 (206) 277-3950
Kitchen	x42348
Family Room	x42346
Living Room	x42344

One last thing....

If you have any questions or concerns during your stay please bring them to the attention of Cecile, (the Manager). She's the one in the little tiny hat.