

# 2016-2017 STUDENT HANDBOOK

Dear Learner,

Congratulations on making a big step in furthering your education and opportunities! We are excited you chose Academy of Hope to help you reach your goals. I encourage you to dream big about your future and that it is never too late to dream a new dream. We will help you reach your big dreams and goals by focusing on reaching many small ones. Our staff will help you with this during orientation.

Academy of Hope is considered one of the most successful adult education schools in D.C. You are now part of a learning community where everyone is valued and adds value. Our staff, teachers, volunteers and current students work hard to maintain a welcoming and supportive environment. We provide intensive instruction to support the greatest learning possible.

We encourage you to take advantage of all the services provided by Academy of Hope by attending regularly and participating actively. This is the best way for you to be successful. Please get to know our Student Support staff. They can help you work through obstacles to your progress. Feel free to contact us at any time if you have any questions or are in need of assistance.

I'm looking forward to hearing about your accomplishments. Let's have a great school year!

Sincerely,

Leicester Johnson, Executive Director

## FOUNDING VISION

"To be a place in which the main subject for everyone—teachers and students alike—is not reading, writing, or math, but hope. Hope only comes when we care and are cared for. At the Academy, all of us are teachers because all of us can care for another. And all of us are students since all of us need to be cared for."

-Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School's founding vision, 1985

Understanding the culture of Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School is a great first step in being successful here. We strive to create an inclusive and respectful environment where all learners—no matter their past journey or current challenges—have the opportunity to better themselves and achieve their goals. We also value hard work and professionalism. We therefore attempt to recreate a typical workplace as much as possible in order to prepare our learners for future employment.

## ADVICE FROM OUR GRADUATES

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**DON'T GIVE UP** Be on time  
This is the right place to succeed  
Stick with it keep learning as much as you can  
Stick with AoH and don't be afraid of not knowing  
be true to yourself Just continue until you reach your goals hang in there  
come everyday and take in as much as possible let nothing distract you  
Stick with it and don't give up Stay focused  
Study hard and don't give up Don't miss any classes  
listen and follow directions Commit and stick with it  
Invest in yourself Do your work  
Don't turn back

## MISSION

ACADEMY OF HOPE PROVIDES HIGH QUALITY ADULT EDUCATION IN A MANNER THAT CHANGES LIVES AND IMPROVES OUR COMMUNITY.

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## CORE VALUES

### **AOH CARES**

#### **COMMUNITY**

- ☐ Treat all adult learners, volunteers and staff as important contributing members of the Academy of Hope community.
- ☐ Practice and teach responsibility for the larger community and for the natural environment.

#### **ACCEPTANCE**

- ☐ Accept and respect all members of the Academy of Hope community, embracing the diversity of backgrounds and learning styles that make each individual unique.

#### **RESPECT**

- ☐ Respect all persons and the different cultures and traditions they represent.

#### **EMPOWERMENT**

- ☐ Provide adult learners the skills needed to make informed economic, social and personal decisions and to be active members of their communities.

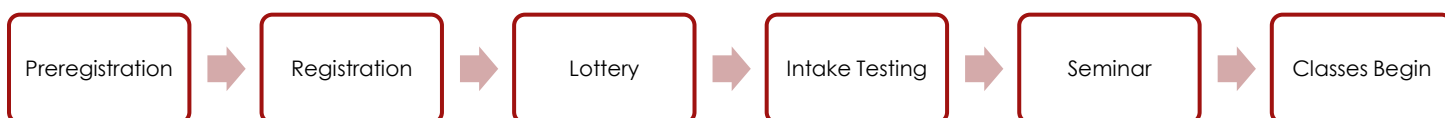
#### **SERVICE**

- ☐ Continually improve our service to each other and to the larger community.

## CURRICULUM

### ENROLLMENT PROCESS

To become a learner at Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School (AoH), you must first sign up during one of our preregistration times. You can visit our website ([aohdc.org](http://aohdc.org)) to find the next preregistration date. The next step is registration, during which you will be required to visit an Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School campus in person to provide proof of DC residency and to complete the needed documents. Registration does not guarantee that you are in classes. After registration is completed, Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School will hold a lottery. After the lottery, learners will be notified if they have been chosen. (If a potential learner is not chosen during the first lottery, he or she will be placed on a waitlist. During the term, if seats become available, Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School will pull names from this waitlist.) Learners chosen in the first lottery will then attend a session where they will take placement assessments to determine their appropriate level of classes. Orientation will follow assessments. Orientation is mandatory. If a learner does not attend orientation, he/she will not be allowed to start classes. After orientation, classes will begin.

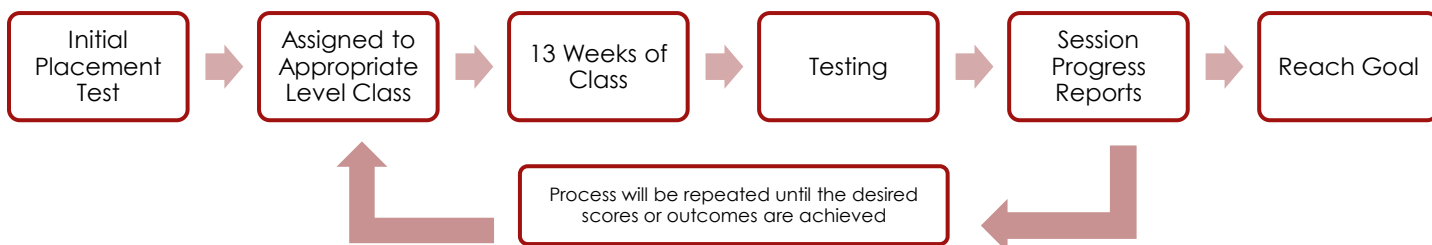


### TESTING

Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School uses a variety of assessment methods including standardized testing, portfolio assessment, teacher-created assessments, progress reports and goal setting to make certain that it is meeting the needs of learners and offers high quality services. To identify educational needs before enrollment, learners take a placement pretest called the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), a widely used national assessment tool which integrates assessment, curriculum and instruction. Learners are also required to take the CASAS test after 50 hours of classes as a way to track progress. CASAS testing is also required if a learner returns to AoH after an absence of 3 or more months, before taking the GED exam, and after finishing requirements for the National External Diploma Program.

### CLASS PROGRESS

Learners are placed in a particular class level based on their initial assessment scores. Learners will then attend classes for a session to gain skills and knowledge. At the end of the session, learners will be assessed in each class to determine their progress. Learners will receive Progress Reports that explain their progress in each class. The scores and results of the tests may be sufficient to reach the learner's goal—either high enough to enter the National External Diploma Program (NEDP), take the Practice GED, enter a training program, or enroll in college courses. Otherwise, the learner will continue with classes and repeat the process for another session.



## PROGRAMS

The Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School offers different programs to meet the needs of our adult learners:

### Adult Basic Education (ABE)

- ABE students develop basic skills in reading, writing, and math. The student objective for this program is to acquire skills for daily life. Students will also learn very basic computer skills.

### GED Preparation

- Students take classes that help them prepare for the GED exam. Instruction is provided in all subject areas on the GED: math, science, social studies, and reasoning through language arts.

### National External Diploma Program (NEDP)

- Students work independently and must demonstrate competencies in reading, writing, and math, as well as other work-related skills. When students complete the program, they receive a high school diploma. Students must be 25 years old and have a reading score at 236 on CASAS or higher to be in NEDP.

### Gateway to College and Careers

- Students with a high school credential are eligible to participate in this program, which focuses on continuing education and preparing interested students for job training and college courses.

### Computer Instruction

- AoH attempts to integrate computer usage into all of our classes. We also provide specific computing certification instruction, including the Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3) and the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS), both of which provide students and job-seekers with a standard for digital literacy and reflect the most relevant skills needed in today's academic and business environments.

### College and Career Readiness

- BRIDGE Career exploration and planning services available at Academy of Hope use a variety of materials, software and hands-on activities to identify career goals and the steps, training and resources needed to obtain those goals.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### ABSENCES

**Learners are expected to come to school every day.** It is important to attend and participate in all classes to learn what is needed to pass the GED test, complete the National External Diploma Program (NEDP) or move on to college classes. If you miss class, you miss learning the new concepts taught, reviewing necessary skills, and participating in class discussions. It is also hard to catch up after missing more than a couple of days of classes. No absence is considered “excused” or “unexcused.” Any absence from the class counts toward a learner’s total, no matter the reason for the absence. Our most successful learners make educational gains after 100 hours of instruction. If you miss class, you will miss instruction. **Those who miss more than 8 days of school are at risk of being un-enrolled.**

Academy of Hope also understands that lives of adult learners are filled with responsibilities and issues that can be difficult to manage in a balanced way. For instance, you may get sick or your child might get sick; job or housing situations may change. As you begin or continue on your educational journey, it is important to remember these things may happen and to save absences for days when they are truly necessary.

These expectations begin the first day of school. All learners are expected to begin attending school at the start of each term in which they are enrolled, including each term’s seminar. **Any learner who does not begin attending school during the first four days of a term will be unenrolled for that term.** If you don’t show up for the start of classes, we will understand that you are no longer able to attend classes that term and will give your spot to someone on the waiting list. Students may appeal to be re-enrolled. If their appeal is accepted, their names will be placed at the end of the waiting list and will be admitted back into class if and when a spot opens.

**Learners are expected to contact the Attendance Hotline (x555) when they are going to miss class.** If a learner misses 4 class days, the learner will be required to meet with an AoH staff member to discuss any barriers to attendance. Learners with frequent absences from particular classes may also be asked to develop an Attendance Plan. Learners who miss more than 8 days of class within a term may be unenrolled from classes.

Attendance meetings are designed to support learners who struggle with attendance. They are designed to help a learner with any attendance challenges that may occur during a term by identifying the barriers to attendance and developing strategies to overcome those barriers. The Student Support staff is here for all learners to help with attendance challenges before unenrollment becomes necessary.

**Coming to class on time is an important part of good attendance.** Learners who are late miss information and directions. When several people arrive late to class, they disrupt the class. For these reasons, Academy of Hope’s policy is that students are expected to arrive to class on-time and to be ready to learn by the time that the class is schedule to begin. This often requires arriving at least 5 minutes early in order to give yourself the time that you need to get materials organized, use the restroom, etc. If you do arrive late, understand that you may not be allowed to enter your classroom as it will be up to the teacher to decide whether or not you can enter class late. If your entry will be disruptive, your teacher likely will not allow you to attend class that day. Please know that if you develop a pattern of missing certain class periods, you may be asked to meet with a Student Support or Programs staff member.

### UNENROLLMENT

If a learner is unenrolled, they will have to re-register for classes and may be put on a waiting list to re-enter the program the following session. If a learner is unenrolled for health reasons, due to the death of a family member, or for work or other reasonable issues determined by programming staff, an enrolled learner who completes deferment, will be permitted to miss up to one semester without re-enrolling in classes. Please contact your advisor to discuss your deferment options.

## CAMPUS POLICIES

### KITCHEN

Coffee and tea are available for no charge. Only staff members and approved students are permitted to make coffee. Please help us keep AoH clean by washing dishes or placing them in the dishwasher. Please be mindful and help us conserve resources by only taking a reasonable amount of sugar, creamer, etc.

### CELL PHONE POLICY

Cell phones are for emergency use only while in school. They may not be visible. They must be put away in a bag, in a pocket, or somewhere else where they will not be seen. Ringers must be silenced or set to vibrate. Certain areas outside of classrooms will be designated for cell phone use to avoid disrupting others in class. *The consequences for breaking this rule are listed the Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School Consequence Chart on page of this Handbook*

### CHILDREN AND VISITORS

Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School is not able to provide childcare because of liability concerns. No children are permitted at AoH during class hours. Please arrange alternative childcare. Visitors, including children, are not allowed in the classroom. When a visitor is expected, staff must be notified in advance. Otherwise they will be turned away.

### PARKING

Parking at the Ward 5 site is limited and requires a monthly parking pass. Passes are available at the front desk. Street parking is also available. Parking at the Ward 8 site is street parking. Please make sure to read all signs. AoH is not responsible for learners' cars or for any damage done while on campus.

### TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE

To help learners with the financial burden of traveling to school, AoH has a limited supply of bus tokens. Learners will be allowed a certain number each term, on an emergency basis. Visit Student Support Services or the Program Managers for emergency transportation assistance.

### FEES AND SERVICE WORK

AoH learners are required to pay a fee for each term. This money will fund learner activities such as field trips and seasonal celebrations and parties. Learners also have the option to pay their fee by completing a number of service activities, such as helping clean up classrooms or unloading the dishwasher.

### SCHOOL CLOSINGS

AoH follows the D.C.P.S. weather closings. When the weather is bad, learners can follow the major news outlets for D.C.P.S. information about delays, early closings and school closing. If there is a one hour or two-hour delay for daytime classes, come to school for second period, which starts at 10:45 am. This information is also available on our website (aohdc.org) and on our voicemail system.

### DIGITAL USE

Access to the internet is provided to learners to improve their learning experience at AoH. Learners are responsible for the content of all text, audio or other images placed or sent over the Internet (see AoH policy on Harassment and Inappropriate technology use in this handbook)

### CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOL SPACES

Please help us keep our classrooms clean and beautiful by returning books and supplies to their proper places and by discarding trash (food wrappers, banana peels, etc.) in trash cans and recyclables (paper, glass, plastic bottles, and cans) in the recycling bins. Please clean all recyclable materials before placing them in the bins!

**Fire Drill Procedures**

The school ensures fire evacuation routes throughout the building and maps are posted in every classroom. There are fire drills throughout the school year. When the fire alarm rings, all learners must leave the building using the nearest exit quickly leaving all personal items behind. All persons meet at a designated location.

**SCHOOL CALENDAR**

Fall 2016		
August	23-25	Fall Seminar (both sites, day and evening)
	29	Classes begin
September	5	Labor Day-AoH closed
October	10	Columbus Day-AoH closed
November	11	Veterans Day-AoH closed
	21-25	Fall Break-no classes
	24-25	Thanksgiving-AoH closed
December	8	Evening classes end
	9	Daytime classes end
	10-January 9	Winter Break-no classes
	23-January 2	Staff Holiday- AoH closed
Winter 2017		
January	1	New Year's Day-AoH closed
	3	Staff returns
	9-10	Winter Seminar for evening classes
	11-12	Winter Seminar for daytime classes
	16	Martin Luther King Day-AoH closed
	17	Classes begin
	20	Inauguration Day-AoH closed



Spring-Summer 2017		
<b>April</b>	6	Evening classes end
	7	Daytime classes end
	24-25	Spring-Summer Seminar for evening classes
	26-27	Spring-Summer Seminar for daytime classes
<b>May</b>	1	Classes begin
	29	Memorial Day-AoH closed
<b>June</b>	10	Graduation
	29	Evening classes end
	30	Daytime classes end

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

AoH believes every learner should have the opportunity to learn skills and values necessary for personal development. Every learner also has the right to learn and be safe, and no one has the right to interrupt learning or make others feel unsafe. During the first week of class, learners receive their schedules and all learners participate in a formal seminar. The seminar provides learners an opportunity to get to know other learners and the AoH faculty and staff. The orientation provides an overview of AoH's programs, policies and procedures, including a thorough introduction to our disciplinary policy: the AoH Student Code of Conduct.

The Student Code of Conduct includes clear rules about the treatment of others (learners, staff and volunteers), attendance, late arrival, attire and hygiene. The Student Code of Conduct clearly describes the consequences of violating these rules. There is also a process learners can follow if they have complaints about peers, staff, school policies or disciplinary actions. In accordance with District of Columbia law (DCMR Title 25), serious violations of school policy and/or the Student Code of Conduct may lead to the suspension or expulsion of a learner. Every learner will be asked to sign a learner contract containing the Student Code of Conduct, indicating his or her willingness to abide by all school rules and policies.

## GRIEVANCE OR COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

- A learner who has a complaint or grievance against another learner in a class should first discuss the issue or concern with the class teacher. If the learner is not satisfied, the learner should discuss the situation with either the Program Manager or the Chief Program Officer.
- A learner who has a complaint or grievance against a teacher should discuss the problem with the teacher. If the learner does not feel comfortable approaching the teacher or the learner is not satisfied with the solution after approaching the teacher, the learner should present the problem to a Student Support Services staff member.
- A learner who has a complaint or grievance against a staff member should discuss the issue with the staff member. If the learner does not feel comfortable approaching the staff member or, after discussing the problem with the staff member is still not feeling satisfied, the learner should take the grievance to the management staff or the Executive Director.
- A learner who has a complaint or grievance against a decision made during the implementation of a policy may appeal the decision by contacting the Chief Program Officer.

## STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

- The staff of Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School encourages learning and personal growth. We expect all learners, teachers, staff and volunteers to respect one another at all times. We encourage and support one another as we learn and grow together in order to meet our goals.
- AoH does not allow alcohol or drug use on our grounds. Learners who come to school under the influence of substances will be asked to leave. AoH is a safe place for all learners and staff.
- AoH does not tolerate violence of any kind. Learners who become violent with other classmates or staff people will be suspended for a period of time determined by the Executive Director or Chief Program Officer. Violence includes physically striking someone or using strong abusive or threatening language toward someone.
- AoH forbids all of its learners from harassing any other learner, volunteer or staff member because of race, color, religion, sex, age, marital status, disability, national origin, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income or any other reason prohibited by law.
- AoH prohibits harassment at AoH itself and in social or educational activities (for example, parties and field trips) conducted or sponsored by AoH. If you believe that you have been harassed by a classmate, volunteer or staff member, please speak with an AoH staff member, the Chief Program Officer or the Executive Director.

## ACADEMY OF HOPE ADULT PCS BULLYING-PREVENTION POLICY

### DEFINITIONS

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Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School (AoH APCS) defines bullying as any severe, pervasive, or persistent act or conduct whether physical, electronic, or verbal that:

1. May be based on an learner's actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual ability, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, place or residence or business, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or on an learner's association with a person, or group with any person, with one or more of the actual or perceived foregoing characteristics; and
2. Can reasonably be predicted to:
  - a. Place the learner in reasonable fear of physical harm to their person or property;
  - b. Cause a substantial detrimental effect on the learner's physical or mental health;
  - c. Substantially interfere with the learner's academic performance or attendance; or
  - d. Substantially interfere with the learner's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by an agency, educational institution, or grantee.

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## PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING

Acts of bullying, including cyberbullying, whether by a learner, volunteer or staff, are prohibited:

- On AoH APCS grounds and immediately adjacent property, at AoH APCS -sponsored or related events on and off AoH APCS grounds, at any transit stop at which learners wait to be transported to AoH APCS business, or through the use of any electronic devices owned by the AoH APCS, leased by the AoH APCS or used for AoH APCS business; and
- At a location or function unrelated to the AoH APCS, through the use of any electronic devices, including those not owned or leased by the AoH APCS, if the acts of bullying or cyberbullying create a hostile environment at the agency for the victim or witnesses, infringe on their rights at the AoH APCS, or materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operation of the AoH APCS.

Retaliation against a learner, volunteer or staff member who reports bullying, provides information about an act of bullying, or witnesses an act of bullying is also prohibited.

Academy of Hope APCS expects all community members, including youth, to behave in a way that supports Academy of Hope's objective to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all youth and adult learners, staff, and volunteers. Youth who are part of the Academy of Hope community are expected to:

- Treat all members of the AoH APCS community with respect;
- Respect the property of AoH APCS, its staff, and other youth and adult learners connected to AoH APCS;
- Respond appropriately to instructions from AoH APCS staff.

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## REPORTING INCIDENTS OF BULLYING OR RETALIATION

- AoH APCS expects all staff members and volunteers to report incidents of bullying or retaliation they witness or are made of aware of to Traci Branch, Case Manager, who can be reached by phone (202) 269-6623 x135 or by e-mail [traci@ao hdc.org](mailto:traci@ao hdc.org). She will create a written report of a bullying incident.
- Reports of bullying by learners, parents, guardians and community members may be made anonymously. Academy of Hope ACPS cannot take disciplinary action solely on the basis of an anonymous report, though such a report may trigger an investigation that will yield actionable information. All oral reports received as part of this process will be transcribed into writing and included in AoH's bullying database.

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## INVESTIGATING INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

The Director of Student Support Services is charged with making determinations as to whether a reported incident constitutes a case of bullying. These determinations will be made in consideration of the totality of the facts and the circumstances surrounding the incident. If the Director of Student Support Services determines that an incident of bullying or harassment has occurred, she should take the response steps enumerated in AoH APCS' Student Handbook.

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## APPEALS

Parties dissatisfied by the outcome of the bullying investigation may appeal the determination of the Director of Student Support Services to Patricia DeFerrari, Chief Program Officer, who may be reached by phone (202) 269-

6623 x110 or by e-mail [patricia@aohdc.org](mailto:patricia@aohdc.org). This appeal should be submitted no later than 30 days after the initial determination. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Chief Program Officer must conduct a secondary investigation within 30 days of the receipt of an appeal. This 30 days may be extended by up to an additional 15 days if the Chief Program Officer sets forth in writing the reasons why more time is needed to conduct an investigation. Additionally, upon the receipt of an appeal, the Chief Program Officer must inform the party making the submission of their ability to seek additional redress under the DC Human Rights Act.

## ACADEMY OF HOPE ADULT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL CONDUCT CONSEQUENCES CHART, MINOR INFRACTIONS

Minor Infractions	
Specifics and Examples	Potential Consequences
<b>Disruptive Behavior</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any action that halts learning and leads to negative changes in the educational environment including:</li> <li>Outbursts or verbal interactions</li> <li>Using profanity</li> <li>Purposefully misdirecting the class</li> <li>Defiant/Confrontational behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher can ask learner to leave at any time during class</li> <li>Learner meets with Case Manager and Program Manager and develops behavioral plan</li> </ul>
<b>Cell phone or electronic device use</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cell phones or electronic devices are visible and/or in use during class time or not turned off or on 'silent mode'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verbal warning from teacher</li> <li>Teacher may ask learner to leave class</li> <li>Meeting with AoH management staff</li> </ul>
<b>Inappropriate technology use</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessing, transmitting, or otherwise making use of pornographic materials of any kind available over the Internet is not permitted. Any form of harassment activity from AoH computers including but not limited to email transmissions or social media platforms is not permitted.</li> <li>Accessing, transmitting, or otherwise making use of "hate-group" or materials of any kind available over the Internet that may cause discomfort to any <b>gender, race, age, religion or belief, disability or sexual orientation</b> is not permitted</li> <li>Illegal duplication or transmission of protected software is not permitted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immediate forfeiture of AoH computer access privileges for personal use, up to one week (Does not include in class technology use)</li> <li>Meeting with AoH management staff</li> </ul>
<b>Dress Code</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners should not wear shorts or skirts more than 3 inches above the knee</li> <li>Casual dresses, shorts and skirts</li> <li><b>Clothing should not reveal underwear, inappropriate body parts</b> (including back, chest, feet, stomach, and excessive cleavage) or offensive words, terms or pictures.</li> <li>Female learners should not wear halter tops and men should not wear tank tops</li> <li>Hats, both for men and for women (unless for religious or ethnic reasons) are not permitted</li> <li>Tight revealing clothing, spandex tights, and torn clothing are prohibited</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asked to correct violation or asked to leave school for the day</li> <li>Meeting with AoH management staff</li> </ul>
<b>Unapproved Solicitation</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The sale or promotion of non-AoH approved goods or services is not permitted (To receive approval, learners should speak with a program manager )</li> <li>The sale of stolen items or illegal items/ services is not permitted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verbal warning</li> <li>AoH staff may ask learner to leave</li> <li>Learner required to meet with AoH management staff</li> <li>(see the Handbook section on Theft and Drugs violations for consequences involving those infractions)</li> </ul>

## ACADEMY OF HOPE ADULT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL CONDUCT CONSEQUENCES CHART, MAJOR INFRACTIONS

Major Infractions	
Specifics and Examples	Potential Consequences
<b>Drugs</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use/Under the Influence, determined by:</li> <li>• Suspicion of use (smell or physical/mental appearance)</li> <li>• Credible information of use (sight)</li> <li>• Drug paraphernalia or actual drugs/alcohol</li> <li>• Selling, determined by:</li> <li>• Credible information of selling</li> <li>• Drug paraphernalia or actual drugs/alcohol</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension of up to 5 days</li> <li>• Expulsion for selling drugs on campus</li> </ul>
<b>Violence</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physically striking someone</li> <li>• Using strong abusive or threatening language</li> <li>• Use of weapons (Including but not limited to: knives, brass knuckles, nun-chucks, TAZER, stun gun, pepper spray, mace or use of everyday items as a weapon)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expulsion for brandishing, showing or threatening to use weapons; physically assaulting someone</li> <li>• Suspension of up to 5 days for using abusive or threatening language</li> </ul>
<b>Harassment</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of language, written or spoken, that exhibits discrimination or disrespect towards another person based on the person's race, skin color, religion, sex, age, marital status, disability, home country national origin, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income, or any other reason prohibited by law</li> <li>• Sexual harassment:</li> <li>• Unwelcome sexual advances</li> <li>• Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature</li> <li>• Graphic verbal comments about an individual's body</li> <li>• Sexually or otherwise degrading comments, jokes, gestures or sounds</li> <li>• Unwelcome touching</li> <li>• Unwanted pressure for dates</li> <li>• Sexually suggestive objects or materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with AoH management staff</li> <li>• Suspension of up to 5 days</li> <li>• Expulsion for ongoing harassment</li> </ul>
<b>Theft</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theft of office equipment or others' (staff or learner) personal belongings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension of up to 5 days</li> <li>• Expulsion</li> </ul>

Police may be contacted for major infractions

### OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION GUIDELINES

Out-of-school suspensions of up to 5 days are used when learners severely violate the expectations of the community of Academy of Hope. This is a step that is never taken lightly, and is a decision made based on input from the program staff, student support staff, faculty, and the Chief Programs Officer and Deputy Chief Programs Officer.

The following categories are examples of behaviors that may result in a learner being suspended:

- Disruptive behavior that is on-going and uncontrollable, including harassment
- Behavior that is a danger to the learner or to others, including the use of threatening language and the possession or use of drugs or alcohol while at school
- Other extreme behaviors that may deserve suspension based on the frequency of the behavior, the riskiness of behavior, and the learner's openness to following instructions

At least one day prior to returning to classes at Academy of Hope from an out-of-school suspension, the learner is required to have a meeting with program and student support staff. Prior to the meeting, the learner is expected to prepare a written statement to take responsibility for his/her actions that led to the suspension and propose a plan to avoid similar actions in the future. During the meeting, a final plan is created and implemented in order to help the learner to avoid the problem behavior in the future.

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### EXPULSION GUIDELINES

In rare instances, student behavior may be so severe that expulsion is appropriate. Expelling a learner is never considered lightly and requires the consensus of the Program Manager, Chief Programs Officer, and Deputy Chief Programs Officer. Typically, student support staff and faculty also participate in the decision process.

As a school, one of our most important responsibilities is to create an environment that is safe for everyone. We take that seriously and act accordingly. As a result, expulsion is considered when we believe that a learner may be a danger to self or others. Except in extreme instances when a learner's behavior might warrant immediate expulsion, we first try to create a plan that meets both the community's need for safety and the needs of the learner. If the plan fails, then we may move to expel the student.

Grounds for immediate expulsion may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical violence or assault
- Brandishing, use, or threat of a weapon
- The sale of drugs on campus
- Theft

Except in cases of extreme behavior, a learner is expelled only after the learner's team has worked closely with the learner to change the problem behaviors. After expulsion, learners are not permitted to attend classes for the current session. If the current session is near its end, the expulsion may carry over to the next session. At the end of the expulsion, a student may complete the application and registration process to return to Academy of Hope, and must also complete a more extensive appeal to return that includes a restorative justice process.



Students receiving special education services through an IEP are entitled to special protections under federal law. Prior to expulsion of these students, a Manifestation Determination Review meeting will be held with member of the IEP team in order to determine if the behavior is primarily the result of the student's disability.

## NOTIFICATION OF FERPA RIGHTS

Learners will be notified of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) at orientation, and a copy of their rights is provided in this manual and is reviewed during orientation week at the beginning of each semester. Learners with further questions regarding the notification of Rights under FERPA should contact the program manager at the school site they attend or contact school officials as identified in the notification.

## Notification of Rights under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students age 18 or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

- (1) **The right to inspect and review** the student's education records within 45 days of the day Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School (AoH) receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Chief Programs Officer a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Chief Programs Officer (CPO) or other appropriate school official will make arrangements for access and notify the Parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- (2) **The right to request amendment** of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students may write the Chief Program Officer, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If AoH decides not to amend the record as requested by the Parent or eligible student, the school will notify the Parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the Parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- (3) **The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information** contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. For example, FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent to school officials whom AoH has determined to have legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by AoH as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person or company with whom AoH has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- (4) **The right to withhold disclosure of directory information.** At its discretion, AoH may disclose basic “directory information” that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy without the consent of parents or eligible students in accordance with the provisions of District law and FERPA. Directory information includes:
  - A. Student Name
  - B. Student Address
  - C. Student Telephone Listing
  - D. Name of School Attending
  - E. Participation in Officially Recognized Activities and Sports
  - F. Weight and Height of Members of Athletic Teams
  - G. Diplomas and Awards Received
  - H. Student’s Date and Place of Birth
  - I. Names of Schools Previously Attended
  - J. Dates of Attendance

Parents or eligible students may instruct AoH to withhold any or all of the information identified above (i) by completing the “Release of Student Directory Information” Form available at the school, or (ii) by notifying in writing to the Director of Accountability, at Academy of Hope – Adult Pubic Charter School, 601 Edgewood St NE Suite 25, Washington, DC 20017. The release or notification must be provided within 30 days of the issuance of this notice.

- (5) **The right to file a complaint** with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by AoH to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20202.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY SIGNATURE PAGE

By signing this page, I am stating that I understand and agree to follow the attendance policy outlined in the handbook and restated below:

I understand that I am expected to come to school every day. I agree to call AoH to let them know when and why I am missing class.

I understand that if I miss two classes, a teacher will likely call to check-in and inform me that I have missed two classes and remind me that I can only miss 2 additional days. If I miss 2 more days, I understand that I will need to arrange a meeting with AoH staff to discuss what is keeping me from attending school. Additionally, I understand that if I miss eight days during the term I may be unenrolled.

Finally, I understand that I am expected to arrive to class and be ready to learn by the scheduled start time of each class. This often means that I need to plan to arrive to class a little bit early in order to give myself time to prepare for class. I understand that when I arrive late, my teacher will decide whether or not I can enter class and that I am expected to follow that decision as it is based on the disruption that I may cause to my fellow learners. When I miss class, whether it's because I'm late or absent, I will contact my teacher for missed work, but also understand that this work is not the same as making up for a missed class.

Learner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Learner's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDENT HANDBOOK CONFIRMATION OF RECEIPT

By signing this, I acknowledge that I understand and will adhere to all policies that are outlined in this Student Handbook.

Learner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Learner's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_