

## *Bridges Ministry*

### **Time Commitment**

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We know that your time at Bridges will probably be very different than what you are used to. We know that you will need a period of adjustment and transition. We also understand that what we will be asking of you may at times seem too difficult and it might be attempting to give up.

We want to better help you understand what your time here will be like, and give you a rough estimate as to how long you will be going through our counseling program. It is important for you to be aware of the restrictions you will have and what is expected of you during each stage. Understand that you going through counseling is only temporary, but that does *not* mean you will be required to leave the house after completing counseling.

#### **Stage 1**

Upon moving into our house you will have a schedule that you will be required to follow, whether you are working or not, for the first two months. If you do not have a job, you will not be spending any of your money. Who you spend time with is determined by the schedule we made for you. These two months are vital for you to get to know us and for us to get to know you.

During this time you will serve at Finger Lakes Christian Fellowship/Seneca Falls community at mandated times alongside a woman from our church. We want to help you cultivate an attitude of service, which involves sacrificially giving up your free time. Generally, you won't have much down/alone time until later in the evening when your schedule permits it.

You will also begin counseling with one of our counselors. You and your counselor will create realistic goals for you to achieve during your first stage. For those who move into the house without a job, their goal will be to get a job. For those who already have a job, their goals will be to make a budget and start saving their money.

So we can keep track of our house keys, you will not be given a key to the house during this stage.

#### **Stage 2**

To begin this stage you must have a job. You and your counselor will create daily schedules for you to follow. You will be required to schedule at least 10 hours of serving at the church or in the community every week, time for daily devotionals, and for counseling sessions as well. With your counselor's consent you are permitted to spend your money. But all purchases must be pre-approved and you must have a receipt. This stage will be the "key" stage to your stay here. Difficult things will occur, which is expected out of life. We will help you through those situations and teach you how to glorify God even when life gets tough.

Stage 2 also shows staff and counselors how serious you are about making God your number one priority in your daily life. Expect to be challenged and pushed; we want to help you grow. As you begin to achieve the goals you and your counselor set up, you will be considered for moving up in our program.

If there is evidence that you are not working hard or honoring God with your lifestyle, we will ask you to leave our house. We exist to offer a safe home to women who *desire* to grow and change. Bridges is more than a roof over your head.

Notice there wasn't a time frame for Stage 2: We assume Stage 2 will take quite a few months. Stage 2 ends when your counselor deems you no longer need to be counseled. Before you start Stage 3 your counselor will help you find a mentor and make sure you both have developed a healthy, God-honoring, relationship.

### **Stage 3**

In Stage 3, residents no longer receive counseling from their counselor. Instead, you will meet with a mentor weekly or biweekly. Your mentor will hold you accountable and encourage you to grow. We want to make it possible for the women in our church to love on our residents at Bridges, and giving them opportunities to mentor you is the best way they can love you.

You will not be required to leave our house – we know that finding affordable housing in our area is difficult. You will still have to abide by the guidelines set in place, with the exceptions of a few freedoms that your counselor will review with you prior to moving into Stage 3. You will still be expected to serve the church and the community while you live in the house.

If you decide you want to move out, we will help you find a place and help you move in.

### **Summary**

If you are able to sign this Time Commitment with a strong and unwavering dedication to remaining in our program until your goals are met, we welcome you to do so. We are confident that the real answers for lasting change are possible when Biblical solutions are applied to your situation. We are ready to help you understand and apply these Biblical solutions if you are willing to commit the time to do so.

You must understand that the staff at Bridges would love to work with every girl that is interested in having a better life. However, we are only able to work with girls that prove they have a strong desire to change, have already tried to make changes on their own, and ready to work very hard the entire time they are here. If you are ready to change, and if you are ready to learn, we are ready to work with you.

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I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand the following things:

- Bridges Ministry exists to house young ladies who are serious about working through their problems and serving Jesus Christ with their whole hearts.
- The Bridges Ministry staff will work diligently to help me to learn and apply Scriptural truth that will enable me to be pleasing to God and to grow in Christ's likeness.
- By coming to Bridges I am voluntarily submitting myself to live under the authority of the Bridges Ministry staff and within the guidelines of the program without complaining or grumbling.
- My schedule, money, and personal contacts will be under the authority and guidance of Bridges Ministry staff. I will regain control over these items as I progress through the Stages.
- It is in my best interest to be firmly committed to finishing out this program. I should not allow myself to dwell on thoughts that help me want to leave early or feed into a desire to quit the program.
- Bridges Ministry is a voluntary program, and I cannot be forced into the program against my will. By committing myself to the Bridges Ministry program, I acknowledge that I am willingly placing myself in this situation for my own and my family's long-term benefit.
- I understand that my time at Bridges will be completed in Stages. I understand the expectation is that the longer I am in the program, the more independent I am becoming, and the goal is that I will complete the program when changes have been made and maintained long enough for staff to determine my graduation readiness.
- My completion of the program is not determined by the length of time I have been in the program, but instead by the changes I am able to make and maintain. Bridges Ministry staff, along with my input, will determine the length of time I am in the Bridges program.
- I understand that the staff regards a signed Time Commitment as a contract and will expect me to abide by it until I complete the program.

Understanding the conditions listed above, I agree to commit to stay in the Bridges Ministry program until both staff and I feel that I am ready to complete it.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date