



FIRST at Blue Ridge, Inc.

Preppie Handbook

Welcome to FIRST at Blue Ridge, Inc! New residents (preppies) are the most important group of people in our program. This handbook was designed with new residents in mind. It is strongly encouraged all clients take the time to read and study this handbook – the quicker you learn program terminology and applied concepts, the easier you will find things at FIRST.

This program is highly structured. There are rules. Everything a client needs to know cannot be included in this book but the program's basics are detailed in the pages that follow. **ASK QUESTIONS!** Remember rules and regulations are in place for a reason. We are concerned with your recovery and the recovery of those around you. Much of what goes on can be learned from listening and observing senior members of the house.

You may find this program challenging. It is designed to test you physically, mentally and emotionally. It may be the most difficult thing you have ever done in your life. Do not feel discouraged – **TALK TO SOMEONE!** Running from your problems is not the solution. There is wisdom and strength in those who have been here several months. They have walked in your shoes and may understand exactly what you are experiencing. Do not be afraid to share how you are feeling. No one will ask you to do anything they have not done themselves.

FIRST is specifically designed to help recovering addicts and alcoholics make positive life changes. We believe in the program and that you will be successful here. There will be times when you feel upset **REMEMBER – when you reach your goal and are standing on the stage at graduation there will be an incredible sense of accomplishment.** The motivation, determination, and the hard work all clients display when they have completed their year are the essential elements to success after FIRST. If we work together, you will achieve your goals and grow as a responsible, productive member of society.

I look forward to meeting you soon.

Sincerely,

The Director and Staff of FIRST at Blue Ridge

Major Program Concepts

A helps B and A gets better is the basic concept upon which this program is built. This means as you (A) grow in the program you will help others (B). The more you help others, the better you will feel. Experience has shown one keeps what he has by giving it back. Do your best to make this concept a part of your daily life. Practice it. Practice it. PRACTICE IT! If you follow this suggestion, you will see results.

When admitted to FIRST, you made a decision to come here. Our rules existed before your arrival and will not change for you. Ignoring the rules, acting in a way where things are only easy for you is disrespectful, dishonest and manipulative. Living as you wanted to live helped bring you to our program. Try it our way! The following are letters (guidelines) to keep in mind at all times.

H – Honesty:

You must be honest and real with yourself and with others. Honesty is essential to recovery. You are required to be honest in everything you do and say. Those who are not totally honest will have difficulty completing this program.

O – Open-minded:

Realize there are better ways of doing things other than the ways you have done them in the past. Listen and look at the big picture. Think about what you are told. Ask questions if you need to. Remember, staff is here to help. Keep an open-mind!

W – Willingness:

You must be willing to change and try a new way of life. Be willing to do anything and everything you are asked to do the best of your ability – whether you like it or not. If you are not willing, you will only make things more difficult for yourself.

Pull-up:

When you see someone breaking a program rule, stop and correct them in a clear, but non-confrontational way. If they talk back or become argumentative, walk away and pass the information to your peer leader.

Pass:

Passing information on another resident means telling your preppie coordinator or peer leader when you see someone breaking a rule, or going out of their way to do something positive. Often, residents have a hard time with this because they consider it “snitching.” Passing on someone in this program means you are helping them. We are not here to enable bad behavior. Abiding by small rules will help you with bigger decisions that come as you progress in the program. Get in the habit of doing the right thing and it will carry with you in the future.

Plug- in:

Plugging-in means talking about what is going on with you to your preppie coordinator or peer leader. It is important you share your thoughts, feelings and concerns with others who have walked in your shoes. They will know how to address a problem if one arises.

Preppie Phase

You will be in Phase One (preppie phase) for 30 days. This is your opportunity to show your dedication to your life-changing decision to come to FIRST. **Jump in and learn!** There will be many opportunities to try something new. Take advantage of them. You will make mistakes but that is OK. Learn from those mistakes and if you have issues with them, please see a staff member. Keep your preppie coordinator informed of your progress during Phase One.

You will be feeling many different emotions during your first few months. You may not understand what is wrong with you or why you are upset. When this happens, plug-in. It may feel crazy but it is perfectly normal. The feelings you are experiencing are a result of the drugs and alcohol leaving your system. Drugs and alcohol numb genuine emotion and your body and mind aren't balanced. Be patient and give it time. The longer you stay clean the easier it will become. Your system will adjust to being without chemicals. Use the resources available to deal with the emotions. Plug-in with your peers, talk to a staff member or write in a journal.

Physical activity is a good idea. There are tools here in abundance. It is up to you to use them.

Become familiar with the Phase One schedule as soon as possible. You are expected to know what to do and when to do it. Please pay attention to scheduled breaks. Do not skip your breaks and take them at the appropriate time. You went to great lengths in active addiction to get what you needed to be okay. We expect the same energy in your efforts at recovery. Understand things are subject to change. This handbook is not written in stone. It is a revision of what was issued before. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask. **The only stupid question is the one not asked.**

- ≈ Residents will receive one 5 minute phone call upon arrival to inform family you are here and safe. Sponsor calls are permitted with permission from the house manager. There will be no additional phone calls for 30 days. After 30 days, residents may have three incoming or outgoing 15 minute phone calls per week.
- ≈ You will be eligible for a day pass after 30 days and eligible for a home visit after 6 months. A day pass can be one time every 30 days; provided you have a sponsor after your second day pass or at 60 days. Eligibility depends on how well you are doing in the program and completion of required groups.
- ≈ You must use the chain of command if you have any questions. If you need anything, ask your preppie coordinator or a peer leader.
- ≈ Clinical groups and individual meetings are mandatory. If you are scheduled to meet with a counselor you are not to go to any other event except work.

ALL PREPPIES MUST COMPLETE AND PASS THEIR PREPPIE TEST AND TRANSITION REVIEW AT THE END OF THEIR 30 DAYS IN ORDER TO COMPLETE PREPPIE PHASE AND TRANSITION INTO PHASE 2.

Dress Code:

You were given a list of things to bring with you at admission. Clothes that reflect poorly on your new image will not be allowed. For example, if you were in a gang before coming to treatment, you will not be permitted to wear any colors or accessories that symbolize that gang. We will provide clothes if needed. Program clothes must be returned if you leave against staff advice. The following are guidelines regarding the dress code.

- ≈ No clothing with drug or alcohol slogans or images.
- ≈ No clothing with foul or offensive language or images.
- ≈ Sunglasses are not to be worn inside any building.
- ≈ No sandals or flip flops may be worn on the floor or outside the house at any time.
- ≈ No colors or accessories representing gangs. While you are here, you will not be permitted to define yourself that way.
- ≈ Pants should not be excessively baggy. We should **never** see your underwear.
- ≈ No muscle shirts or tank tops. No sleeveless or see-through shirts.
- ≈ Neckline of shirt should not be excessively low.
- ≈ Skirts and/or shorts should be no higher than mid-thigh when standing.
- ≈ No hats in any building.
- ≈ When wearing ball caps the bill must be facing forward.
- ≈ Clothing should be neat and clean.
- ≈ When on an outing or going to church dress appropriately. You are representing yourself as well as FIRST. If you do not have appropriate clothing, see your peer leader. They will make sure your needs are met.

Family:

You will be permitted one 5 minute phone call upon arrival. No other calls are allowed while you are on the preppie phase (exceptions are for emergencies, medical issues, etc. which will be made with staff/case management). Sponsor calls are permitted after your sponsor has been approved by staff. All calls are logged at reception. Long term clients will be allowed 3 fifteen minute phone calls a week (outgoing or incoming) after the preppie phase. If you attempt to make a call and no one is home, leave a brief message and it will not be counted as one of your calls. There is only one phone (located at reception). The use of other phones is prohibited unless specifically authorized by staff. Clients are eligible for a 14 hour pass (day pass 8am – 10pm) after Phase One. Day pass proposals must be submitted two weeks before you want to take your pass. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** Take time to introduce your family to staff and orient them so they are familiar with us and what we do. Curfew is 10:00 pm. Schedule your pass around curfew. If you leave at 2:00 pm you are still required to be back by 10:00 pm.

You are eligible for a home pass at 6 months. Home passes are four days and three nights. Proposals must be submitted two weeks in advance. You must be back by 10:00 pm on the fourth day.

All passes are contingent on your progress in the program. Proposals may be denied if the treatment team decides your progress does not merit the privilege.

Family emergencies will be handled on an individual basis.

Your mailing address is: **32 Knox Rd**
PO Box 40
Ridgecrest, NC 28770

Your phone number is: **828-669-0168 ext. 1203**. Your family can call this number when they need to speak with you.

Holidays:

Holidays are special occasions at FIRST. We host family celebrations and typically will not work (most major holidays). Guests are welcome on certain holiday occasions. Home passes are permitted for clients who have been here 6 months or more. Proper proposals must be submitted for all passes.

Work Schedule:

The work schedule is posted at reception. Review this schedule daily to insure you are where you are supposed to be. Work is an important part of recovery. A healthy work ethic goes a long way toward instilling self-discipline, accountability, structure and responsibility. We will not ask you to do anything we have not done ourselves. Perform each task to the best of your ability.

Conduct yourself professionally at work. Do not use any foul language or racial slurs at any time (home or work). Present yourself the way you want to be seen. Do what you are asked. Notify staff if you have a problem at work – we will schedule you according to your abilities. Do not get fired. Do not get high. Do not leave the job site without permission. **These are all dischargeable offenses!**

Medical:

FIRST at Blue Ridge, Inc. is not a medical facility. If you are sick or injured, let staff know. If you need to see a doctor please fill out a medical proposal form and place in Medical Case management to schedule appointments. Over the counter medications are available in the office. Please see House Manager on duty. **All prescription medications are kept in our medical room.** Prescriptions are dispensed at announced times. It is your responsibility to be aware of the medication calls. Failure to properly take your medications will result in consequences up to and including discharge.

Probation and All Appointments:

All appointments (probation, community service, medical, etc.) are scheduled through case management. Appointments are posted on the daily work schedule. You must submit a proposal to case management for any appointment other than medical. Probation and parole cases are handled individually by case management. Most FIRST clients are supervised by one probation officer. Probation lists will be posted each month. Make sure case management receives all information pertaining to your legal situation.

Terminology:

Bad-rapping: Talking in a negative way about other people or the program. You should never make fun of others or talk badly about people behind their backs. If you have a problem with a resident, go to your leader and let off steam.

Caught-up: When you get caught up in a disagreement with another resident. You should never confront another resident. If confronted come directly to House Management.

Clean-up: When you are asked to write down all information pertaining to a specific event or situation. If you are ever asked to write a clean-up, you are expected to clean up everything that happened, not just what you think we already know.

Contracted-up: When you and another resident give each other passes to break the rules. You agree to cover for them if they agree to cover for you. Healthy friends will not stand beside you while you break the rules because it is not good for you or for them.

Shooting a Curve: When asking permission to do something, you by-pass your leader and go to the next person you think will say yes. When you receive an answer you don't like you go to someone else to try to get a different answer.

Venting: To air your feelings of anger or frustration. It's OK to go to your peer leader, a senior resident or a staff member and say that you need to vent. That person can then take you someplace that will allow you to say how you feel without being heard by others. You should never vent to someone who has not been in the program as long as you have.

War Stories: Telling glorified stories about what you did in active addiction. When you talk about where you come from be sure to play the tape all the way through and tell about all the bad things that happened as a consequence of your use.

Guidelines to Follow:

1. Pass all information! Good, bad or indifferent. Passing is not tattling or snitching but being responsible for yourself and others.
2. Be honest.
3. Maintain a good attitude. Think and try to be positive at all times.
4. Be on the floor by 6:30 a.m. while on preppie.
5. Make sure your personal area is neat and clean.
6. Maintain your personal hygiene. Daily showers are required.
7. No swearing on the floor. No racial or sexual slurs.
8. Be on time. Do not be late.
9. Smoking is only allowed at the smoking area. Cigarette butts are to be in butt cans or ashtrays only!
10. Read and abide by your consequence guidelines.

Consequence Guidelines

Minor Range Offenses:

- First offense: written warning
Second offense: loss of free time up to two weekends; essay assignment; up to eight hours extra duty
Third Offense: return to preppie status for at least a month; review by executive staff to assess desire to be at FIRST at Blue Ridge, Inc.; may lead to program discharge.

Mid-Range Offenses:

- First offense: essay assignment and up to eight hours consequences.
Second offense: loss of free time up to four weekends and/or return to preppie status for at least one month; review by executive staff to assess desire to be a FIRST resident; may lead to discharge from the program; based on violation history of the resident and the safety of FIRST residents.

Major Range Offenses:

- First offense: review by executive staff to determine immediate termination based on the violation history of the resident and the safety of all FIRST residents.

Minor Range Offenses

The following minor range infractions are punishable at the time of the offense; consequences begin two hours extra duty and double after each offense.

- ≈ Wearing headwear in the house or worn inappropriately at any time
- ≈ Wearing clothing in an inappropriate manner or wearing inappropriate clothing
- ≈ Use of inappropriate or obscene language; profanity
- ≈ Sleeping in meetings or house functions
- ≈ Playing loud and/or obscene music
- ≈ Being late to meetings or house functions
- ≈ Being unprepared or unequipped for work
- ≈ Eating or drinking in FIRST vehicles
- ≈ Entering kitchen without permission
- ≈ Failure to clean up after yourself
- ≈ Failure to get on the books/property at the required times
- ≈ Lying flat and/or sleeping on couches or on outside furniture

Mid-Range Offenses

- ≈ Use of tobacco products in FIRST vehicles and/or outside of designated smoking areas
- ≈ Use of smokeless tobacco products in any building at FIRST
- ≈ Missing assigned group or class
- ≈ Non-performance or failure to complete assigned duties
- ≈ Gambling
- ≈ Possession of pornographic material
- ≈ Researching other treatment facilities prior to talking to staff or a peer leader
- ≈ Openly talking about FIRST in negative terms to other residents
- ≈ Communication with males outside immediate family (other than brief exchange)
- ≈ Failure to sign out before leaving property or sign in upon returning to property
- ≈ Spreading rumors or gossip
- ≈ Going in to a peer leader or staff mail box
- ≈ Being in a dorm room other than your own with or without permission
- ≈ Phone rules violation; exceeding 3 fifteen minute phone calls per week (Loss of phone privileges for one week), calling someone other than who you stated (loss of privileges for one month)
- ≈ Use of phone without permission from staff when at an assigned job site or outside meeting/activity
- ≈ Being asked to leave group (If there is a reason of a personal nature that presents a problem for you with a particular group topic please express this to the instructor and ask permission to explain further after group has been dismissed)
- ≈ Repeated minor offenses

Major Range Offenses

- ≈ Possession and/or use of drugs or alcohol in or on FIRST at Blue Ridge, Inc. property
- ≈ Refusal to submit to drug and/or alcohol indicator test
- ≈ Use of violence or threats of violence
- ≈ Use of intimidating words or behaviors
- ≈ Use of racial slurs
- ≈ Possession of a weapon (real, toy or counterfeit)
- ≈ Willful destruction of property
- ≈ Stealing
- ≈ Sexual advances towards another resident, co-worker, or staff member
- ≈ Participating in an activity which may lead to the transfer of blood-borne pathogens including but not limited to tattooing and piercing. **(This includes on Passes such as Day Pass and Home Pass)**
- ≈ Possession or use of material or adulterant designed to falsify drug or alcohol test results
- ≈ Sharing prescription drugs with other residents
- ≈ Lying on day pass proposal or home pass proposal about where you are going, who you are going with, and otherwise getting someone else to lie for you
- ≈ Being on the floor after or before specified times
- ≈ Refusal of job assignment or refusal to work
- ≈ Disrespecting other clients, staff or peer leaders
- ≈ Use of intimidation or coercion towards others
- ≈ Having unauthorized visitors on premises or job site

- ≈ Possession of cell phone, walkie-talkie, etc.
- ≈ Leaving work or FIRST campus without prior permission
- ≈ Inappropriate behavior at a 12 Step group
- ≈ Use of tobacco products in the buildings and/or vehicles of FIRST

Appeals

Any consequences can be appealed; however all appeals will be handled in the following order:

Remember.... Rules can never take the place of good character.

The Rules:

Not all rules can be put in writing because circumstances may arise that have not been thought out prior to printing the rules. Therefore, staff and peer leaders reserve the right to change or add to the rules as seen fit. Common sense and rational thinking will prevail in all circumstances. Any behavior seen as inappropriate may be subject to consequences. If a rule is changed or added it will be posted.

Penalties: Failure to abide by any of the rules or guidelines of the community will result in additional household chores, early curfew, loss of overnight passes or privileges, or immediate discharge.

It is important to note that FIRST at Blue Ridge, Inc. have the following rules that will result in IMMEDIATE TERMINATION from the program without exception!

- ≈ Possession and/or use of drugs or alcohol in or on FIRST property.
- ≈ Use of violence.
- ≈ Smoking in any building at FIRST
- ≈ Refusal to submit to drug and/or alcohol indicator test.

Phase One Daily Schedule

6:30 – 7:00 Preppie Clean-up (kitchen)

7:00 – 7:45 Hot Breakfast (Wednesday and Friday)

7:45 – 8:00 Morning Meeting

8:00 – 9:00 Kitchen clean-up and Preppie Chores

9:30 – 10:30 Group

11:00 – 11:30 Lunch

11:30 – 12:00 Kitchen Clean-up

12:00 – 2:30 Inside/Outside 12 step group

2:30 – 3:30 Group

5:00 – 5:30 Dinner

5:30 – Kitchen clean-up

8:30 – Preppie Chores

9:30 – Kitchen Clean-up

WOMEN'S HOUSE SCHEDULE

MONDAY

7:45 AM MORNING MEETING
9:30 AM STEP STUDY WITH GLORIA
12:00 PM LIFE AFTER FIRST WITH LAURIE
1:00 PM IN-HOUSE MEETING
5:30 PM SEEKING SAFETY WITH LAURIE *
6:30 PM SEEKING SAFETY WITH LAURIE *
7:00 PM CHOSEN FROZEN OUTSIDE
7:00 PM IN-HOUSE MEETING

TUESDAY

7:45 AM MORNING MEETING
9:30 AM RELAPSE PREVENTION WITH GLORIA
11:20 PM LEAVE FOR 12 STEPS AT NOON OUTSIDE
12:00 PM 12 STEPS AT NOON ON ZOOM
6:00 PM MRT WITH DANA & LAURIE

WEDNESDAY

7:45 AM MORNING MEETING
9:00 AM SEEKING SAFETY WITH LAURIE *
12:00 PM RELATIONSHIPS WITH LAURIE
1:00 PM IN-HOUSE MEETING
6:00 PM LEAVE FOR AGAPE NA
7:00 PM AGAPE NA ON ZOOM

***ONLY IF ASSIGNED TO THIS GROUP**

THURSDAY

7:45 AM MORNING MEETING
9:30 AM ANGER MANAGEMENT WITH GLORIA
12:30 PM IN-HOUSE MEETING
2:30 PM MOTIVATION FOR RECOVERY WITH DANA
5:30 PM LEAVE FOR SISTERS IN SPIRIT MEETING
7:00 PM BLACK MOUNTAIN AA ZOOM

FRIDAY

7:45 AM MORNING MEETING
8:30 AM MRT WITH DANA & LAURIE
9:30 AM MATRIX WITH DANA & LAURIE
11:45 AM GRACE OUTSIDE MEETING
12:00 PM MARATHON ON ZOOM
2:30 PM JOB SKILLS EVERY OTHER WEEK

SATURDAY

7:45 AM MORNING MEETING
12:30 PM STORE RUN
6:00 PM PEER LEADER MEETING
6:30 PM ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING
7:30 PM TESTIMONIALS

SUNDAY

9:30 AM PEER GROUP COOKING
11:00 AM BRUNCH
12:30 PM STORE RUN
5:30 PM NEIL'S MEETING

All groups are required if you are on property and scheduled for the group. If you are unsure of your enrollment in a group, ask the facilitator for the group or your peer leader. If you are unable to attend a group, make sure of when the make-up group is and be sure to attend it. If you are on property and you fail to attend either the original or make-up group, you will receive a behavior alert.

FIRST at Blue Ridge Creed

Honesty – I will promote the truth. I will not lie, cheat or steal. I will move toward recovery through fair and honest means.

Open-minded – I will listen with the intention of learning. I will accept the fact that my best thinking got me here.

Willing – I will attempt those things that I was unwilling to try before and I will give them my honest effort.

Respect – I will treat others only as I would like to be treated, with respect and dignity.

Unity – I will base my decisions on what is best for this house and what is best for this house is best for me at any given moment.

Remember – I can't but *GOD* can!!