



SD School for the Blind  
and Visually Impaired

# Residential Handbook

## Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>Bedroom Management</b> .....                            | 8  |
| <b>Bedroom Maintenance</b> .....                           | 8  |
| <b>Setup</b> .....   | 8  |
| <b>Permitted Items</b> .....                               | 8  |
| <b>Prohibited Items</b> .....                              | 8  |
| <b>Bedtime Guidelines</b> .....                            | 8  |
| <b>Bullying to Include Harassment</b> .....                | 9  |
| <b>Reporting</b> .....                                     | 10 |
| <b>Case Management</b> .....                               | 10 |
| <b>Church</b> .....  | 10 |
| <b>Clothing</b> .....                                      | 10 |
| <b>Dress Code</b> .....                                    | 11 |
| <b>Dangerous Weapons</b> .....                             | 11 |
| <b>Day Student Overnight Stays</b> .....                   | 11 |
| <b>Drug Free School</b> .....                              | 12 |
| <b>Energy Drinks</b> .....                                 | 12 |
| <b>Illness or Medical Attention</b> .....                  | 12 |
| <b>Independent Living Experience - The Apartment</b> ..... | 13 |
| <b>Latex Free Environment</b> .....                        | 13 |
| <b>Laundry</b> .....                                       | 13 |
| <b>Meals</b> .....   | 13 |
| <b>Medications</b> .....                                   | 14 |
| <b>Money</b> .....   | 14 |
| <b>Off Campus Independent Travel</b> .....                 | 14 |
| <b>Phone Calls</b> .....                                   | 14 |
| <b>Picking Up Students</b> .....                           | 15 |
| <b>Restraint</b> .....                                     | 15 |
| <b>Scent Sensitive Environment</b> .....                   | 15 |
| <b>Students 18 and Over</b> .....                          | 15 |
| <b>Student Feeding</b> .....                               | 16 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>Student Suicide Threat Response</b> .....   | 16 |
| <b>Student Use of Electronic Devices</b> ..... | 16 |
| <b>Suspected Child Abuse Reporting</b> .....   | 17 |
| <b>Toiletry Items</b> .....                    | 17 |
| <b>Trading or Borrowing</b> .....              | 18 |
| <b>Travel Release</b> .....                    | 18 |
| <b>Visitation Guidelines</b> .....             | 18 |
| <b>Residential Visiting Hours</b> .....        | 18 |

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the residential living experience is to assist students in developing the skills they will need to successfully meet challenges in an ever-changing world. The residential program implements the Expanded Core Curriculum in daily living skills, essential to independent living. Students learn skills such as menu planning, shopping, cooking, time and money management, light housekeeping, leisure skills, and community living.

The residential program provides students with a supportive and nurturing living environment to be their 'home away from home, while also nurturing and encouraging student participation in extracurricular and recreational activities. Students enjoy a wide variety of on-and off-campus recreational activities to promote healthy, active lifestyles. The organized activities provide students with real-life opportunities to experience, develop and master functional life skills and to encourage social interaction.

## **Bedroom Management**

### **Bedroom Maintenance**

Students are expected to maintain a tidy room daily. Beds are to be made before the students leave for school or an extracurricular activity on non-school days. Drawers and wardrobes are to be well organized, and the floor should always be free of clutter. Students are not allowed to store or eat food or beverages in their bedrooms at any time. A cupboard in the residential kitchen is designated for each student to store such items.

### **Setup**

Each residential room is set up for a single occupant, and includes a bed, desk, chair, nightstand, and armoire. Students are encouraged to bring personal items that will contribute to their comfort and personalization of their room. Due to the limited available space, however, the amount and type of personal items is limited. All personal items must be clearly labeled with the student's name.

### **Permitted Items**

- Televisions
- Clocks
- Video game systems
- Wall hangings (to be hung using command strips or putty)
- Bedding
- Comfort items (stuffed animals, blankets, toys, etc.)
- Power strips
- Small fan

### **Prohibited Items**

- Extension Cords
- Refrigerators
- Microwaves
- Small kitchen appliances
- Items containing a heating element (electric blanket, portable heater, etc.)
- Pets

### **Bedtime Guidelines**

Sleep plays a crucial role in the physical and emotional well-being of children and adolescents, affecting their ability to learn, engage socially, and develop properly. With children of various ages residing at the school, it is important to tailor bedtime routines to their developmental needs, ensuring they receive the appropriate amount of rest for their age group. These guidelines aim to promote healthy sleep habits, provide a sense of security, and create

a calm, restful environment for all students, contributing to their overall growth and success.

| Age   | Days                                | Bedtime              |
|-------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 3-7   | Sunday-Thursday<br>Friday -Saturday | 8:00 PM<br>8:30 PM   |
| 7-10  | Sunday-Thursday<br>Friday -Saturday | 8:30 PM<br>9:00 PM   |
| 11-13 | Sunday-Thursday<br>Friday -Saturday | 9:00 PM<br>9:30 PM   |
| 14+   | Sunday-Thursday<br>Friday -Saturday | 10:30 PM<br>12:00 AM |

### **Bullying to Include Harassment**

SDSBVI is committed to maintaining a constructive, safe school climate that is conducive to student learning and fostering an environment in which all students are treated with respect and dignity.

Bullying is an intentional isolated act or pattern of repeated physical, verbal, or cyber conduct toward another person that is sufficiently severe and offensive to the person, and

1. has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive school environment for one or more students, and/or
2. has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with a student's educational opportunities (i.e., academic, co-curricular activities, extra-curricular activities, and social opportunities, etc.) within the school environment
3. places a person in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, and/or
4. causes physical hurt or psychological distress to a person, and/or
5. constitutes retaliation against any person for asserting or alleging an act of bullying, and/or
6. disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

## **Reporting**

Any individual who believes a student has been the victim of bullying, as defined above, by students, staff, or third parties shall report the alleged acts immediately to the Student Services Director and Superintendent. The report must be submitted in writing on the SDSBVI bullying form and is available from the Student Services Director, Superintendent, or on the SDSBVI website.

## **Case Management**

Students are assigned to a residential case manager to ensure personal attention to skills, needs, and guardian contact. Case Managers will communicate with guardians biweekly either by telephone or email correspondence to keep families abreast to students' well-being. Any pertinent information provided by guardians to the case manager will be shared with the appropriate teachers, administrators, and staff.

## **Church**

Students are welcome to attend church while attending SDSBVI. Legal guardians must contact the Director of Residential Services to make arrangements.

## **Clothing**

The following is a list of recommended clothing to bring to SDSBVI. If possible, clothing tags should have the students' initials written in permanent marker in case of misplacement.

- Clothing hangers
- Laundry hamper or laundry bag
- Light weight jacket
- Pajamas, robe, slippers
- Pants and shorts
- Shirts (long and short sleeved, sweatshirts, etc.)
- Shoes (tennis shoes for PE, casual shoes, dress shoes, etc.)
- Swimwear (swimsuit, swim towel, swim bag, etc.)
- Undergarments (SDSBVI does not provide disposable underpants)
- Winter Gear (Jacket, snowpants, snow boots, gloves, hat, etc.)
- At least one casual dress outfit for special occasions (School programs, special community events, Special Olympics Banquets, etc.)

## **Dress Code**

Students are expected to dress with standards that support and enhance a safe learning environment. School administration has the responsibility to monitor the dress code policy for the safety of its students and is the final authority on what is appropriate or acceptable attire for the school setting. Therefore, students are prohibited from wearing clothing, headwear, jewelry, book bags, or other articles of personal attire that:

- Depict profanity, obscenity, disrespect, the use of weapons, or violence.
- Promote the use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or other illegal or harmful products.
- Contain sexually suggestive messages.
- Excessively exposed skin or undergarments such as tube tops, halter tops, mesh tops, bare midriff tops, spaghetti straps, pants worn below the hips, skirts or shorts above mid-thigh.
- Hats are permitted at the discretion of the superintendent and may be worn due to visual condition. However, sweatbands and bandanas are not to be worn inside the school building during the school day but may be worn in student residences.

Students not meeting the expected dress code requirements will be expected to change clothes before leaving the dorm or attending class.

## **Dangerous Weapons**

A dangerous weapon ([SD CL 22-1-2](#)) is defined as a firearm, air gun, knife, instrument, material or substance, whether animate or inanimate, which is calculated or designed to inflict death or serious bodily harm. No dangerous weapons are permitted on any school premises, school vehicle, in any school building or other building or premises used for school functions. Any student bringing a dangerous weapon to school may face suspension or expulsion based on the nature of the violation and shall be referred to law enforcement ([SD CL 13-32-7](#)).

## **Day Student Overnight Stays**

A student who only attends SDSBVI for the day program may stay overnight on campus for specific school-related activities with guardian consent and prior



approval by the Superintendent. Permission to stay overnight must be received and approved two (2) days prior to the event.

## **Drug Free School**

The South Dakota Legislature has decreed that possession of tobacco or alcohol by minors is prohibited. No smoking, vaping, chewing tobacco, inhalants, or alcohol is allowed on campus. If any prohibited products are found while on campus, they will be confiscated. Any chemical misuse for the purposes of intoxication is against the law and such products will be confiscated and may lead to legal intervention.

Any student who violates the provisions of State law will be subject to disciplinary action. The guardian will be notified of a first offense, and a conference will be held, and disciplinary action(s) taken. Severe state and federal penalties are possible for violations under state law and the federal "SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS ACT."

The South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired maintains age-appropriate drug and alcohol education and prevention programs for students in all grades.

## **Energy Drinks**

SDSBVI promotes the health, safety, and well-being of all students by reducing the consumption of energy drinks on school grounds. Energy drinks contain high levels of caffeine, sugar, and other stimulants that can have negative effects on students' physical and mental health, including dehydration, increased heart rate, anxiety, and difficulty concentrating. SDSBVI does not allow students to have energy drinks at school, to include residential, or on school transportation. Energy drinks are defined as beverages marketed as products designed to increase energy, alertness, or athletic performance. These drinks typically contain high levels of caffeine, taurine, guarana, or other stimulants.

## **Illness or Medical Attention**

If a student has a minor illness, such as an upset stomach, headache, etc., the Student Health Nurse will monitor their symptoms as they rest in their dorm room.

Students may be quarantined to their bedrooms if they have a contagious illness. Student Health Services and the Student Services Coordinator will evaluate each situation to determine plan of action.

If a student presents a medical condition and the Student Health Nurse feels a trip to the doctor is immediately necessary, the guardian will be notified before SDSBVI staff take the student to the clinic/hospital/Emergency Room.

In the event of a medical emergency, 911 will be called. The school will then attempt to contact the guardian listed. Emergency medical staff will transport the student to the hospital if deemed necessary.

Scheduled and routine medical appointments are the responsibility of the guardian.

### **Independent Living Experience – The Apartment**

During the school year, students aged 16+ may have the opportunity to strengthen their independent living skills with the apartment program. The apartment program is located within the residential wing of the building and students can access staff right outside their apartment door during the usual residential hours.

Students may stay in the apartment 2-6 weeks depending on their needs. Program objectives will be determined and monitored for the duration of the students' stay. While living in the apartment, students are responsible for their own meals, laundry, housekeeping, and other daily tasks.

### **Latex Free Environment**

SDSBVI is a latex free environment. In accordance with this policy, no latex balloons, band aids, gloves, etc. are allowed into the building.

### **Laundry**

Students are assigned a day or two to do their personal laundry. Students participate in the process as much as is reasonable for their age and independence level. Residential staff assist students as needed. Dye and scent free laundry detergent is supplied by SDSBVI.

### **Meals**

Routine meals and snacks served at SDSBVI following the dietary guidelines for Child Nutrition Programs provided by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). [Final Rule - Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 DGAs | Food and Nutrition Service \(usda.gov\)](#). Student meals and snacks are provided at no cost to their families or the LEA.

## **Medications**

Guardians are required to fill out a medical information form annually. This form may grant SDSBVI medication certified staff to administer medication to students while at SDSBVI. Updates or changes to medications or authorization to administer medication by SDSBVI certified staff should be directed to the Health Services office.

Medications must be presented to SDSBVI in their original bottle with a prescription label attached. Medications will be dispensed by medication certified aides in the evenings and on weekends. The medication aides are supervised by the SDSBVI Registered Nurse.

Guardians are responsible for contacting the physician and refilling medications. If there is a dosage change, guardians are responsible for obtaining a new order and providing a copy to the SDSBVI Student Health Nurse.

Any medications that are discontinued must be documented by the prescribing physician and provided to the SDSBVI Student Health Nurse.

## **Money**

Students may bring a small amount of money for personal care items and leisurely shopping (if deemed necessary/appropriate by the guardian). If requested, cash will be placed in the locked staff office for safekeeping. However, if a student is independent in money skills, they may keep their cash or debit card in their bedroom. Guardians will be notified by residential staff if personal care item money is needed.

## **Off Campus Independent Travel**

Prior to independent travel in and or around the community, permission must be granted by SDSBVI Orientation and Mobility Instructor and the Superintendent.

## **Phone Calls**

Family members are encouraged to call their students during out-of-school hours. Personal phone calls are not permitted during mealtimes, and phone calls after 10:00 pm are restricted to emergencies only.

### **Calling Hours:**

- 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM
- 6:00 PM until 9:00 PM

**Residential Phone Number: (605) 626-2582**

### **Picking Up Students**

If someone other than a custodial guardian is picking a student up from SDSBVI, written permission per the student information sheet, collected at the start of the school year from the custodial guardian, or updated written or verbal consent must be provided before the student is released. If verbal permission is being granted, residential staff must have a direct conversation with the student's guardian verifying they give permission for the student to go off campus with someone other than those listed on their Infinite Campus. No text messages or emails will be accepted. SDSBVI has the right to request picture identification of those picking students up.

Students must have written guardian permission to spend the night away from SDSBVI (other than homegoing). The person taking the student off campus must leave a telephone number where the student can be reached, sign the student out, list the date and time the student leaves, and the date and time of anticipated return to campus.

### **Restraint**

Staff at SDSBVI are trained in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® techniques to ensure the safety and support of students. The approach emphasizes Care, Welfare, Safety, and Security® without prescribing specific actions in crisis situations. Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® promotes a person-centered approach, prioritizing the dignity and rights of individuals. Physical restraint will only be used in case of emergency where a student is harm to themselves or others. Restraints are to be used for minimal time and will be implicitly documented. Any use of restraint is reported immediately to the superintendent and guardians. The superintendent reviews each incident to ensure policy adherence and identifies any trends requiring further action.

### **Scent Sensitive Environment**

Due to health concerns from exposure to scented products, SDSBVI is a scent sensitive environment. Scented lotions and strong perfumes, cologne, and deodorant are not permitted to be worn on campus.

### **Students 18 and Over**

Students who are 18 years or older are considered by law to be adults, unless a legal guardian judgement has been determined. Students who are their own guardian are required to sign an agreement acknowledging their rights and responsibilities as an adult and compliance with SDSBVI procedures and

policies. SDSBVI must receive a copy of the guardianship determination documentation to keep on file, if applicable.

### **Student Feeding**

Students who have chewing or swallowing concerns will be evaluated by the Speech-language pathologist. Any changes to diet textures, adaptive equipment, assistance, and setup at meals will be determined by the evaluation. All staff will be trained in general dining skills related to visual impairments at the time of hire.

Employees will be trained in specific feeding procedures for students who need them by the Speech-language pathologist. The feeding procedures for students who require assistance and adaptive equipment will be posted on the inside of the dining room cupboard door. Any concerns related to feeding procedures will be referred to the Speech-language pathologist.

Concerns related to nutrition, hydration, or weight will be referred to nursing. Any recommended changes in feeding procedure, hydration, or nutritional intake made by families or health professionals should be reported in writing to the Speech-language pathologist and the Student Health Nurse.

### **Student Suicide Threat Response**

SDSBVI recognizes that depression and self-destruction are problems of increasing severity among children and adolescents.

Staff who are aware of or suspect the potential of a student suicide threat or attempt, will immediately inform the school counselor or superintendent, who will evaluate the situation and contact the student's guardian(s). If the situation is deemed a medical emergency, the student will be transported to the nearest or most appropriate medical facility for observation and/or treatment.

A suicide threat is defined as a verbal or written statement or physical gesture that implies, indicates, or signals the student's intention or decision to fatally harm themselves. Any such signs or the report of such signs from another student or staff member will be taken with the utmost seriousness.

### **Student Use of Electronic Devices**

All students who have a cell phone or similar devices (Ipad, tablet, computers, etc.) must read and sign the SDSBVI Cell Phone and like devices policy. If the student is under the age of 18, a guardian must sign the policy.

The contract points include:

- Devices can be taken for out-of-town outings; the rules set by the staff in charge are to be followed. SDSBVI is not responsible for lost or damaged student devices.
- Students are prohibited from making unauthorized recordings or social media posts that would be a violation of another person's right to privacy or violate any law or rule/policy.
- Cell phones are to be turned off and out of sight in all locker rooms and rest rooms. All such violations will be handled by SDSBVI school administration.
- Devices may not be used during mealtimes.

### **Suspected Child Abuse Reporting**

To comply with the mandatory reporting law ([SDCL 26-8A-2](#), [26-8A-6](#) and [26-8A-8](#)), it is the policy of SDSBVI that any school employee having reasonable cause to suspect that a child's physical health or mental health or welfare may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect will make a report to the Student Services Director or Superintendent. [SDCL 26-8A-3](#) further provides that any person required to report, but who willfully fails to do so, is guilty of a Misdemeanor of Class 1.

### **Toiletry Items**

SDSBVI does not provide toiletry items. Students are expected to bring these items with upon move in, and/or bring money to purchase needed items. Please bring items labeled with student's initials. The following is a list of recommended items, as appropriate to the students' age and personal needs.

- bug spray & sunscreen
- comb or brush
- deodorant
- disposable underpants (diapers, pullups, briefs)
- hair ties, headbands, clips, etc.
- hair tools (dryer, flat iron, etc.)
- lotion
- shower caddy or plastic basket
- toothbrush & toothpaste
- shampoo, conditioner, body wash, face soap
- shaving supplies (shaving cream, razor, hair removal cream)
- personal hygiene products (tampons, sanitary napkins, etc.)

## **Trading or Borrowing**

Students are not allowed to borrow or lend money, clothing, or personal items among themselves or with staff. Purchasing, trading, or selling items between students and staff is strictly prohibited.

## **Travel Release**

A Student Transportation Consent Form must be signed by a student's legal guardian annually to authorize SDSBVI staff to transport students to or from activities. This authorization form will be sent out in the Back to School Packet in August of each year.

Students are not permitted in private cars without special written permission from parents. Parental permission (either in writing or on the telephone with two witnesses) must be obtained before a child can attend any activity not sponsored by SDSBVI.

## **Visitation Guidelines**

Families are encouraged to visit their students during residential visiting hours. Such visits provide families with the opportunity to observe the social and daily living skills instruction provided by the residential staff. However, since instruction time does occur during residential hours, along with many on and off-campus residential activities, residential staff may not be available to confer with parents who stop by for unscheduled visits. It is best practice to inform the Residential Staff of plans to visit 24 hours prior to arrival.

Guardians may visit with students in their bedrooms. Other guests must meet in the common area, residential kitchen, toy room, or teen center.

## **Residential Visiting Hours**

Monday - Friday: 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM and 6:30 PM – 9:00 PM

Saturday: 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM and 6:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Sunday: 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM and 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM