

Standards for Outside Sisters

August 28, 2009

It is of primary importance that Sisters Of The Road address the concerns raised by staff, customers, neighbors, and the city around the blocked sidewalks and the sale, purchase, and use of drugs outside of our Cafe, Personalist Center, and Admin/Development office. We commit to creating a safer and more accessible sidewalk for all, while attempting to deter drug sales, purchases and use. Additionally, at the same time we acknowledge the systemic reasons for these activities.

How this new standard is different than the sit lie law that has targeted people experiencing homelessness.

Sisters believes and has always stated that people need to be able to sit and lie down to rest. Our policy does not prohibit sitting or lying, it prohibits blocking the passage of other pedestrians. You are welcome to sit or lie outside of the marked zone. Sisters has always asked that we all be respectful and not block the passage of another person on the sidewalk. This new standard offers people a chance to easily change their position to respect the pedestrian zone if they are not doing so, and will give a clear message of how they can do that by simply moving to outside of the pedestrian zone.

Policy for Blocking the Sidewalks:

Staff, customers, volunteers and visitors and their belongings are welcome to gather outside of Sisters Of The Road as long as they *never* block the pedestrian space (which is 60 inches after a 30 inch frontage zone next to the building. The remainder of the sidewalk after the frontage and pedestrian zone is available for people and belongings as well.) This allows adequate room for mobility devices and also provides others a sense of safety and a welcoming environment as they walk by.

If a person or people block the pedestrian zone, staff will tell them our policy and ask them to change their behavior. If they change their behavior staff will thank them for their cooperation. If they refuse to change their behavior they will be asked to leave and will not be able to access Sisters services for one week. This includes meals, barter work, CAG activities, volunteering, Sisters' events or standing outside of the cafe, Personalist Center and Admin/Development office. The person can request a list of viable public gathering areas; these will also be posted in the window at all times.

Each customer will be given the following information when they sign up for a time slot to eat: "You are welcome to wait outside, but we ask that you do not stand in the marked zone that must stay clear to allow people to pass by on the sidewalk." This ensures that each person has the same supportive information

and that we do not assume that all people will or are able to read standards posted in the window.

Why we are asking people to take a break from Sisters for a week if they are asked to keep the zone clear but do not do so:

Sisters does not currently have the resources to keep a staff person outside during the entire time we are open. Even if we could, one person would never be successful if their only tool was to ask the same people over and over to respect the passage zone for others. In the past we have asked many of the same people many times over in the same day to please respect this zone and it has not worked. The zone continued to be clogged by the same people we asked, in part because we were not clear where they could stand, sit or lie and in part because there was no consequence for not changing this behavior. We believe it is within the values of best friendship to ask each of us to respect the rights and needs of others, to be good neighbors, and to offer a humane and fair consequence if someone is not able to do so after being asked on any given day.

Policy for Urinating or Defecating Outside Sisters:

Do not urinate or defecate outside of Sisters Of The Road. If someone refuses to change this behavior they will be asked to leave and will not be able to access Sisters' services for one week. This includes meals, barter work, CAG activities, volunteering, Sisters' events or standing outside of the cafe, Personalist Center and Admin/Development office. Our public restrooms are available from 10am – 3pm only. The person looking for a public restroom outside of these hours can request a list of viable public gathering areas; these will also be posted in the window at all times.

Policy for the Sale, Purchase, and Use of Drugs Outside of Sisters:

Do not sell, purchase, or use drugs outside of Sisters Of The Road. We clearly state in messaging posted on our building that all people are welcome but drug dealing, purchasing and/or use is not welcome in our space. We ask that individuals involved in the selling, purchasing or use of drugs be aware that we will call the police if we witness this activity. This policy and our posted stance serve as notice that you should not engage in these activities in or outside of Sisters' Cafe, Personalist Center or Admin/Development Office. You will also be asked to leave Sisters for 30 days for any of the above offenses. This includes not participating in meals, barter work, CAG activities, volunteering, Sisters' events or standing outside of the cafe, Personalist Center and Admin/Development office.

Policy for Littering Outside of Sisters: In order to maintain a clean, safe and hospitable environment Sisters Of The Road asks that all customers, barter workers, volunteers and staff assist in keeping the areas outside of our cafe free from litter.

Please put your garbage in the trashcans located on the curb or in a trashcan inside Sisters. If trash will not fit in any of these garbage cans, please ask a staff member for assistance with garbage disposal.

If you litter outside of Sisters you will be asked to clean up your litter. If you continue to litter outside of Sisters, you will be asked to leave for a period of time. During that time you will not be permitted to enter Sisters for any reason or to access Sisters' services, and you will be asked not to hang out outside the cafe, PC or Admin office. If you do hang out outside or enter Sisters, your time out will start over each time.

If you are interested in sweeping the sidewalk as barter work, please see a café floor manager.