

## **Mercy Conference and Retreat Center**

### **Policy Manual Table of Contents**

Page	<b><u>Welcome to MCRC</u></b>
3	Mission
3	Vision
<b>3</b>	<b><u>MCRC General Operating Procedures</u></b>
<u>3</u>	Animals
3	Availability of Scholarships
3	Calls Placed to 911
3	Candles
4	Chapel Guidelines
4	Children and Minors
4	Damage, Theft, and Vandalism
4	Early Arrivals and/or Late Departures
5	Emergency Contacts
5	Energy Policy
6	Extension Cords and Power Strips
6	Fire Alarms
6	Fireplaces
7	Holiday Closures
7	Hospitality for Sisters of Mercy
7	Inclement Weather – Cancellations
8	Injuries
8	Interface with the Food Service Provider
9	Maintenance Service & Emergencies
9	Mobility/Accessibility
9	Musical Instruments
10	Parking
10	Reception Desk Coverage
10	Reception Desk Procedure Manual
10	Responsibility for Personal or Organizational Property
10	Security
11	Silent Retreats
11	Shoes and Shirt Requirements
11	Smoking/Tobacco Products
11	Tornado Emergency Plan
12	Unexpected Guests / Intruders

- 12 Version Control
- 12 Weapons and Explosives

## **Mission**

Impelled by the Gospel, the Mercy Conference and Retreat Center (MCRC), sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, provides a tranquil environment of hospitality and healing in the Mercy tradition, where groups and individuals of all faiths can engage in prayer, reflection and dialogue for personal, communal and global transformation.

## **Vision**

To be a thriving oasis of vibrant spirituality which is expansive, integrative, inclusive and responsive to the needs of seekers of peace, personal growth, and development.

# **MCRC General Operating Policies**

---

## **Animals**

Animals are not permitted in the facility, with the exception of service animals.

## **Availability of Scholarships**

There is a scholarship fund that has been established to provide financial support to persons unable to afford the full cost of programs including:

- Sponsored programs
- Private or directed retreats
- Ongoing spiritual direction
- Rest and Renewal—for those (such as caregivers) who want/need a time of rest and renewal, but not an explicitly religious experience.

Scholarships are limited to one request per person per fiscal year for under \$100; one request every two years for a scholarship above \$100. Any member of the Mercy Center team can authorize a scholarship up to \$100.00. Requests for scholarships above this amount will be brought to the Spirituality Team.

## **Calls Placed to 911**

MCRC campus staff and residents must ensure that after placing an emergency 911 call that the receptionist at the front desk of the Conference and Retreat Center is notified of the call as soon as possible. The person who placed the 911 call is responsible to provide details about the nature and location of the emergency. The receptionist will then call the Administrative Assistant or Nurse's Station at Catherine's Residence to inform that staff person as well.

If in the midst of calling 911, campus staff or residents realize emergency help is not required, then they are to stay on the line and inform the 911 operator.

## **Candles**

The use of candles and incense is prohibited in guest rooms. Staff and guests may use incense and candles in the chapels, offices, meeting rooms and lounges only when they are present in those rooms and are able to supervise said use. MCRC has a wax less candle policy for any ACTS services held on campus.

### **Chapel Guidelines**

Staff and guests of MCRC are expected to respect our Chapel/Worship spaces by observing the following guidelines:

1. In the Catholic tradition the altar, which represents Christ, should not be used as a table for any other purposes. Nothing is ever to be placed on the altar except the plate of bread and the cup of wine for Eucharist along with the Sacramentary/Missal.
2. In respect for this tradition staff and guests are asked to place any objects involved in prayer services (candles, candle holders, lighters, oil, flowers, symbols, etc.) on a table(s) in front of the altar and its carpeted platform.
3. All seasonal decorations (flowers/plants, banners, candles, etc.) are to be left in place.
4. The chairs, altar, or podium are not to be rearranged without the express permission of the Chapel Coordinator and/or their designee. If these furnishings are moved with permission, we ask that staff and/or guests restore them to their original configuration when preparing to leave.
5. No beverages of any kind may be taken in to the Chapel.
6. If there is a spill of any sort (, oil, wine, etc.) in the Chapel it is to be reported immediately to the Receptionist or other Mercy Center contact.
7. If wax needs to be disposed of, there is a tin can in the Sacristy kitchen near the sink for wax deposits.
8. All microphones and the sound system are to be turned off when they are not being used. Guests are instructed to follow the printed directions posted on the sound system for this.
9. All Chapel and Sacristy lights are to be turned off when not in use.
10. Nothing is to be placed on the dais (raised/carpeted portion of the chapel floor) without prior permission.
11. Blue tape is to be used for taping anything to the chapel floor.

### **Children and Minors on Campus (added 7/17/2018)**

Children and persons under the age of 18 are welcome to attend daytime and/or evening programs at MCRC as long as they are responsibly supervised by a parent or guardian at all times. Children and persons under the age of 18 are not permitted to stay as overnight guests. Rare exceptions to this policy must be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director and/or the Director of Operations and Administration.

### **Damage, Theft, and Vandalism**

Persons responsible for any acts of damage, vandalism to the premises, or removal of items from MCRC will be referred to the appropriate authorities and will be held accountable for their actions.

### **Early Arrivals and/or Late Departures**

Check in time at MCRC is 3:00pm and check out time is 9:00am. If guests request that they be allowed to arrive early and/or depart late, staff persons are to forward these requests to be reviewed with the Director of Operations and Administration (DOA) or their designee.

The DOA/designee will first determine if the request might be accommodated by checking the date(s) in question in Retreat Manager (RM). If the request could be granted then the DOA/designee will review the request with the Mercy Center Administrator who will have the final say as to whether or not the request will be granted.

If an early arrival/late departure changes any meal counts, the responsible staff person must ensure that this is reflected appropriately in RM and communicated to the kitchen staff either via email or in person.

### **Emergency Contacts**

**Staff:** All MCRC staff persons are required to provide the phone number(s) for one or more emergency contact persons. This list will be managed by the DOA and updated no less frequently than twice a year. The list is to be maintained electronically by the DOA and ED. A hard copy is to be kept in the receptionist's binder at the front desk.

**Overnight Guests:** Program coordinators should advise retreat coordinators that it is their responsibility to collect and maintain emergency contact information for the members of their groups.

### **Energy Policy**

Staff and guests are encouraged to abide by the following guidelines:

- Turn off all electronic devices (except for computers at workstations) when leaving a room for more than 15 minutes.
- Turn off all office machines, copier, fax, shredder, etc. at night and log off or lock computers
- Turn off air conditioning/heating units when leaving for the day.
- All windows and doors should be kept closed when heating or cooling is on. Windows should be kept locked.
- During cool weather, open blinds for light and warmth and close drapes/blinds at the end of the day to reduce heat loss at night. In warm weather, close blinds to reduce cooling load.
- Windows should only be opened when the outdoor temperature is approximately 60 to 78 degrees. This will prevent the building from being over cooled or heated.
- Take advantage of daylight as much as possible.
- Report any energy related problems, leaks or water problems to the appropriate personnel.
- Recycle all paper, cardboard, aluminum and recyclable plastic products in recycling containers provided in offices, dining room, meeting spaces and/or at the back door.
- Ensure that all heating and cooling units and lights are turned off in vacant guest rooms and meeting rooms when no longer in use by guests.
- At the end of each day Housekeeping will check all bedrooms and lounges. Additionally all rooms and hallways will be checked at the end of the evening receptionist shift.
- Laundry – wash full loads of laundry only using cold water when possible.
- Make all guests aware of Mercy Center's energy related policies.
- Future equipment purchases will be energy efficient models.

- Install timers and occupancy sensors where possible.
- The Mercy Center Complex will purchase and use only compact fluorescent Light bulbs (the exception would be incompatible fixtures).
- Replace existing zone aires with new energy efficient units.
- Maintenance on all equipment should be done on a regular basis to ensure energy efficient performance.
- CRM will try to house guests in one section of the building at a time.
- Continue recycling of computer equipment, monitors and printers.
- Recycle all non-rechargeable batteries.

### **Extension Cords and Power Strips**

When groups request multiple (3 or more) extension cords and power strips for use in their meeting rooms, the group coordinator must insure that an inventory of these items is completed at the end of the retreat. Any items that are taken from MCRC must either be returned or paid for by the group that removed said items from MCRC.

### **Fire Alarms**

When a fire alarm panel is activated:

- Staff persons are to notify maintenance immediately.
- Staff will go through all hallways and meeting spaces to gather all guests.
- Staff and guests will be advised of where they can go for their safety (generally the west parking lot or, in inclement weather, the dining room)
- The Receptionist on duty is responsible for taking the Front Desk (White) Binder with them to the west parking lot or dining room. This contains employee, resident, and guest lists which will be used to ensure proper head count in said emergency.
- Use the stairs and not the elevator.
- Take cell phones whenever possible.
- Once it has been determined that the building is safe, staff may silence the fire alarm panel.
- Staff members are not to reset the alarm. The Fire Department will reset the Fire Alarm Panel.
- In case of a false alarm staff members are to immediately notify the Frontenac Fire Department and also notify Tech Electronics of the false alarm.
  - Phone numbers for this are in the Front Desk (White) Binder.
- A fire drill is to be conducted no less than once per year.
- Fire drills are arranged by the DOA in consort with the Maintenance Department.

### **Fireplaces**

There are two electric fireplaces in the reception area that are designed for atmosphere; they do not provide heat. These are operated via a switch and may be used at any time at any staff members' discretion. These are to be turned off at the end of the day.

There is a gas fireplace in the Heritage Lounge that does provide heat. The gas line for this is to be turned on/made active by maintenance staff in September and turned off/inactivated in May. Staff and/or guests may use this fireplace but are to be advised to

utilize the instruction sheet that is kept in the Receptionist Binder at the front desk. The fireplace must be turned off whenever staff and/or guests are preparing to leave the room.

### **Holiday Closures**

- The Executive Director (ED) in consort with the DOA may determine that during some holiday periods there will be no front desk coverage at MCRC. In that case the front doors will be locked during that time period and anyone needing to access the building will be advised to use the current door code. A campus wide memo will be sent out by the DOA advising all staff, residents, and adjunct spiritual directors. The DOA will provide emergency contact instructions and information in said memo.
- The post office will be contacted and advised to make mail deliveries to Catherine's Residence during that time period as well.
- A sign will be posted at the front entrance to MCRC that directs UPS, FedEx, or other deliveries to Catherine's Residence.
- The MCRC phone greeting will provide our holiday hours and instruct callers on how to reach key MCRC personnel.

### **Hospitality for Sisters of Mercy**

- While MCRC is a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, it is still expected that any sister wanting accommodations and/or meals at MCRC would reserve in advance in the same manner as any other guest.
- All sisters will be provided with the door code so that they can access the building should they arrive while there is no receptionist on duty.
- Sisters of Mercy receive a generous discount for hospitality at MCRC.
- If a sister does arrive unexpectedly and without having given prior notice to the MCRC staff, then she will be assisted by MCRC staff in securing accommodations and/or meals with one of the small on-site RSM communities.

### **Inclement Weather – Cancellations**

Whenever there is a potential weather event predicted for the local area, the ED and DOA will confer and determine if there appears to be any serious threat of harm for staff and guests based on said forecast. If a serious threat of harm for staff and guests is identified, the DOA or ED will direct group coordinators to reach out to the retreat contact for retreats that are scheduled for that time frame and inform them that MCRC will be cancelling their retreat. Retreatants already on campus will be provided instructions by the DOA and or ED regarding their continued stay during the weather event. MCRC staff scheduled to work during said weather event will be directed that safety comes first and that they are not to travel in weather in which they feel unsafe. The DOA and/or ED will arrange for a campus resident to act as an on-site contact for guests. The DOA and/or ED will draft a memo with all of the specific plans and information about contact persons and have it distributed campus wide prior to the weather event.

## **Injuries**

- If a guest is injured, staff persons are to attend to them as quickly as possible.
- If it is a minor injury which requires only basic first aid there are many first aid items available in the cabinet in the business office.
- If a guest falls but is not seriously injured in the fall, staff persons are advised to help them get up on their feet and walk with them to a comfortable place where they can rest and regain their composure. Water ought to be offered to them at that time.
- If a guest is seriously injured or has a medical emergency and moving them is not clearly advisable, staff persons are to stay with the guest and arrange for someone to contact the retreat facilitator for that particular group. Should the injured guest need to go to the hospital staff persons are to call 911 and request ambulance services.
- Staff persons are never permitted to transport injured guests from the property.
- In all cases of injury, the staff person(s) involved will report what they recall of the event to the DOA – or ED in the DOA's absence – then the DOA or ED will complete an incident report which will be filed in the file cabinet in the DOA's office.

## **Interface with the Food Service Provider**

- The current food service provider for MCRC is The Hospitality Group (THG). The DOA has the primary responsibility for managing the relationship between MCRC and THG.
- Menu planning, vendor management, invoicing and making payments are handled by the DOA.
- Menus are generally sent to the DOA by Tuesday or Wednesday.
- The DOA will outreach to group coordinators that have guests in the house on the days covered by that weekly menu and request feedback.
- Menus are then finalized by the DOA and THG and distributed via campus wide email to staff and residents of MCRC by the Receptionist.
- Special diets are proactively communicated to THG; however, in the case that this was not done and there is a guest with a dietary restriction, staff is to make THG staff aware of this in person or via email.
- Meal times are generally 7:30–8:30am for breakfast, 12:00–1:00pm for lunch and 5:30-6:30pm for dinner. These meal times can be changed to accommodate groups requesting times other than these standard times. In these cases group coordinators will be sure that the time change is noted correctly in RM and communicated directly to the kitchen staff either verbally or via email
- Special requests on behalf of staff or guests may be made by staff persons directly to THG or via the DOA.
- THG staff members are attendees at all staff meetings and food service issues are generally addressed as the first item on the agenda after which THG staff members can be excused from the meetings.
- One-off food services and pricing (e.g. ice cream socials, special banquets, bar-be-ques, etc.) are managed by the DOA.

- For larger and/or high touch groups, meetings can be arranged between the group retreat facilitator and THG staff members in person to address any concerns about food services at MCRC.

### **Maintenance Service & Emergencies**

Guests and staff members may report any maintenance service needs to the MCRC Receptionist on duty who will then pass along the information to the Maintenance staff. When a Receptionist is not on duty, the 'Emergency Maintenance On-Call Cell Phone Numbers' will be posted at the Reception Desk and on the Sign-In Table outside of the Chapel. The Receptionist on duty is responsible for ensuring the correct On-Call information is posted each day and during any Holiday Closures.

### **Mobility/Accessibility (added 10/10/2018)**

- Differently abled guests are able to use MCRC as there are adequate ramps, an elevator, and a limited number of bathrooms that are ADA compliant.
- Differently abled guests will be able to park in the handicap reserved spaces in the front parking lot. If there are several guests with special needs, parking spaces can be blocked with cones by maintenance so that adequate parking for them is available.
- Differently abled guests are generally to be housed in rooms on the second floor close to elevator.
- Whenever possible, differently abled guests will be assigned the use of the lounge that is closest to their bedrooms/meeting rooms.
- Differently abled guests must be aware of the following:
  - MCRC is a very large campus with many long hallways such that guests must be able to move about the building safely and efficiently on foot, or with a walker, wheelchair, or if necessary an electric scooter.
  - MCRC does not provide walkers, wheelchairs, or electric scooters.
  - Only 2 rooms share a wheelchair accessible shower. Many rooms have walk in showers but some rooms have bath tubs with showers. Guests are advised to alert MCRC staff if they are not able to step into a bath tub and therefore need a room with a walk in shower.
  - Several rooms are equipped with recliners for those guests who prefer them for sleeping.
  - There is only one room that is outfitted with a lift chair.
  - Meals are served buffet style. Guests must be able to manage carrying a tray with their food/beverages on it.
  - MCRC does not have medical or nursing staff on site.

### **Musical Instruments**

- There is an organ in the chapel as well as several pianos in various rooms on campus.
- The DOA is responsible to ensure that the organ and the pianos are tuned and in good working order.

- Guests are welcome to play the organ and/or piano in the chapel during prayer services and liturgies.
- Guests are also welcome to bring other instruments to be played in the chapel or other areas as part of prayer services and other liturgical events.
- Guests are also permitted to recreationally play the pianos on campus, organ and/or piano in the chapel, as well as their own instruments during times when this would not be disruptive or distracting for other guests, staff and/or residents on campus.

### **Parking:**

Overnight Guests are required to park on the upper west parking lot. The parking lot in front of the building is for resident Sisters, employees of Mercy Center, those who have appointments at MCRC, and guests who require handicapped parking.

### **Reception Desk Coverage:**

The MCRC Reception Desk is staffed from 7:30am to 4:00pm Monday through Friday. Additional staffing is provided on evenings and weekends as needed based on guest schedules. The Lead Receptionist will be responsible for scheduling additional staff for these time slots and managing the published Receptionist Schedule.

### **Reception Desk Procedure Manual**

The Policies and Procedure that are found in the Reception Desk Procedure Manual are incorporated by reference into this document. No less than two times per year (July and January) the DOA and Lead Receptionist will review all material in that binder to ensure that it is kept up to date and relevant to all of the operations at MCRC.

### **Responsibility for Personal or Organizational Property**

- MCRC is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage of personal or organizational property. Guests of MCRC should take appropriate care of such items.
- If items are found within the MCRC facility, they should be taken to the Reception Desk where they will be held in 'Lost and Found' cabinet for a period of six months. Every attempt will be made to contact the owner of a found item when the owner has been identified.

### **Security**

- The front desk is outfitted with a security system in which all staff and volunteers will need to be trained on regarding how to use it appropriately. They will be retrained no less than 2 times per year (July and January).
- Should there be a need to initiate the alarm, the staff person/volunteer at the desk are to pull the red button just to the left of the desk back from the disengaged position to the engaged position in which case a loud alarm will sound in the MCRC staff hallway.
- When the alarm is engaged the staff person that is at the desk is to state, "The police have just automatically been called by this system."
- When the alarm sounds, all available staff members are to make their way to the front desk to assist with any emergent situation.
- There is also a camera and intercom system for use after hours.

### **Silent Retreats**

- MCRC can accommodate silent retreats. This can mean at times that all of the guests on the entire campus are making a silent retreat or at other times that only a portion of guests are making a silent retreat.
- In either case, the day prior to the start of the silence, the DOA and/or the ED will draft a memo about this and have it distributed campus wide to remind staff and residents of the need to be mindful of noise.
- If it is a situation where only some of the guests will be on a silent retreat, they need to be advised that they are not going to be in a situation in which all of the guests will be maintaining silence.
- In these cases meals times will need to be adjusted so that those keeping silence can eat in the dining room without being disturbed by other guests or staff members.
- The DOA and/or ED will be sure that other key departments (Maintenance, Housekeeping, THG, etc.) are reminded about the silence on the first day of the retreat by email and/or in person.

### **Shoes and Shirt Requirements**

For health and safety reasons, all persons entering MCRC must wear proper attire, which includes shirts and shoes. Persons not wearing proper attire will be asked to leave the premises. Exceptions for cultural, religious, or other reasons may be made at the discretion of the DOA and/or ED. As a faith-based conference and retreat center, comfort is the primary goal. Dress should be comfortable and appropriate.

### **Smoking/Tobacco Products**

- For the health of the MCRC community, the use of tobacco products of any kind is not permitted inside the facility at any time.
- This includes, but is not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, pipes, pellets, chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes, and snuff.
- There is no smoking permitted within 25 feet of the building.
- Guests willfully and persistently violating this policy will be asked to leave the premises.

### **Tornado Emergency Plan**

If a tornado warning is activated via tornado sirens or weather radio notifications for our area, our employees and guests must be notified immediately. During a tornado warning, MCRC employees will:

- Gather all guests and calmly explain that, for their safety, we must take them to an interior corridor away from windows. Check your headcount to ensure that all guests are present and no one is missing.
- Stay away from lobbies, walkways, atriums and other large glassed-in areas.
- Use the back stairs and not the elevator.
- Take cell phones whenever possible with you, as well as a weather radio.
- Go to the lower level to the back hallway (north and northwest).
- If possible, crouch down along the wall and protect your head with a coat/sweater from possible debris.

- Remain in sheltered area until given the all clear by the local sirens/weather radio updates. The siren will give a long blast for approximately 30 seconds to let you know that an all clear has been given. Return guests their rooms.
- The Receptionist on duty is responsible for taking the Front Desk (White) Binder with them to the lower level back hallway. This contains employee, resident, and guest lists which will be used to ensure proper head count in said emergency.
- If only the night/weekend Receptionist is on duty, the procedures will be modified as follows:
  - Put the phones on “Night”
  - Lock the front doors
  - Gather all guests and follow the procedures listed above.
- A tornado drill is to be conducted no less than once per year.
- Tornado drills are arranged by the DOA in consort with the Maintenance Department.

### **Unexpected Guests / Intruders**

Should an unexpected guest arrive and state that they want to/intend to stay at MCRC; they must be asked to leave. Should they refuse to leave they will be informed that they may either leave the premises on their own or that a 911 call will be placed and the police will be summoned to escort them off of the property. If said event appears to pose any potential threat then staff persons are to follow the steps outlined above under the security policy.

### **Version Control**

This policy manual shall be reviewed at least annually. The version control for this will occur via use of the footer in the document which shall read MCRC Policy Manual - version ( # ) as of (date). Items added or revised between annual review dates will be dated parenthetically at the end of the heading line for said items.

### **Weapons and Explosives**

Weapons or weapon facsimiles are not permitted in areas under the MCRC jurisdiction. A weapon is defined as a tool or other device that can be used to kill, injure, or incapacitate an individual and/or destroy property or other resources, rendering them non-functional or unavailable. This includes but is not limited to: firearms, knives, clubs, bows/arrows, martial arts weapons, bombs, stun guns, etc. No fireworks or other incendiary devices are permitted. Public Safety officials are excluded from this policy.