

## Sovereignty & Interdependence Agreement

**Location:** Sisters' Sanctuary at El Paso | **Effective Date:** September 1, 2026

### **I. Purpose of the Sisters' Sanctuary**

This home is a high-integrity-trust, interdependent living environment designed specifically for women veterans recovering from MST, TBI, and PTSD. By signing this agreement, you are choosing to enter a space of mutual respect, compassion, and shared responsibility.

### **II. The Sovereign Rights of the Resident**

- **Privacy:** You have the right to a secure, private room and the right to choose when and how you engage with others.
- **Voice:** You have the right to participate in "Community Circle" and "She's Got My Six" meetings to help shape the household's rhythms and resolve conflicts in a healthy and respectful manner.
- **Autonomy:** You are the lead architect of your transition to independent living. Our support network exists to provide tools, not to dictate your path.

### **III. The Commitment to Interdependence**

- **Shared Spaces:** We share a large kitchen and bathrooms (including one ADA-compliant). We agree to maintain these spaces with the same care we give our own rooms.
- **Nutritional Security:** Meals are provided through a USDA-compliant framework. We agree to participate in shared mealtimes when possible to foster a support network.
- **Safety & Sobriety:** To protect the recovery of all sisters in the home, this is a sanctuary free from Alcohol/Illegal Substances/Uninvited Guests.
- **Communication:** We practice "Empathetic Honesty." If a conflict arises, we address it with the intent of healing, not harming.

### **IV. Transition & Lifelong Connection**

Our goal is to methodically prepare you for your own independent home. Even after you move out, you retain **Lifetime Access** to our support network (peer groups, resource navigation, and community events). You are never "discharged"; you simply transition from "Resident" to "Alumna."

### **V. Signatures of Agreement**

**Resident:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sanctuary Director:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. The "Resident Leader" Rotation

This is a powerful clinical tool. It moves residents from a "victim" or "recipient" mindset into a **Leadership/Agency** mindset.

- **The "Handover" Routine:** At 5:00 PM, the daytime staff shall have a formal 10-minute "Sovereignty Handover" with the weekly Resident Leader. This signals the shift from staff-supported to resident-led.
- **Responsibility:** The Leader does not "boss" others; she ensures the **Sovereignty Agreement** is upheld (e.g., the kitchen is clean for breakfast, the doors are secured, and the "Quiet Room" is available).

### 2. The "Quiet Room" for Episodic Situations

This is a trauma-informed inclusion. For survivors of MST/TBI/PTSD, "episodes" (flashbacks, hyper-vigilance, or sensory overload) are often exacerbated by the feeling of being "watched" or trapped in a bedroom.

- **The Design:** This room has low-sensory lighting (dimnable), weighted blankets, and perhaps a white-noise machine, etc.
- **Self-Referral:** The rule is that any resident can use the Quiet Room at any time without needing "permission" from the Leader or Staff. It is a **Self-Regulation Station**.

### 3. The 5:00 PM to 9:00 AM Gap

To make "Self-Policing" successful and safe, we will have a **"Safety Infrastructure"** that does not feel like "surveillance":

- **The On-Call "Ghost" Support:** Even if staff is gone, there will be a dedicated 24/7 "Sister-Line" (a cell phone held by a trusted board member or off-site lead) for the Resident Leader to call if a situation exceeds the home's ability to self-police.
- **Conflict Resolution Protocol:** If two sisters have a disagreement at 8:00 PM, the Resident Leader uses a "De-escalation Script" we provide. If it cannot be solved, they agree to "Pause" the issue until 9:00 AM when staff returns.

### 4. Signatures of Agreement

Resident: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sanctuary Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Milestone Map: 12 Months to Independence

This visual guide helps the residents see that the **Self-Policing** at our home is actually "practice" for their own future home.

Phase	Months	Focus	Milestone
I. Sanctuary	1 – 3	<b>Stabilization:</b> Routine, nutrition, and nervous system regulation.	Completion of "Self-Care Plan."
II. Interdependence	4 – 6	<b>Leadership:</b> Taking on the Resident Leader role; peer support.	Leading a "Community Circle" meeting.
III. Strategy	7 – 9	<b>Planning:</b> Mapping out the El Paso housing market and job/benefit goals.	Securing a "Transition Savings" account.
IV. Sovereignty	10 – 12	<b>Launch:</b> Finalizing a lease; setting up their independent support network.	Signing a personal lease & "Alumna Status."

To maintain our high-integrity-trust, self-policing model, the **5:00 PM Handover** shall be a ritual of empowerment, not a "shift change." This checklist ensures the **Resident Leader** has the situational awareness and authority to manage the sanctuary until staff returns at 9:00 AM.

## V. Signatures of Agreement

Resident: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sanctuary Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_