

Operations Management Plan 501 Powell Modular Housing Program for Women



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Introduction

The Operations Management Plan for the *501 Powell Modular Housing Program for Women* located at 501 Powell Street in Vancouver provides an overview of Atira Women’s Resource Society’s (Atira) commitment to operating a supportive housing program for women living in a shared living environment. It is our intent to operate the 501 Powell Modular Housing Program in a manner that manages any and all impacts of the program on neighbouring tenants and business, as well as ensures the safety and security of the women who live there. This operations management plan outlines the basic housing objectives and operating parameters for the program and incorporates protocols to manage various concerns, which may be raised by tenants, neighbours and business owners, as well as ensuring an adequate and timely response on the part of Atira staff. This is the beginning of a new program in a community where Atira already has deep roots and we look forward to working together again to best respond to tenants, neighbourhood and community needs.

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1. Overview

Who We Are

Atira Women's Resource Society was incorporated under the Society Act of British Columbia on March 10th, 1983 and registered with Revenue Canada as a charitable organization in 1984. In 1987, the Society opened its first transition house, Durrant House (formerly known as Atira House), in the South Surrey/White Rock community. The Society began expanding its services in 1993 and today Atira has more than 40 housing programs, two community daycares and multiple non-residential support programs located across the Lower Mainland.

Our Mission

- Atira Women's Resource Society is dedicated to supporting women and children affected by violence by offering safe and supportive housing and by delivering education and advocacy aimed at ending all forms of gendered violence

Our Vision

- A world free of inequalities, where everyone's human rights are respected and where women and girls have the right to participate fully and effectively in all of the decisions that affect their lives.

Our Values

- **Inclusive Feminism:** Our work is informed by our understanding that women's experience of oppressive institutions (sexism, racism, colonialism, classism, heterosexism, ableism, transphobia, xenophobia and other identity markers) are interconnected and cannot be examined separately from one another.
- **Women-Centred:** Our work is informed by our understanding that in addition to providing safety and respect, all of our programs must invite and encourage women's collaboration and that women must have the opportunity to be active participants in all of our services.
- **Harm Reduction:** Our work is informed by our understanding that women's experiences of gender-based violence is central to their use of substances and that understanding the intersections between women's experience of violence, poverty, racism, gendered patterns of drug use/harms, and lack of support for mothering, are critical to developing programs that are seamless and which increase opportunities for women to keep themselves and their children safe.
- **Innovation:** Our work is informed by our understanding that the women who access our services and our staff are our greatest asset and so we encourage individuality, creativity, leadership, transparency and accountability

Historically, Atira has provided low-no barrier housing and related support programs to women who are marginalized by their experiences for violence/abuse, struggles with homelessness, poverty, substance use and mental wellness. Atira offers a Stopping the Violence Counselling program; a support program for children who have witnessed abuse, a parenting program, a legal advocacy program; a 16-Step addictions recovery program; Enterprising Women Making Art (an alternative employment program for women with significant barriers to employment); The Painter Sisters (an employment training program); housing outreach programs and outreach programs for women who are older and for First Nations, Metis and Inuit women; housing, services for women who are criminalized, trauma-informed daycares, bee-keeping programs,

community gardens, a women-only overdose prevention site, to name a few. Atira also manages 20, women-only housing programs. More information about Atira's programs and services is available at our website at www.atira.bc.ca.

The 501 Powell Modular Housing Program provides housing for 39 women who face barriers to securing safe, affordable housing. Seven units are fully wheelchair accessible and all units have their own bathrooms.

Shared amenities include:

- Two indoor amenity rooms and cooking facility
- Landscaped grounds with an outdoor garden
- Outdoor amenity with seating area
- Accessible office
- Storage
- Free, accessible laundry facility
- Internet access
- Bike storage
- 3 visitor parking including once accessible spot

2. Housing Objectives

Atira will provide a supportive housing program that honours and validates women. We will nurture belonging, influence and purpose in all women who live at the *501 Powell Modular Housing Program*. We will operate within a relationship-based model of care where desired outcomes are achieved through collaborative relationships and where tenants and their support networks/families are at the center our practice.

Relationship-Based Care Principles

- The essence of caring is human connections: harmony, healing and spirit;
- Informed caring is knowledge and skills;
- Everyone has a valuable contribution to make;
- Relationships between program participants, their support networks/families and staff are at the heart of service delivery;
- Knowledge of self and self-care are fundamental requirements for quality care and healthy interpersonal relationships;
- Healthy work relationships and environments result in high program participant and staff satisfaction;
- Women are most satisfied when their roles and daily work practices are in alignment with their personal and professional values;
- Empowerment and ownership of work and practice are essential elements of Relationship-Based Care;
- Transformational change happens one relationship at a time.

The 501 Powell Modular Housing Program will house women who are marginalized by their experience of violence/abuse, homelessness, poverty, struggles with substance use, struggles with mental wellness and chronic health issues. The *501 Powell Modular Housing Program* will also contribute to a healthier neighbourhood by enhancing the quality of tenants' lives and supporting them to more fully participate in their community, which will include an invitation for neighbours and neighbourhood tenants, faith groups, schools, businesses, other groups and organizations to become involved in service delivery.

3. Housing Goals

Atira is committed to working closely with the community toward the effective provision of supportive housing to women who in order to achieve the following goals:

Belonging

Create **Belonging** thereby honouring our human need to connect with others:

Tenants will be encouraged and supported to form a group identity and view themselves as a critical piece of a larger community. They will be encouraged and supported to build meaningful relationships with each other, with staff, with neighbours and volunteers, making the *501 Powell Modular Housing Program* their home. They will be encouraged to support one another. The *501 Powell Modular Housing Program* will also support belonging by:

- honouring women's existing support networks including family, however women define family for themselves;
- Encouraging and supporting the creation of new relationships;
- working together to make the *501 Powell Modular Housing Program* the best possible place to live;
- Encouraging and supporting group interactions and problem solving, which builds community;
- Creating the space and opportunity to make decisions as a group, supporting program participants to build new memories together and enjoy sharing them with others.

Influence

Creating tenants' **Influence** over their environment by facilitating freedom of choice:

Tenants will have influence over their environment through participation in household management, service delivery and daily operations including meal planning and preparation and event and activity planning. Tenants will be engaged in the household decision-making processes. We will also support Influence by:

- ensuring a barrier-free housing that women of any ability can navigate;
- facilitating weekly household meetings in order to provide an opportunity for tenants to discuss household issues and make decisions;
- providing a simple, consistent and routine environment making it possible for tenants to choose when and where to participate.

Purpose

Supporting **Purpose** in life by engaging women to the utmost of their abilities:

Having a purpose/making a difference in the world around us drives us throughout our lives. Women who live at the *501 Powell Modular Housing Program* will be expected to allow others to contribute to their lives. Tenants will also have an opportunity to give back to those they interact with by acting as mentors and/or by forming meaningful relationships. Purpose will also be realized by:

- The small scale of the building coupled with the nurturing of a strong group identity, allowing all tenants to define and form a place for themselves;
- Encouraging tenants to acknowledge their appreciation for one another;
- Supporting tenants to be involved fully in the service delivery in their home and through their contributions, be able to form a lasting legacy they can feel proud of.

4. Programs

Referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referrals to the 501 Powell Modular Housing Program will be coordinated by Atira staff, who will accept referrals from BC Housing, the City of Vancouver and from community. Decisions will be made by the staff based on Atira's mission, vision and mandate and the 501 Powell Modular Housing Program Housing for Women's specific housing objectives.
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary support will be provided by women support workers 24/7. Support will also be provided by a defined group of partner agencies, all with expertise in specific areas including problematic substance use, health care, mental wellness, etc. and all of which are gender responsive.
Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment for mental wellness and struggles with substance use will be provided by a part-time counsellor with specialization in women and will be voluntary; Atira will offer 16-step groups to tenants who wish to participate.
Medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medication regimes are primarily the responsibility of the tenants and may be supported by Atira staff when requested by women; A medication support system will be available to tenants who require assistance to achieve independence in this area.
Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff will refer to and liaise with the Ministry of Health, the Vancouver Health Authority, B.C. Women's Hospital, B.C. Housing, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, as well as women-serving agencies including physical health, mental health and substance use programs; Atira will provide educational resources for tenants re: BC benefits, CPP, OAS, & GIS, mental wellness, substance use, medical conditions, etc.. Atira will maintain contact with other community agencies and women's support services.
Life skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> staff will provide group or individual support, life skills education and training on such issues as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>household management and meal preparation</i> <i>conflict resolution skills</i> <i>budget management</i> <i>personal rights /empowerment/self-advocacy</i> <i>mentoring and peer support programming to complement existing staffing and support services</i>
Meal Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will be provided in a supportive/community kitchen capacity, as part of the life skills component of the program.

5. Community Connection

Contact Information

The women support workers, as the designated community contacts, are responsible for addressing any issues related to the ongoing operation of this facility. Their contact information is as follows:

Name:

Phone: #####, during normal business hours (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)

cell phone for after hours calls (emergencies only)

Email: 501powell@atira.bc.ca

Mail: 501 Powell Modular Housing Program for Women
c/o Atira Women's Resource Society
201, 190 Alexander Street, Vancouver, BC V6A 1B5

Website: www.atira.bc.ca

The secondary designated community connection is:

Name: Niki Antonopoulou, Executive Director Operations for Vancouver

Phone: 604.681.4437, ext. 113

Email: niki_antonopoulou@atira.bc.ca

Mail: Atira Women's Resource Society
201, 190 Alexander Street, Vancouver, BC V6A 1B5

is a 24-hour cell-phone number available to community members who wish to contact staff at the facility to report an emergency problem.

Community Advisory Committee

Atira will establish a Community Advisory Committee to ensure there is open communication and that community issues are dealt with.

The 501 Powell Modular Housing Program Housing for Women (501 Powell Modular Housing Program) community advisory committee (CAC) will be a group of community agencies formed to partner with Atira. It will have an advisory and referral role, not a decision-making role, and will fulfill its purpose by being solution-focused and responsive to community issues. Members will operate in agreement with Terms of Reference they have established.

The *501 Powell Modular Housing Program CAC* will meet monthly to start, then as determined by the CAC. This schedule may change from time-to-time, based on the advice of the CAC, but would meet no less frequently than semi-annually.

The purposes of the committee would be to:

1. Provide support to Atira in its commitment to meeting its goals with the *501 Powell Modular Housing Program*;
2. Address the impact the *501 Powell Modular Housing Program* has on the community and provide input to address issues;
3. Review Atira's response to complaints; and
4. Act as a liaison between Atira and the neighbourhood/community.

Membership on the *501 Powell Modular Housing Program CAC* would be comprised of the following, plus an alternate:

1. Atira
2. City of Vancouver
3. Vancouver Police Department
4. Vancouver Coastal Health
5. Community Representation such as businesses, tenants, schools, local service providers and agencies.

6. Management Protocols

Atira is committed to the following management protocols to reduce the potential for harm or nuisance to the tenants, neighbourhood individuals and property from the operation of *501 Powell Modular Housing Program* and, where necessary, to take appropriate actions to address issues within its control.

Staffing

- Regular operating staff numbers will include women support workers on duty at all times (24/7), allowing for an immediate response to any issues as they arise. Staffing levels will be reviewed regularly to determine if adjustments are warranted;
- Staffing support may also be provided by partner agencies, each of which will undertake a Memorandum of Understanding, outlining their commitment and specific services to be provided at *501 Powell Modular Housing Program Housing for Women*;
- Staff responsibilities include receiving referrals; managing all tenant issues, including incoming and outgoing tenants; liaising with mental health and addiction services, as well as other relevant community services; working with tenants to achieve their goals; coordinating and delivering recreational opportunities; and medication support duties as requested;

- Staff experience and educational level requirements will be as follows:
 - Experience with a population similar to *501 Powell Modular Housing Program* tenants;
 - All staff have undergone a reference and background check including a criminal record check;
 - All staff members are trained in Atira’s established risk management procedures;
 - All staff members are oriented to protocols within The Operations Management Plan, including responsiveness to resident safety and community concerns.

Tenants’ Terms of Residency Agreement

Tenants will be required to sign an RTA agreement, which will include specific information about the *501 Powell Modular Housing Program Modular Housing program*, tenants’ rights and obligations, and a “good neighbour” agreement that will clearly outline grounds for eviction from *501 Powell Modular Housing Program*.

Safety and Security

As part of its commitment to operating this project, Atira has established the following set of protocols to ensure the safety and security of tenants, staff and the community. In case of immediate danger inside or outside of the facility, 9-1-1 will be called.

<p>Exterior Perimeter Security</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24-hour on-duty staff will allow the monitoring of all activity in and around the building, responding as necessary. • Atira will remotely monitor activities at the facility through the use of security cameras at all exits. Any suspicious activity will be immediately reported to the Vancouver Police Department and the on-site staff. • Atira will work closely with its sister program, located across the alley, which has a high-resolution camera located in the alley at the corner of Jackson.
<p>Interior Security</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all exits are alarmed and monitored by security cameras • there is a monitored magnetic entrance card system for tenants (room doors, offices, lounge, storage) • Atira’s visitor policy will apply, which requires all visitors to provide Government-issued ID, sign in and which requires visitors to enter with a tenant between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. • staff will be alerted to “unwanted” persons – e.g. people who have a known history of unacceptable behaviour – through its existing internal processes, advice from partner agencies and community alerts • Atira has a breach-of-security response plan with protocols for staff to follow in respect to potential safety related events that could occur – staff are trained in these procedures
<p>Police Liaison</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atira will maintain regular communication and consultation with the Vancouver Police Department through a designated liaison; • The 911 and Mental Health Emergency Services systems will be used in all situations involving violence or potentially volatile situations
<p>Criminal Activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atira will take appropriate action to intercede in cases of vandalism or other criminal activity, up to and including reporting the incident to police.

7. Community Responsiveness

Atira will ensure that careful consideration is given to any concerns or issues expressed by tenants and members of the community about the facility and will take appropriate actions to address problems within its control.

The goal of being responsive to the tenants and community is to ensure, as much as possible, that tenants are safe and respected and that the community has positive and helpful experiences with the *501 Powell Modular Housing Program for Women*. The secondary goal is to ensure that continuous quality improvement issues are made evident, so they can be addressed.

Safety, Security and Nuisances

Any situation that affects the safety and security of tenants, staff or a member of the community will be dealt with immediately, following the protocols set out in the “Safety and Security” section of this document. The procedures below will be followed to address community concerns:

1. When a complaint comes in, the appropriate staff will acknowledge the question or concern with a rapid response.
2. In cases where staff cannot respond to the question or concern to the satisfaction of the complainant, the issue will be brought to Atira senior staff to address. Senior staff will contact the complainant within seven days of being notified of such a complaint.
3. In most cases, the 501 Powell Modular Housing Program staff should be able to resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the complainant. Where the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, the individual has the option of launching a complaint, following Atira Complaints Resolution process, which is available on our website and outlined below.
4. All complaints or incidents will be logged and regardless of the severity of the complaint or whether it has been resolved, this information will be shared with the Community Advisory Committee at the next advisory committee meeting, where a community advisory committee exists.

Issue Resolution Process

In addition to the preceding protocols to address issues regarding safety, security and nuisances, occasionally, there may be other types of concerns that arise from members of the community. While the intent is to address these concerns through dialogue, if the individual feels the situation warrants an official complaint, Atira’s issue resolution mechanism will ensure that an objective and thorough response is provided. See Appendix 1.

8. Appendix 1

Complaint Resolution Process

Atira understands concerns may arise about how we conduct ourselves with respect to our programs and services. We trust this complaint resolution process allows you the opportunity to be heard and allows our staff the opportunity to best hear your concerns. Our intention is to always act in the best interests of ALL of the women and children we serve. We understand you have the right to raise your concerns and that we have a responsibility to carefully consider your concerns and to respond.

Some examples of concerns that could arise include the following:

- You believe you are being harassed, discriminated against or threatened;
- You believe you are not being treated with respect and dignity;
- You believe you are being treated unfairly;
- You believe you are being excluded from planning/decision-making about you or your child(ren);
- You believe staff are being unclear in stating expectations of program participants/tenants;
- You believe staff or programs are not living up to Atira's stated mandates and/or commitments;
- You are dissatisfied with Atira's services at any level.

All concerns and/or complaints will be dealt with fairly, promptly and where appropriate, in confidence. A resolution means ALL parties involved in the complaint are heard and fully involved in the process. If the resolution is not what you were hoping for, it does not mean there was no resolution. Whatever the outcome of a complaint, our priority is to reach a resolution that benefits ALL of the women Atira serves and one that honours Atira's mission and mandate. It is also Atira's priority to ensure all resolutions, solutions and decisions are properly explained to and understood by everyone involved.

Step One, Informal Review:

You are always encouraged to resolve your complaint informally and directly with the person you have concerns about or whose behaviour caused your concern. In most cases, this is the fastest and easiest way to work things out. If you are unable to resolve your complaint informally or directly or if you feel uncomfortable doing so, you may choose to go to Step Two of the Informal Review by speaking with the Program Manager.

Step Two, Informal Review:

The manager of the program is closest to the situation and so in most cases is best able to find a quick and satisfactory resolution. As she will want to find the facts of the complaint, she may need to ask others for their input. The results of her review will be shared with you in a meeting. If you are unable to resolve your complaint by speaking with the program manager or if you feel uncomfortable doing so, you may request a Formal Review.

Step Three, Formal Review:

A Complaint Resolution Committee will be formed to review your complaint. The Committee will include two managers from programs other than the one where your complaint arose as well as a woman from Atira's administrative team. The Committee will be made up of women who have had no involvement in any matters related to your complaint. The Complaint Resolution Committee will work to find the best solution for everyone involved, which may include speaking with all parties. They may also request a meeting, giving everyone an opportunity to come together to find a resolution. Whichever process they adopt, they will speak with you to provide an explanation of both the process and resolution and you will receive a letter documenting their process, resolution, follow up as applicable and reasons for all of their decisions and actions.

To start a Formal Review, you can ask the program manager to assist you, email your request to complaints@atira.bc.ca, which goes directly to the administrative office, or write a letter to: Complaints Resolution Committee, Atira Women's Resource Society, 201, 190 Alexander Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1B5

Step Four, Formal Review:

If you feel your complaint was not resolved by the Complaints Resolution Committee and it is of a serious nature, you may request your complaint and the resolution adopted at Step Three be forwarded to the Executive Director, Operations for an Administrative Review. You may or may not be granted an Administrative review; it is the decision of the Executive Director, Operations after speaking with you, the Complaints Resolution Committee and reviewing the documentation. Only very serious issues will reach this step. If your request for an Administrative Review is denied, you will receive a letter informing you of the decision and reasons. If the Executive Director, Operations reviews your complaint, you will receive the results of her review and the resolution in writing.

To request a Step Four, Administrative Review, you can ask the Complaints Resolution Committee or the Program Manager to assist you, you can email your request to complaints@atira.bc.ca or write a letter to: Executive Director, Operations, Atira Women's Resource Society, 201, 190 Alexander Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1B5

Step Five, Formal Review:

If you have been through Step Four and have met with the Executive Director, Operations or received a letter denying an Administrative Review and you still feel your complaint did not receive proper consideration, you may request in writing to have your complaint forwarded for a CEO review. The CEO will review the documentation from all steps of the process and may request a telephone or in-person meeting with you. You may or may not be granted a CEO Review; depending on the seriousness of your complaint and the thoroughness of the complaints resolution process leading up to your request for a CEO Review. It is the decision of the CEO whether your complaint will be considered for review. If your request for a CEO Review is denied, you will receive a letter informing you of her decision and reasons. If the CEO reviews your complaint, you will receive the results of her review and the resolution in writing.

To request a CEO Review, you can ask the Executive Director, Operations or the Program Manager to assist you, you can email your request to complaints@atira.bc.ca, which goes directly to the administrative office, or you can write a letter to: CEO, Atira Women's Resource Society, 201, 190 Alexander Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1B5