


THE CITY OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES
ADULT SERVICES

Procedure 01-419

SUBJECT: Client Valuables	APPLICABLE TO: Adult Shelter Facilities	ISSUED: June 20, 1883 REISSUED: November 1, 2000
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ADMINISTERED BY: Division of Adult Services	APPROVED BY:  Marcia Stevenson, Deputy Commissioner
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I. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines and detailed instructions for the safekeeping of client valuables in accordance with Section 491 of Regulation 18 New York State Code Rules and Regulations (NYCRR).

II. APPLICABILITY

Applicable to Adult Services shelter staff, Program Analysts, and Program Administrators.

III. FORMS

- 419A Receipt of Client Valuables (Sample)
- 419B Release of Client Valuables (Sample)
- 419C Client Valuables Log (Sample)

IV. RELATED PROCEDURES

- 00-412 Locker Assignment and Client Belongings

V. INTRODUCTION

Clients with money, property or items of value may request operators to safeguard the valuables while they are residents of a shelter. The safekeeping of client valuables by operators must be consistent with Section 491.6 (c) of 18 NYCRR:

- (1) The operator may offer a resident the opportunity to place money, property or items of value in the operator's custody.
- (2) The operator shall maintain inventory records and provide for the security of property or items of value which the resident has voluntarily given to the operator to hold in custody or to exercise control over.
- (3) The operator shall obtain written authorization from the resident to hold property or items of value and shall provide each resident with a receipt thereafter.

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All shelters must provide some storage space, either an on-site or off-site safe or secure cabinet, for clients to deposit small valuables. These valuables may include, but are not limited to, bank documents, cash, personal documents, food stamps, and small items, such as jewelry. The amount of cash stored on the premises should be limited to reduce the risk of theft and liability. Where possible, clients should be encouraged to store money orders rather than cash. Staff may assist a client, where appropriate, to arrange for the safekeeping of items too large or numerous for the safe/secure cabinet (i.e. tools), in an alternative storage location, such as a secure storage room in the shelter or with relatives or friends. Where storage is off-site, staff must make every effort to store valuables as soon as possible upon receipt. Under no circumstances should operators place valuables anywhere but in a locked area, preferably a safe.

Only authorized personnel should have access to the safe/secure cabinet and its combination/lock. The Shelter Director should appoint two staff members to process valuables and systematically document the transactions.

One staff member should be responsible for the handling of deposits and withdrawals from the safe/secure cabinet. The staff member should deposit valuables into the safe/secure cabinet in an individual envelope and always issue a receipt to the client for each deposit and withdrawal of valuables. The storage envelope and receipt and release forms must denote the client's name, HA number, description of the item(s) deposited or withdrawn and date of activity. The client and staff member must co-sign receipt and release forms. Copies of forms must be retained for the shelter files. The other staff member should maintain a bookkeeping system, which logs all safe activity and contains a file of all documents related to storage of valuables.

Operators may use the attached samples of a receipt form, release form, and a shelter valuables log.

Shelters should establish specific hours when the designated staff will be available for clients to make deposits and withdrawals. Staff should make special arrangements for clients who cannot be available during the shelter's specified hours for the deposit or withdrawal of valuables.

Upon discharge or transfer of a client, operators must return valuables in accordance with Section 491.5 (c) (3) of 18 NYCRR:

At the time of discharge or transfer but in no case more than 72 hours after leaving the facility, the resident, representative or other appropriate individual or agency shall be returned any monies, properties or things of value held in trust or in custody by the operator.

Former clients have **30 days** from the time they leave the shelter -- through transfer to another shelter, placement outside the shelter system or whose whereabouts are unknown -- to retrieve their valuables. A relative or friend of a former client may also claim valuables, provided the shelter receives written, notarized authorization from the former client. The relative or friend must also provide appropriate identification to shelter staff at the time of retrieval, with copies of the ID placed in the client's case file.

Property not claimed within 30 days is considered abandoned and is forwarded to the State Comptroller's Office for auction. Unclaimed funds become property of the NYC Department of Homeless Services for deposit into the Homeless Trust Fund.

The Shelter Director will conduct a quarterly audit of the contents of the safe/secure cabinet and handle any discrepancies that occur during the deposit and retrieval of valuables.

VI. DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS

1. CASEWORKER

- a. When a client requests storage of valuables:
 - (1) Explains process for safekeeping of valuables, including:
 - (a) hours and contact staff for the safe/secure cabinet.
 - (b) requirement to withdraw all valuables before leaving the shelter.
 - (c) requirement to maintain all deposit/withdrawal receipts.

2. DESIGNATED STAFF

- a. When client is depositing valuables:
 - (1) In client's presence, seals valuables in an envelope. Writes on envelope the following information: client's name, H.A. Number, description of valuables, and date/time deposit took place. Deposits envelope in safe/secure cabinet.
 - (2) Fills out receipt. Client signs receipt. Staff person co-signs and dates. Gives copy to client. Copy to client's Caseworker for placement in case file. Original to Shelter File. See Receipt of Client Valuables (Sample Form 419A).
 - (3) Records contents of envelope in log. See Client Valuables Log (Sample Form 419C).
- b. When client is withdrawing valuables at his/her request or upon discharge from the shelter, including transfer to another shelter or placement outside the shelter system:
 - (1) Requests receipt signed at the time of deposit and verifies client's identity. If client lost receipt, s/he must present photo-ID, provide a signature which matches the signature on the receipt kept in the Shelter File, and describe the valuables in sufficient detail for ownership to be established.
 - (2) Obtains sealed envelope containing client's valuables from safe/secure cabinet. Returns envelope to client. Asks client to open envelope in staff member's presence to confirm contents.

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- (2) After client has reviewed and confirmed contents of envelope, fills out release form. Client and staff co-sign release form. Gives copy to client. Copy to client's Caseworker for placement in case file. Original to Shelter File. See Release of Client Valuables (Sample Form 419B).
 - (3) Records release in log.
 - (4) If there is a discrepancy between the contents of the envelope and the original receipt, refers matter to Shelter Director.
- c. If a family member or friend requests valuables on behalf of a former client:
- (1) Asks individual for former client's written, notarized authorization to claim the valuables.
 - (2) Asks individual for personal identification to confirm his/her identity. Photo copies personal ID document and returns ID to individual.
 - (3) If the individual provides written, notarized authorization and personal ID to verify his/her identity as the family member or friend, releases valuables to the individual as specified in Instruction 2b above.
 - (4) Gives copy of release form to family member or friend. Attaches client's written authorization and copy of the personal ID to release form. Copy to Caseworker for placement in case file. Original to Shelter File.

3. SHELTER DIRECTOR

- a. Conducts a regular inventory of all valuables in safe/secure cabinet, ensuring that staff has logged all items appropriately and that all clients received receipts.
 - b. Completes a quarterly audit of the contents of the safe/secure cabinet.
 - c. Arranges for the transfer of abandoned property to the State Comptroller's Office and for the transfer of abandoned funds to the Department of Homeless Services.
 - d. Handles discrepancies in deposit and retrieval of client valuables from the safe/secure cabinet. Notifies Program Analyst if wrongdoing is suspected.
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RECEIPT OF VALUABLES

DATE: _____

CLIENT NAME: _____

HA NUMBER: _____

Deposit Type: ___ Money Order ___ Cash ___ Check ___ Food Stamps ___ Other: _____

Money Order/Check Number: _____ Amount of Deposit: \$ _____

Money Order Company: _____

Description of Item (include account number of bank accounts): _____

Client Signature: _____ Staff Signature: _____

Keep this receipt to verify your deposit. Clients whose whereabouts are unknown have 30 days to withdrawal their valuables from the safe. Unclaimed property is considered abandoned and is sent to the State Comptroller's Office for auction. Unclaimed funds become property of the Department of Homeless Services for deposit into the Homeless Trust Fund.

Distribution: 1st - Client 2nd - Caseworker (placement in case file) 3rd - Shelter/Safekeeping

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RELEASE OF VALUABLES

DATE: _____

CLIENT NAME: _____

HA NUMBER: _____

Withdrawal Type: ___ Money Order ___ Cash ___ Check ___ Food Stamps ___ Other: _____

Money Order/Check Number: _____ Amount of Withdrawal: \$ _____

Money Order Company: _____

Description of Item: _____

Retrieved by: ___ Applicant/Client ___ Family Member/Friend Signature: _____
(Attach a copy of written authorization and identification)

Staff Signature: _____

This receipt verifies that the client/relative/friend has received the above items from storage in the shelter safe.

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