

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Between

Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis,  
Inc. ("Family Promise")

and

\_\_\_\_\_  
("Host Congregation")

Effective January 1, 2020

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of each party as they relate to the implementation of Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN), a program operated by Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis, Inc. ("Family Promise"). IHN is an emergency shelter for families experiencing homelessness.

## 2. Mission Statement and Family Promise Program Information

*Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis is a partnership of congregations and community organizations responding to the crisis of children and their families who are homeless. We work to eliminate homelessness in Greater Indianapolis.*

Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has operated in Indianapolis, IN since 1994, collaborating with faith-based organizations to provide emergency shelter, meals, and support to families in crisis. It does this through the Interfaith Hospitality Network program (IHN). IHN Host Congregations follow a model of hospitality. Congregations and volunteers are referred to as hosts. Program Participants are guests or guest families.

The Family Promise Day Center located at 1850 N. Arsenal Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46218, houses administrative offices. It provides guest families with access to showers, laundry facilities, limited storage space, dining and day rooms that are designed for family use. This is where adult clients meet with staff for case management, receive mail, attend workshops, and care for young children. Families access the Center from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., seven days a week, with weekday hours being extended as early as 6:00 a.m. to accommodate guest school or work schedules.

Family Promise's name indicates the promise to keep a family together during their hardest time, regardless of the makeup of the family. Family Promise does not define what a family is, but accepts the definition of the family that applies for shelter.

Furthermore, Host Congregations participate in the IHN program recognizing that the program strives to be a low barrier shelter, recognizing that many families going through homelessness will have obstacles to employment and/or housing from either previous mistakes or current conditions requiring support. Shelters that are exclusionary in their acceptance of families can at times perpetuate homelessness instead of helping resolve it. Family Promise seeks to be as accepting as possible of a shelter program while still maintaining safety of guest children, parents, volunteers, staff, and property.

Last, the IHN program is interfaith, meaning Family Promise relies on congregations of many different faiths to be members of the network serving together. Even though congregations, staff, and volunteers are often motivated in large part by their individual faith, congregations and volunteers do not proselytize or evangelize to the families in the programs. An agent of Family Promise should not discuss their own faith unless asked by a guest family, and participation in any prayer (e.g., before meals) is always optional.

## 3. Responsibilities of Host Congregation

- Host families at the congregation for three or more weeks per calendar year, with any exceptions requiring approval of the Congregation Relationships Committee of Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis. Hosting is defined by the responsibilities that follow.

- Engage one or more Volunteer Coordinators to manage IHN activities that relate to the Host Facility, including, but not limited to, scheduling volunteers, collecting data (i.e. sign in sheets, volunteer applications and agreements, incident reports) and reporting to Family Promise Staff.
- Provide overnight accommodations within the host facility that are accessible to guests from 5 p.m. – 7:30 a.m., one week at a time, on a rotating schedule. Hosting begins Sunday evening and ends the following Sunday morning.
- Provide volunteers between the hours of 5 p.m. and 7:30 a.m. for each night of the host week. Guests are not permitted in the Congregation facility without supervision.
- Provide clean linens, private sleeping space for up to four guest families consisting of no more than 14 individuals and two overnight hosts, and three meals each day for guests during hosting weeks.
- Provide guests with transportation to and from the host facility using 15-passenger vans provided by Family Promise.
- Maintain Family Promise equipment in good condition and transport it to the next Host facility on Sunday, at a mutually convenient time.
- Communicate with the congregation via newsletters, bulletins, and other appropriate methods, to keep them “in the know” about the Interfaith Hospitality Network program and activities.
- Promote and support Family Promise volunteer trainings by encouraging congregation participation, including attendance by one or more of the Volunteer Coordinators at three of the four quarterly IHN Coordinator trainings.
- Support Family Promise financially each year at a level determined by the Congregation Mission Team. Support can be a congregation collection, a sponsorship of a Family Promise event, or other support that helps take responsibility for the operating costs of the program.

#### **4. Responsibilities of Family Promise**

- Provide volunteer training, Hosting Manuals, and other assistance as necessary to support Host Congregations in fulfilling their mission.
- Thoroughly screen prospective guest families for program eligibility in accordance with Family Promise’s IHN Acceptance Policy.
- Provide case management, ongoing assessment, and intervention with the goal of helping families achieve and maintain permanent housing.
- Enforce Guest Guidelines and the program’s Termination & Grievance Policy.
- Provide data collection tools (i.e. sign in sheets, volunteer applications and agreements, incident reports) for use in the Host Facility.
- Provide on-call emergency assistance to volunteers, 24/7, during host weeks.
- Communicate with Volunteers, and other Network Partners as needed.

- Provide timely information to Congregations and Volunteers via newsletters, bulletins, and other appropriate methods, to keep them “in the know” about the Interfaith Hospitality Network mission and activities.

Host Congregation agrees to partner with Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis, in the role described above. Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis and Host Congregation agree to work together to the best of our abilities. We will work with other faith traditions within the Interfaith Hospitality Network with love and cooperation.

**SIGNATURES**

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, Family Promise and Host Congregation have executed this Agreement in Indianapolis, Indiana on the dates subscribed below.

**(“Host Congregation”)**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**FAMILY PROMISE OF GREATER INDIANAPOLIS (“Family Promise”)**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print: Michael D. Chapuran \_\_\_\_\_

Position: Executive Director \_\_\_\_\_

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