

## **EXPANDED HOME, HOUSEKEEPING AND HYGIENE ORIENTATION CHECKLIST**

This housing checklist should be used for clients coming from locations without amenities such as electricity, running water, and modern appliances, or for any others for whom many aspects of an American house or apartment will be unfamiliar. These clients will most likely require extensive and intensive follow-up housing orientation to ensure understanding. We suggest that daily demonstrations and explanations of various items listed below take place until the resettled family is comfortable with their new housing. These measures will help to ensure that refugees won't overlook something that could result in injury or damage to property or household objects.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION (explain and demonstrate):**

- Locking and unlocking house and apartment doors.
- Use of elevators in apartment buildings.
- Intercom system in apartments (if applicable).
- Other apartment building amenities (if applicable), including laundry area, garbage chute, etc.
- Opening, closing and locking windows (safety precautions regarding children and windows).
- Turning on and off lights.
- Electrical outlets and their use (safety precautions for children. Recommend plastic safety plugs for unused outlets).
- Thermostat and heat control.
- Purpose of smoke detector, testing and changing of batteries (do not use too much incense in the house).
- Telephone use (holding phone in the appropriate way, dial tone, dial pad, where is telephone plugged in. Keep resettlement caseworker number and other important numbers next to telephone).
- How to make a call. Proper phone etiquette ("Hello, this is... Could I please speak with..." etc.)
- Changing lightbulbs.
- Reporting housing problems such as faulty appliances, water problems, loss of heat, broken windows, inoperable locks & other hazardous situations
- Child care issues: walk together; stay close to home; properly clothed, shoed and cleaned; medical care; quiet after hours, etc.
- Call Anchor Relative or Volunteers or Case Manager if you need assistance.
- Case Manager's telephone number
- Call 911 for an emergency: this means in case of a fire or if you need immediate medical assistance or the police

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**KITCHEN (Explain and demonstrate):**

- Store all food in the kitchen and eat only in the kitchen or dining area
- Explanation of perishable and non-perishable foods and storage of food in appropriate places. What should go into the refrigerator, freezer, kitchen cupboards, etc.
- Use of storage items – Tupperware, containers, foils, plastic wrap.
- Refrigerator and freezer use.
- Stove and oven use, including on/off switch, heating levels, safety precautions (make sure the burners are off when done)
- Other kitchen accessories as applicable (toaster, microwave, disposal, etc).
- Use of pots, pans and other cooking accessories.
- Use of potholders, oven mitts and hot pads.
- Use of plates, forks, knives, spoons, glasses (safety precautions surrounding knives and children).
- Use of can opener (clients may use knives to open cans if can opener is not explained).
- Sink use – how to adjust hot and cold-water knobs.
- Sink drain explanation (important not to place garbage in drain).
- Use of garbage disposal (safety precautions –especially for children).
- Use of dishwasher (if applicable).
- Show proper cleaning supplies and demonstrate proper use of cleaners and cleaning tools
- Dishes and Cookware – clean with dish soap after each meal, dry
- Counters – clean after each use so as not to attract bugs or rodents
- Cleaning sinks and drains
- Cleaning stove, microwave, other appliances
- Floor – sweep daily; vacuuming/sweeping and mopping
- Cleaning tables and chairs
- Cleaning cupboards and other storage areas
- Refrigerator (inside, outside and underneath)
- Cleaning windows
- Garbage cans, garbage bags and garbage disposal methods. How often to dispose of garbage (garbage collection timeline).

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**COOKING CLASSES:**

- Teach basic cooking skills using burners and oven.
- Examples: Boiling water, making pasta, frying an egg, heating food in oven.
- Storing leftovers.

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### **LIVING AREA(S):**

- During warm weather, open windows during the day to air out the home; close and lock 1<sup>st</sup> floor windows when not at home and at night
- All clothing, toys and other articles must be cleaned up off the floor at the end of the day
- Demonstrate proper use of cleaning supplies and tools
- Dusting
- Sweep or vacuum floors on a weekly basis or as needed
- Vacuuming, sweeping furnishings as needed
- Cleaning of windows
- Cleaning stains on floor, walls or furnishings

Other Items/Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **BATHROOM (explanation and demonstration):**

- Using toilet: Lid for toilet, toilet seat, sitting for women, sitting and standing for men (do not stand on top of toilet seat). Use of toilet paper. Flushing toilet after each use. Do not put anything other than toilet paper in toilet. Do not fill with excessive toilet paper; use a plunger if the water does not run down. Do not use toilet water for cleaning, drinking, washing, cooking etc. Toilet water should not be touched other than if and when necessary to clean toilet.
- Using sink (hot and cold water nozzles). Washing hands with soap after toilet use. Drying hands.
- Do not put anything down the sink other than water; do not leave water running.
- Using shower: hot and cold water. Shifting water from bath faucet to shower faucet. Keep shower curtain inside tub or shower stall to avoid water on the floor; any water that gets on the floor must be mopped up immediately. Keep towel or mat on floor next to shower or bathtub to prevent water from spilling on floor. Bathmat inside shower to prevent slipping (warn about slipping in shower).
- Soap and shampoos used in shower. Washcloth use in shower.
- Using bath towels to dry off. Where to hang and dry bath towels (do not hang towels on radiators).
- Explain that the bathtub is not where clothes should be washed.
- Using body lotions and after-bath applications.
- Using toothbrush and toothpaste.
- Using mouthwash.
- Using air freshener in bathroom.
- Disposing of sanitary products, disposable diapers
- Sewage system and where waste goes.
- Cleaning toilet with toilet brush and detergent (keep detergents in child-safe location). How often to clean toilet.
- Methods of cleaning entire bathroom –cleaning bathtub/shower, sink, walls, mirror, tile, inside and outside of toilet, mopping floor, etc.

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**American standards of washing:**

- Shower at least once a day. Some Americans shower in the morning, some in the evening and some twice a day. Each person makes these decisions for him or herself.
- Brush teeth twice a day.
- Wash face at least once a day.
- Apply body lotion (if needed for dry skin).
- Wash hair every two to three days.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**American morning bathroom rituals:**

- Shower and wash body with soap and water.
- Wash face with soap and water.
- Wash hair (if needed).
- Brush teeth with toothpaste.

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**American evening bathroom rituals:**

- Shower and wash body with soap and water.
- Wash face with soap and water.
- Wash hair (if needed).
- Apply body lotion (if needed).
- Brush teeth with toothpaste.

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**Other American Hygiene / Behavior Standards:**

- Spitting in public is considered impolite.
- Blowing or picking the nose in public is considered impolite.
- Urinating in public is illegal.
- Littering is illegal. All garbage must be placed in a garbage container.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**BEDROOM (Explanation and demonstration):**

- Turning on and off lights.
- Storing clothes in dressers.
- Using closets. How to hang clothes and store other items as needed.
- Making the bed.
- Changing and washing bed linens (how often).
- Using alarm clock to wake up.
- Storing dirty clothes in hamper or other location.
- Sweeping and/or vacuuming floor.
- Keeping bedroom clean.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**LAUNDRY:**

- Demonstrate proper use of detergent, washer and dryer
- Clean lint trap regularly

Other Items/Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**GARBAGE REMOVAL:**

- Use plastic bag liners for garbage containers
- Remove garbage bags on a regular basis or when nearly full; tie securely and put in garbage receptacles outside of the home
- Put garbage receptacles at the curb for city pick-up on the appointed days

Other Items/Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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