

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MEMBER  
SHELTERS' CONTENT AND ASSISTANCE FACILITIES**

# **THE SECRETARIAT FOR THE SHELTER MOVEMENT 2006**

## **Foreword**

Now and in the past, the women's shelters constitute the most important socio-political initiative for battered and/or raped women and their children in Norway. Thanks to many hundred women's solidarity with women who have been exposed to violence and abuse, the women's shelters have since their establishment in 1978 provided a unique service. A shelter is a low threshold facility where women can get assistance without having been referred by a doctor and without having to pay. The shelter is a place where women, together with their children, have sought refuge to save their lives and protect their physical and mental health, anonymously, without being monitored, rendered suspect or treated as a sick person.

The women's shelters provide the only defined low threshold service with a considerable professional insight into women and children's circumstances of life, their emotional, mental, physical and social needs.

The lack of formalized minimum requirements of the service has led to variations between different types of shelters when it comes to the organization of the facility, the basis for finance and content, and the content of the services that are being offered. From a welfare perspective, where equal access to high-quality assistance facilities is central, these variations are problematic.

The Women's Shelter has therefore prepared a set of minimum requirements for the member shelters content and services.

In cooperation with the member shelters, the Women's Shelter will through its work demand that the authorities lay the financial foundation for an upgrade of the service through the minimum requirements that have been passed, where the aims and objectives will ensure equal and high-quality facilities for women and children who have been exposed to violence.

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## **Explanation of terms**

**Low threshold facility:** An emergency shelter that is open 24-7, does not require that the woman is referred by a doctor, does not require payment, and can be contacted directly and anonymously.

**Competence and skills:** Knowledge about and insight into men's violence against women.

**Quality assurance:** The work environment of the facility shall be safe with regards to routines and procedures pertaining to health, environment and security. This requires both a single and unified evaluation of the factors in the work environment that may affect the employees' physical and mental health and well-being.

## **1. Aims for the shelters/crisis telephones**

The aim of Norwegian equal rights politics is that all women and men shall have the same rights, duties and opportunities within all areas of society. This aim cannot be achieved as long as many young girls and women are being exposed to sexual harassment, abuse, mental and physical violence, threats, rape, forced marriage, circumcision, prostitution, and made victims of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The latter expresses the most extreme part of the oppression of women in our society. In addition to hurting and destroying women mentally and physically, this extensive violence is an obstacle to women's participation in society, and an obstacle to a country's financial and democratic development.

A life without violence is a human right. This is among other places expressed through the UN Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, and the European Human Rights Convention of 1950. Everyone has a basic right to a life without fear of violence. At the UN's World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 it was acknowledged that a universal declaration about equal rights has not been sufficient in securing women's rights. In Vienna it was therefore for the first time explicitly stated that women's human rights are an integrated and inseparable part of the universal human rights. This is also an overarching aim when it comes to combating men's violence against women and children.

Men's violence against women is thus a violation of women's human rights. At the same time, the violence is a grave obstacle to equal rights between the sexes since it expresses unequal power relations between women and men. This is according to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW 1980) and the plan of action from the UN's women conference in Beijing in 1995.

Men's violence against women, wherever it takes place, is a public responsibility. It is a public task to prevent violence and give aid and support to the exposed, both in situations of emergency and in the re-establishing phase of an independent life without violence.

The women's shelters will therefore be included as important low threshold facilities and supplements to society's services for women exposed to violence and their children.

Whether the shelters are run by private organizations or the public, they shall be run professionally with regards to the needs of the clients. The public has to allocate sufficient means so that the shelters' quality can be assured based on the minimum requirements for the assistance facility. It is therefore expected that the following acknowledgements are rooted in the overarching aims:

- The work of the shelters shall be grounded in the acknowledgement that men's violence against women is an obstacle on the way to achieving equality, development and peace
- The shelters shall in their work acknowledge that men's violence against women both violates, weakens and erases women's abilities to employ their human rights and fundamental liberties.
- The shelters shall in their work be party-politically neutral, and they cannot be associated with

particular organizations or religious communities.

- In addition to the operation of the particular shelter or telephone, the shelters shall aim to influence society so that it changes its attitude towards men's violence against women. Among other things, the shelters shall achieve this through external information work, systematic registration of statistics, following up on relevant media coverage, and working with attitudes and aspects of society that upholds violence and oppression of women.
- The shelters/telephones shall be fully financed by the public
- The shelters shall be low threshold facilities that do not demand of their clients that they have been referred by a doctor, and their work shall be based on the principle help to self-help.
- The work at the shelters/telephones shall in principle be paid.
- The shelters shall cooperate with the public support and others in the local community whose aim is to take care of women who have been subjected to abuse and sexualized violence, and their children.
- The shelters shall keep in touch with each other, and to the largest possible degree support each other in common causes.

## **2. Aim for the operation of the shelters/telephones**

### **Aim:**

Women and their children all across the country who need to get in touch with a shelter or stay at a shelter in their local community shall have that possibility, both practically and financially. The shelter shall be a low threshold facility, and women should be able to freely choose which shelters they want to get in touch with. Leaving aside expenses related to food, the stay shall be free of charge for the clients.

Women who have lived in close relations where abuse and sexualized violence has been a part of her every day life have lived in a relationship connected to powerlessness. When the woman comes to the shelter, she shall not enter into a similar position of powerlessness. She herself must take back the control over her own life, and have full right of disposition over her own circumstances of life. The woman shall be the employees' closest partner.

All decisions that relate to the woman's and her child's lives are to be made by herself. If there is reason to believe that children experience serious failure of care, and the mother is not able to see that the child needs to be followed up by the public support, the matter shall be reported to the child welfare.

The reality and needs of the women subjected to violence and their children shall be central, and constitute the conditions for the shelters' content and services. The shelters need be staffed in a way that makes it possible to offer a wide range of services and choices that show respect for each and every woman's choice through advising, guidance, offers of conversation, follow-up, conversation groups and a temporary living facility in cases of emergency. At the same time, the shelters need to receive the sufficient means in order to make the public aware of the situation of women subjected to violence, and help develop the competence about such matters in other fields through courses, seminars and external work

## **2.1 The shelters' service**

- Telephone duty/emergency telephone – information about legal rights, advice, guidance
- Services during the day – talks, advice, guidance and accompanying the women to the public support.
- Offering residence at the shelter for women and their children who are in a crisis situation – talks, help to get in touch with the public support and other important institutions in the local community.
- Follow-up in the reestablishment phase
- Offers of individual and group talks – self-help groups
- External activity in the form of information and training of the public support, the public and authorities.

### **3. Offering residence**

**Aim:** The shelters shall offer temporary residence to the women and their children, and these facilities shall be of an acceptable standard. The service shall ensure the clients' basic needs, and each client's need for safety, security and well-being.

- The shelters shall have a certain standard of housing, and regular rules for the standard of living in accordance with building regulations.
- Each woman should have a room to herself and her children, access to a lockable bathroom, and access to a common room where she can socialize.
- The shelter shall have safe playgrounds for children, both inside and outside.
- The shelter should have a room where school children can do their home work.
- Residents with special needs should, if possible, have living quarters adjusted to their needs. In each county there must be at least one shelter which is suitable for women with physical disabilities.

#### **3.1 Safety**

- The shelter shall arrange for a safe environment for all residents and employees. The shelter shall have an emergency plan in case of fire.

### **4. Manned telephone/crisis telephone**

- The shelter shall be staffed in a way that makes it possible to man the telephone 24-7.

### **5. Offers of conversation**

- The shelter must be staffed in a way that makes it possible to offer individual or group conversations (self-help groups).
- The shelter shall have suitable premises for carrying out offers of conversation.

## **6. Operating the shelters**

Aim: - To ensure professionalism, satisfactory fulfilment of the aims, and optimal utilization of the resources that are available, and also to ensure the employees' influence on their own working conditions, and the residents' ability to influence their own living conditions. The employees shall be willing to listen to the residents' wishes and needs in the daily operation of the shelter. The shelter shall be operated according to guidelines and aims that in the best possible way take care of women subjected to violence and their children, also in the reestablishment phase they are going through after their stay at the shelter.

### **6.1 Demands related to the ethical guidelines**

Aim: - More self-examination on the part of the staff, better quality of the assistance that the shelter gives to each client, respect for the dignity of women subjected to violence, and women's rights to make their own decisions.

- The shelter shall have ethical guidelines that among other things regulate the relationship between employees and residents. (See attachment 3: Ethical guidelines)
- The shelter shall strive towards a professional attitude towards the residents, based on equality and equal treatment for everyone, regardless of age and ethnicity.

### **6.2 Demands related to the reporting**

- The annual report shall describe completed activities, statistics and the goals reached according to the aims.

### **6.3 Demands related to staffing and working hours**

- It is expected that the telephone is manned 24-7.
- The shelter shall have a plan for staffing and working hours which ensures that management, organizational and administrative tasks and work directed towards the clients are attended to in a justifiable way. The workforce shall be large enough for the shelter to take care of all the tasks that have been given.

#### **6.4 Demands related to functional office spaces and spaces for meeting activity and offers of conversation**

- The shelter shall have functional office spaces
- The shelter shall have adjusted meeting rooms based on the activities of each shelter.
- The shelter shall have a room for carrying out offers of conversation.

#### **6.5 Demands related to qualifications**

- Of the person(s) who is responsible for management, personnel and professional knowledge at the shelter it is demanded that they have a broad and relevant qualifications and suitable personal abilities. Relevant experience and/or higher education can be given priority. Given that no shelter profession exists, employees must be given the possibility of increasing their knowledge and skills with regards to the attached modules (attachment 1).
- Full-time employees and volunteers shall have the same professional qualifications and insight into the living conditions of the person subjected to violence, their emotional, mental, physical, and social reactions and needs.
- The shelter's management shall assess qualifications and suitable personal abilities in all employment processes.
- The shelter's management shall, as far as possible, ensure that the employees have a conduct that makes them suitable to working at the shelter.
- The shelter should encourage women with immigrant backgrounds to apply for positions at the shelter.
- The shelter shall prepare written instructions about the different positions for all employees.
- The shelter's management, or the persons given this responsibility, shall ensure that the personnel receive regular guidance in order for them to handle the particular challenges connected to the work at the shelter.
- The shelter's employees and volunteers shall participate in obligatory training.

#### **6.6 Demands related to the work environment**

- Each shelter shall do work related to health, environment and safety (HES) in accordance with the Working Environment Act and the regulations for internal control.

## **7. Demands related to professional secrecy**

**Aim:** - to ensure the anonymity of the clients by a self-imposed professional secrecy.

Shelter personnel is obligated to keep others from getting access to or knowledge about the things that she learns during her service or work:

- 1) someone's personal relations or (if relevant) the whereabouts of the shelter.

The professional secrecy also covers birth place, date of birth, social security number, civic status, marital status, occupation, residence, place of work, or other information that may reveal the persons' contact with the shelter.

The professional secrecy is also valid after the employee has terminated her service or work. She cannot use such information in her own work or activities or in work for others. (*See attachment 2: The Secretariat of the Shelter's professional secrecy passed at the annual assembly in 2003.*)

## **8. Demands related to women with special needs**

**Aim:** - When it comes to older women, women with minority backgrounds that need extra assistance and women with reduced functional abilities, the shelters shall adjust their operation on the basis of each woman's special needs.

### **8.1 Basic demands**

- The shelter shall organize purposeful activities to ensure that women with special needs are attended to in a justifiable way both during and after the stay at the shelter. This must happen in cooperation with the professional and assistance authorities from which women subjected to violence and their children wishes to and needs to get help.
- The shelter shall contribute to creating understanding among co-residents for the need to differentiate activities for the target group.

## **8.2 Women with special needs of assistance**

- The shelter shall receive funding for individual assistance to women who on the background of weaker networks, language difficulties and a lack of financial resources need this type of assistance.
- The shelter shall receive funding in order for employees to follow up on the women and their children who want support in the reestablishment phase after they have moved out of the shelter.

## **9. Women and their children from asylum centres who stay at a shelter**

**Aim:** - the shelter shall offer services to women subjected to violence and their children who live at an asylum centre. On the background of the woman's status, her case is administered by's UDI's operational regulations (the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration.) It is the obligation of the shelter to follow the current guidelines given by UDI. (*See attachment 4 from UDI*)

## **10. Using an interpreter**

**Aim:** - to ensure the quality of the information exchanged between the shelter and the resident, and attend to the clients' legal protection.

### **10.1 Demands related to the use of an interpreter**

- The shelter shall ensure that all women and their children are able to express themselves in the language of which they have the best command.
- The shelter shall use a professional interpreter when necessary. This expense shall be covered by the municipality.

## **11. Cooperation and contact between the shelter, the public support, organizations and local communities.**

**Aim:** - ensure good communication and interaction between the shelter and its residents, the public support, organizations, and local communities.

### **11.1 Demands of the shelter's cooperation with local and regional institutions**

The shelter shall arrange for good and structured cooperation with external relief measures.

## **12. Basic demands related to children and youths**

**Aim:** In cooperation with the mother, the shelter shall organize purposeful activities that contribute to ensuring the needs, rights and participation of children and youths during the stay at the shelter.

- The shelter shall have a particular focus on children's and youths' rights and needs.

### **12.1 Children shall have the right to be seen as autonomous subjects with their own needs and rights**

At the shelter, the mother is responsible for the day-to-day care of the child, but children shall be given the possibility to talk about their family's and their own history of violence through:

- knowing that there are other families in which violence occurs
- experiencing that violence is not supposed to be a secret
- a protection against having to listen to other grown-ups' stories of violence.
- positive experiences while staying at the shelter
- receiving personal support when it comes to their crisis or problem
- achieving insight, and being prepared to face their future after the stay at the shelter.

### **12.2 Demands when it comes to ensuring care**

The shelter shall arrange for the mother to follow up on her responsibility for the care of her child.

- The shelter shall have written guidelines for handling

- presumed or real failure of care
- threats, violence, and abuse
- contact with the child welfare

### **12.3 Demands related to activities for children under compulsory school age**

If children who stay at the shelter have certain individual needs, this shall be funded by the authorities.

## **13. External information work**

**Aim:** - the shelters shall be given funding to prevent men's violence against women through spreading knowledge, changing attitudes and social conditions that sustain the oppression of women.

- The shelters shall, through information material, give information to the clients about the services of the shelters.
- The shelters shall organize and/or participate in internal and external courses, professional seminars, conferences, institutions of education and other important arenas.
- The target group is both the people working for the public support who handle such problems, the general public, politicians, and other important people.
- The shelters should have permanent agreements both with asylum centres and institutions that teach Norwegian to non-native speakers. In this way the shelters can reach asylum seekers and refugees who arrive in the country with information about legal rights.
- The shelters shall through their work in interdisciplinary networks set the standard and provide new and broader insight into the problem.
- The shelters need to be given the possibility to cooperate with shelters and organizations in other countries in order to exchange knowledge and experiences in the fight against sexualized violence against women.

# ATTACHMENT 1- MODULES FOR TRAINING EMPLOYEES AT THE SHELTERS

## Module no. 1

<b>Organization:</b>
<i>Organization knowledge</i>
<i>Controlling projects</i>
<i>Action plans</i>
<b>Economy:</b>
<i>Budgetary procedure</i>
<i>Controlling budgets</i>
<b>Administration:</b>
<i>Personnel policy</i>
<i>Job interviews/appraisal interview</i>
<i>HES</i>

## Module no. 2

<b>Media:</b>
<i>Marketing</i>
<i>Information</i>
<i>Speaking skills/presentations</i>
<i>Medias' usage of the shelters</i>

## Module no. 3

<b>Law:</b>
<i>The Marriage Act</i>
<i>The act relating to social services</i>
<i>The act relating to child welfare</i>
<i>The national insurance act</i>
<i>The Children Act</i>
<i>The Immigration Act</i>
<i>Family law</i>
<i>Asylumseeking women's rights</i>
<i>Compensation for Victims of Violent Crime Act</i>
<i>The act relating to registered partnership</i>

<i>Knowledge about om the legal apparatus</i>
<i>The Court of Justice</i>
<i>The Gender Equality Act</i>
<i>The Conflict Resolution Council</i>
<i>The role of experts</i>

**Module no.4**

<b><i>The instruments of the police:</i></b>
<i>Ban on visits</i>
<i>Alarms</i>
<i>Witness protection</i>
<i>Public prosecution</i>
<i>Changing someone's social security number</i>
<i>Free legal aid</i>
<i>Codes</i>
<i>The deadline for obsolence</i>
<i>Counsel for the aggrieved party</i>
<i>Sexual offense</i>

**Module no. 5**

<b><i>Psychology:</i></b>
<i>Handling crises</i>
<i>Debriefing</i>
<i>Trauma treatment</i>
<i>Conversation techniques</i>
<i>Personality disorder</i>

### **Module no.6**

<i>Solving conflicts</i>
<i>Guidance</i>
<i>Preventing secondary traumatization</i>
<i>Group dynamics</i>

### **Module no. 7**

<i>General knowledge:</i>
<i>Forced marriage</i>
<i>Female circumcision</i>
<i>Prostitution/trafficking of women</i>
<i>Women with disabilities</i>
<i>Definition of abuse/myths</i>
<i>Mental, physical and other consequences of violence</i>
<i>Ethnicity – the cultural aspect</i>
<i>The religious aspect</i>

### **Module no. 8**

<i>Children:</i>
<i>The siblings of people subjected to violence</i>
<i>"Participating witness"</i>
<i>Directly touched by violence</i>
<i>Roles</i>
<i>Conversation techniques</i>
<i>The role of the public support</i>
<i>Children of substance abusers</i>
<i>Children of mentally ill parents</i>
<i>Visiting rights with children</i>
<i>Mediation</i>

## ATTACHMENT 2 – COMMON REGULATIONS ABOUT PROFESSIONAL SECRECY

### § 1. *The main rule about professional secrecy*

It's the obligation of shelter personnel to prevent others from getting access to or knowledge about what he/she learns in line of duty:

1. someone's close relationships, or
2. *[if relevant:] where the shelter is situated*

The professional secrecy *after the first paragraph no. 1* also extends to birth place, date of birth, social security number, citizenship status, marital status, occupation, residence, place of work, or other information that may reveal that the persons have been in touch with the shelter.

### § 2 *Duration*

The professional secrecy is also valid after the client's death.

The professional secrecy is also valid after the employee has terminated his or her service or job.

The professional secrecy ends after 60 years.

### § 3. *Consenting to giving out information*

The professional secrecy does not prevent information from being known to others to the extent that the person whom the information is about consents to it.

### § 4. *Limitations to the professional secrecy*

The professional secrecy cannot prevent someone from:

1. making the information known to the people whom it concerns.
2. making the information known to the client or his/her representative.
3. giving information to the child welfare service in accordance with the Child Welfare Act § 6-4  
a
4. giving information when no entitled interest requires secrecy, for instance when it is generally known or generally available other places.
5. giving away information when the need for protection must be considered taken care of by giving the information in statistical form, or by somehow leaving out individualizing marks.

### § 5 *Information to emergency services*

Shelter personnel shall alert emergency services (the police/the fire brigade) if this is necessary in order to prevent damage to someone's person or property.

If there is reason to believe that there is an immediate danger that a client will be subjected to violence, shelter personnel might call the police unhindered by professional secrecy.

In cases of a client's urgent physical or mental illness, shelter personnel might call a doctor and/or an

ambulance unhindered by the professional secrecy.

#### § 6. The duty to provide information to the child welfare service

Shelter personnel shall in their work be aware of circumstances that may lead to interventions from the child welfare service. Effective from July 1st, 2006, with background in the act relating to child welfare services from June 17th, 1992 nr. 100, § 6-4a, employees at private shelters who get their operation costs covered by the public are obligated to provide information in accordance with § 6-4.

Without being hindered by the professional secrecy according to paragraph 1, employees at the shelter are, by their own accord or after a request from the child welfare, obligated to give information to the child welfare service when there is reason to believe that:

- a child is being abused at home
- other forms of serious failure of care exist, cf. §§ 4-10, 4-11 og 4-12

and when a child has shown continued serious behavioural problems, cf. § 4-24

The woman shall as far as possible be informed about the release of information from the shelter to the child welfare service, but it is no longer necessary to get a written consent from the woman. Any other release/exchange of information to public institutions, departments or others still requires consent from the woman. See the act relating to child welfare services § 6-4 a.

Breaking the professional secrecy according to this regulation can be punished according to the General civil penal code § 212 (see page 28), if the person in question has been alerted to the fact that this might be the result of such a breach.

At each of the shelters **should** be appointed one person who is responsible for the release of information to the child welfare service, even if every single person who is connected to the shelter by giving advice, support and guidance has an independent obligation to inform the child welfare service, see the regulations § 2 (see the regulations on page 26).

#### § 7. *Information for the purpose of research*

When there are good reasons, the action does not lead to disproportionate disadvantages, and the woman has given her consent in writing, a shelter may give out information for the purpose of research without being hindered by the professional secrecy. The researcher is obligated to anonymize the information completely, and keep others from getting access to or knowledge about information covered by the professional secrecy that the researcher gets from the shelter or the shelter's clients.

The information can only be used according to what is necessary for the research, and in accordance with the rules about professional secrecy in paragraph 1 and 3, see the Public Administration Act § 13 e, first and second paragraph. According to the Personal Data Act § 13, cf. the regulations § 2-11, there shall exist an objective requirement for any access to personal information where confidentiality is necessary. It is the Director who authorizes other people's access to the information.

#### § 8. *Information about professional secrecy, storage of information subjected to professional secrecy*

Each shelter shall ensure that the vow of silence is known to the people whom it concerns, and may\* demand from them a written declaration about their knowledge of the shelter's rules for professional secrecy and duty of information.

If documents and other material that contain personal information subjected to professional secrecy are being stored, the shelter shall carry out a risk assessment and follow the Data Inspectorate's guidelines for securing this material.

§ 9. *Right to access*

Anyone who asks for it has right to access to his or her own personal information. When treating information about a third party one must therefore exercise caution. It must be pointed out that a third party will be able to demand access to information about him/her that is being processed, see Personal Data Act §§ 18 and 23.

\*If the shelter stores personal information about clients electronically, it must in accordance with the Data Inspectorate's rules demand a written statement.

\* If the woman wants the shelter to store her personal information, there must be available a written consent where the number of years of storage is indicated.

## **ATTACHEMENT 3 – ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR SHELTERS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SECRETARIAT OF THE SHELTER MOVEMENT**

### **Aim:**

The document deals with our ideology, our values, norms, and attitudes, and is founded on the platform from 1982 for the Shelter Movement.

Ethical guidelines are binding, and they are supposed to help us be conscious about our attitudes and our understanding when we meet other people. The aim is to achieve a more considerable self-examination, a better quality of the assistance we give to each person, and an improvement of the methods we use in our work.

The overarching aim is respect for the dignity of women subjected to violence and women's right to make their own decisions.

The guidelines should be incorporated in each shelter's internal system of control.

### **Set of values:**

The shelters shall be low threshold facilities for women and their children who have been subjected to violence and abuse, and shall not require payment or that the woman is referred by a doctor.

The work at the shelter is based on equality and respect, democracy, humanism, and feminism. The foundation of our work is neutrality when it comes to politics and religion. This means that we respect the client's attitudes and choice of life strategies regardless of ethnical background, religious faith and political views.

We meet women on their own terms, support them in their decisions, and do not spread doubt about the violence they have been subjected to. We shall give help to self-help by maximizing the client's ability to handle her own circumstances of life. This presupposes a period of residence adjusted to individual needs.

The shelters work on society, group and individual levels for all women's right to

- respect
- safety and security
- freedom of thought, freedom of speech, religious and political freedom
- privacy
- a life without violence and sexual abuse
- protection under the law
- work
- health

### **Target groups:**

The document is binding for all women connected to a shelter, and it is applicable to volunteers as well as employees. Everyone is obligated to familiarize themselves with the ethical guidelines, and carry out their work in accordance with them.

- clients
- colleagues
- employers/budgetary authorities

- partners

## ***ETHICAL GUIDELINES***

### ***1. Clients***

Women and their children who seek out the shelters, and who make use of our services, are called clients.

We are supportive, look after the clients and give dignified care based on equality and equal status. We will not re-examine the women's choice of solutions. The woman is her own most important resource. Our loyalty lies with the women and their children.

### ***2. Colleagues***

The diversity among the women who work at the shelters is a strength and a challenge. We have different backgrounds, experience, and skills. Those who work at the shelters are obligated to perform their work in accordance with the platform, and current guidelines.

We are obligated to know our role and take the responsibility our role demands. We shall prepare the grounds so that possibilities of development and increasing of skills becomes real for each and everyone.

We are responsible for taking care of each other in the work we perform together.

### ***3. The society outside (eg. employers, budgetary authorities, partners)***

The shelters are responsible for informing the society at large about the work that we do. We have to use the media, but we are also responsible for sheltering individuals from unwanted exposure.

We shall contribute to the disprove myths and attitudes that maintain and legitimize violence and the oppression of women. Through objective arguments and legal instruments, we shall provide information and increase the knowledge about violence and sexual abuse at all levels of society. We shall help make visible the extent of men's violence against women and children, and the consequences this violence has for the society and the individual.

*Our vision is a society with equal rights and obligations for both genders.*

### ***4. Professional secrecy***

The women who get in touch with the shelters are entitled to anonymity. The people working at shelters are obligated to attend to the clients' confidentiality and right to personal protection, and shall handle their professional secrecy professionally.

## ***5. Binding values***

The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

The European Human Rights Convention.

The UN Platform for Action Against Violence Against Women (Beijing 1995)

(passed at the Annual Assembly of 2005)

## **ATTACHEMENT 4 – THE SECRETARIAT OF THE SHELTER’S ETHICAL COUNCIL**

### **Introduction:**

Ethical guidelines for members of the Secretariat of the Shelter Movement were passed at the Annual Assembly of 2005 (see attachment). The overarching aim of these guidelines is respect of the dignity of women subjected to violence, and women’s right to make their own decisions. The guidelines shall also contribute to a greater self-examination in the people who help out at the shelter. This is in order to increase the quality of the aid that the shelters give to each person, and to improve the methods used in this work.

In the aim for the ethical guidelines it is clearly stated that these guidelines should be implemented in each shelter’s internal system of control.

At the Annual Assembly of 2006, the mandate and composition of an ethical council were passed. The council shall have an advisory role in single cases where there has been a complaint from a client, or a reported breach of the ethical guidelines.

Each member shelter is an independent organization or establishment. It is therefore up to each shelter to make decisions about sanctions pertaining to a breach of the ethical guidelines. When it comes to questions of work ethic in single cases, the shelters may ask for advice and guidance from the council.

In the cases where a member shelter breaches the ethical guidelines, the council shall give their advice and recommendations/suggestions to the Contact Committee about a warning or possible suspension in accordance with the Secretariat of the Shelter Movement’s adopted constitution.

The Ethical Council shall be operational from June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007.

### **Mandate:**

The Ethical Council shall, based on the adopted ethical guidelines for the Secretariat of the Shelter Movement, contribute towards safeguarding a raised ethical consciousness among the members of the organization, by, among other things, debating problems and dilemmas connected to ethics and reputation.

The Council is a forum that only gives advice or recommendations to the member shelters or Contact Committee based on breaches of the ethical guidelines, or suspicion thereof. Clients of member shelters or members of the Secretariat of the Shelter Movement may report cases to the Council. The Council may, if it finds it necessary, raise issues based on its own initiatives.

Each member shelter at which the complaint is directed may seek advice and guidance from the Council, and together discuss how the issue can be solved.

### **1. The Council's Tasks:**

- Give the members advice and guidance/recommendations in questions of work ethic, both in single cases and when it comes to questions of a more general character.
- Be the Contact Committee's advisory organ in cases of an ethical character.
- Raise questions of work ethic with the purpose of having a debate in the organization.
- Ensure that the member shelters follow the ethical guidelines.
- Actively and on an independent basis raise issues that pertain to the organization's questions in cases of an ethical character.

### **2. Composition, nomination and constitution**

- The Council consists of 5 members and one deputy member.
- Three representatives and a deputy member are elected from the member shelters in an internal process. Two representatives and a deputy member are elected externally. A broad professional composition should be the aim.
- The Contact Committee nominates members of the Ethical Council who must be approved by the Annual Assembly.
- The members are elected for 4 years, and the election must be carried out so that three members respectively are being appointed every second year.
- The Council constitutes itself with a President, Vice President and a Secretary.

### **3. Casework and procedures:**

- Women who are clients at shelters and members of the Shelter of the Secretariat Movement can suggest cases to the Council, also the Council's own members.
- Cases that deal with single breaches of the current ethical rules shall be presented in written form within four months after the incident is registered.

- The one(s) whom the case concerns shall be told that the case is being tried in the Council, and have right of access to the case. The involved parties shall further be acquainted with the fact that they have the right to make a statement on the case, and have their case tried within four months.
- In cases of disqualification, the involved member of the Council shall resign.
- The decision about disqualification shall be made by the Council.
- The Council has a quorum when four members are present.
- A decision in the Council is valid when it is made with a minimum of 3 votes.
- A book of minutes about the Council's negotiations shall be written.
- The Council's statement shall as soon as possible be given to the person(s) who brought the case to the Council, and the person(s) whom the case concerns.
- If the Council thinks that cases that are being presented are of such a character that they, according to Council, could have consequences for the membership in the organization, the Council shall inform the Contact Committee and the person responsible at each single shelter.
- Members who are or have been members of the Ethical Council is bound by professional secrecy when it comes to all personal information that they receive or have received through their duty.
- The Council shall give an annual report to the Contact Committee, who in their turn will submit the report to the Annual Assembly.

#### **4. Changing the ethical guidelines, mandate and guidelines for the Council**

- Changing the ethical guidelines, mandate and guidelines for the Council is the responsibility of the Annual Assembly.

#### **5. Economy**

- The Secretariat of the Shelter Movement is responsible for the Council's economy.

## **ATTACHMENT 5 – ROUTINES CONCERNING FEMALE RESIDENTS AND RESIDENCE AT SHELTERS (UDI)**

### **A) REFUGE AT A SHELTER**

- If an employee is witness to abuse, and the woman wishes to press charges, the centre personnel shall be of help reporting the case to the police.
- The same applies if a female resident contacts an employee and asks for assistance to report a case or get protection after an assault.
- If the case in question is a rape, it's important that the woman is taken to see a doctor for a medical examination, and to secure biological traces.
- The centre will obtain an interpreter if necessary.
- In the case of such an intervention, the centre personnel must be prepared to testify in a possible subsequent trial.
- The woman shall automatically be informed about the existence of shelters and what they can help her with. If she wants to go to a shelter, she is to be assisted in getting transport and a necessary interpreter when she arrives at the shelter. The expenses are to be covered by the centre.
- The centre should have a list prepared over available lawyers who are willing to take on such cases, and the centre shall assist the woman if she wants to apply for free legal aid.
- The centre is obligated to inform the shelter about its own role concerning the woman and her status, in other words that she is administratively subjected UDI's operational regulations.
- The centre is obligated to alert the shelter about the woman's juridical status (resident/non-resident/family reunion) so that the shelter does not give the woman advice that unintentionally will jeopardize her asylum application or residence permit in Norway.
- If the woman has children, the centre must alert the school that mother and child are staying at the shelter. Children shall still go to their regular school. The journey to/from the shelter and school shall be covered by the municipality in which the woman is staying, that is to say the municipality in which the centre is situated (cf. the act relating to compulsory schooling). As long as children below the age of elementary school are staying at a shelter, they shall use the shelter's facilities for children.
- Abuse shall be reported to UDI according to the current routines.

- If the woman, after coming to a shelter, runs to another shelter far away from centre, and this new shelter is known to the centre, this move shall automatically be reported to UDI's own regional office, which will follow the case further to the regional office that has the geographical responsibility for this area. UDI will then take over the responsibility for deciding whether or not the woman shall move to a new centre, etc.
- If the woman disappears from the shelter without leaving a message about a new place of residence, the woman (and the children, if any, that are with her) will be reported missing.

## **B) DURING A STAY AT THE SHELTER**

- The centre must call to the shelter's attention the fact that the centre according to operational regulations must know at all times where a resident is. The shelter shall therefore alert the manager of the centre if a woman moves to resident family or friends when this is not organized with assistance from the centre.
- The woman must pay for her stay at the shelter like the other clients. A basic sum is paid out to the woman as if she was staying at the centre.
- The centre is obligated to alert the shelter about children's appointments at clinics, the dentist's, the hospital, doctor's appointments etc. so that these are being followed up while the children are staying at the shelter. The same applies if the mother has appointments connected to the National Health Service or other important areas.
  - The centre is obligated to send all mail and possible enquiries from a lawyer about telephone interviews etc. to the shelter.

## **C) MOVING OUT OF THE SHELTER**

- Possible solutions after the stay at the shelter.

### **Transfer to another centre:**

- If the woman wishes to, the centre manager will immediately contact UDI and help the woman apply for transfer to another centre.

### **Direktebosetting/Direct establishment in a municipality without residence permit**

The manager of the centre will discuss the possibility with UDI, and assist the woman in procedures relating to an application.

**Establishment in the municipality (w/a residence permit ).**

- If the woman has a residence permit, the manager of the centre shall contact UDI requesting that UDI tries to speed up the process of establishment due to special circumstances. This applies whether or not the woman has been assigned to a municipality.

**Permission from a centre to stay with resident family or friends.**

- If the woman has a family or a social network in which she can stay pending establishment, the manager of the centre shall assist the woman in applying for a leave of absence.

**Going back to the original centre:**

This must be seen as a last resource if the woman does not herself wish it.

**The centre must endeavour to arrange for a situation in which the victim and the molester to the least possible degree have to socialize in a common room.**

UDI and the manager of the centre shall together decide which steps are relevant in each single case.

## **ATTACHMENT 6 – UPGRADING EXISTING SHELTERS**

**Aim:** The public authorities are obligated to ensure that the operation of each shelter is secured, and that there is a financial foundation for upgrading the standard of living, office spaces, conversation rooms, meeting rooms, working conditions, and payment, and also for developing further the quality of the services offered by the shelters. Each shelter is responsible for setting up budgets that ensure the quality of the operation based on minimum requirements and needs.

### **Developing skills/competence**

The shelter is the only defined facility that has such a considerable professional insight into women and children's circumstances of life, their emotional, mental, physical and social needs. It is therefore important that the employees at the shelters, who meet with people in crisis situations, have sufficient knowledge to handle this in a good way. The professional development of employees and volunteers must be ensured through courses and supplementary training, and there must be enough funding to run process guidance in order to quality assure the facility.

### **Upgrading office equipment**

Some shelters have "ancient" office and computer equipment, or lacks computer equipment entirely. Other office equipment is in some cases so old that it is barely of any use. To get the staff's office equipment to function satisfyingly according to today's standard at comparable places of work, it is necessary with an upgrade or purchase of office and computer equipment, in addition to computer training.

### **Poor standard of living**

Several of the shelters have low standards in comparison to what is now reckoned as a common standard of living. An example of this is that most shelters have few or no rooms that have separate bathrooms/toilets. At a lot of shelters, many people share a bathroom/toilet and a stove/kitchen. In addition a lot of shelters have cramped quarters, the residents have too few and too small rooms, the shelters are run-down, etc. At the same time, some shelters have a bad working environment for the employees, like cramped and hardly functional offices, a lack of room for meeting activity and a conversation room for people who only use the shelter during the day.

### **Poor accessibility for people with reduced functional abilities**

Each year, several women and children experience that the shelters fail to offer the emergency relief which is needed because too few shelters are adjusted to women/children with disabilities or reduced functional abilities. The situation is getting better, but there is reason to believe that this group's needs exceed the existing services.

### **Little knowledge about the services of the shelters**

The Vista report from 2001 states that there is reason to believe that the number of people who make use of the shelters' services will increase in the future, among other things because of an increased focus on and information about violence and abuse. In addition, the shelters have challenges when it comes to developing initiatives in order to reach the women who do not see themselves as women subjected to violence.

### **High costs of living at a number of shelters**

Today, the fees that residents at the shelters have to pay vary from NOK 0 to NOK 200-300 per night. As a rule, this fee is supposed to cover food expenses during the stay. Every fifth shelter demands that women from districts outside of the coverage area get to live at the shelter in return for an arrangement where the native municipality covers the daily expenses for lodging the woman, which vary from NOK 200 to NOK 1500. If the women have an income or other financial means, they need to cover these expenses themselves, in addition to rent and/or a mortgage and other living expenses. It is unfortunate that women subjected to violence and their children experience that the costs of the shelters' services vary. Based on the notion that men's violence against women is a social problem, the public is obligated to provide a financial framework in such a way that all services that the shelter offers can be free of charge, and the women can freely choose which shelter they want to stay at.

## **ATTACHMENT 7 – SHELTERS THAT ARE MEMBERS OF THE SECRETARIAT OF THE SHELTER MOVEMENT**

1. Aust-Agder Shelter for Women
2. Betzy Shelter
3. Bodø Shelter
4. Gjøvik Shelter
5. Haugesund and the surrounding area Shelter
6. Harstad Shelter
7. Indre Østfold Shelter
8. Kongsberg Shelter
9. The Shelter for Ytre Helgeland
10. The Crisis Telephone in Førde and the surrounding area
11. The Crisis Telephone in Indre Sogn
12. The Shelter for Women in Sunnhordland
13. Lofoten Shelter
14. Midt Troms Shelter
15. Mosjøen Shelter
16. Moss Shelter
17. Narvik Shelter
18. Nord-Trøndelag Shelter
19. Oslo Shelter
20. Orkdal and the surrounding area Shelter
21. Romerike Shelter
22. Sogn og Fjordane Shelter
23. Sunnmøre Shelter
24. Stavanger Shelter
25. Sør Helgeland Shelter
26. Trondheim Shelter
27. Tromsø Shelter
28. Vest-Agder Shelter
29. Vesterålen Shelter
30. Vest-Finnmark Shelter, the Hammerfest branch
31. Vest-Finnmark Shelter, the Alta branch
32. Vestfold Shelter
33. Voss Shelter