

# COUCH SURFER HANDBOOK

for couch surfer hosts

PREPARED BY:





## A NOTE FROM: RABBI MENDEL KASTEL OAM



**Jewish House**  
People helping people

Welcome to the Couch Surfer Host Handbook. This handbook has been created to ensure your experience as a host of a couch surfer is a positive one, and that you feel safe as you generously support and share your home with someone in need.

The handbook provides practical advice on the various issues that you may encounter as a host.

Should you begin to feel uncomfortable or need further advice on how to support the couch surfer, we have further developed a dedicated Couch Surfer Host Support Line Service. By texting 0480 049 922 or filling out the web form on [www.couchsurfer.org.au](http://www.couchsurfer.org.au) you will be connected to one of our experienced caseworkers who will assess your situation and work together with you to create a plan to meet your individual needs.

Our platform is available in 109 languages and can be accessed by scanning the QR codes provided.

We thank you for your generosity and kindness in supporting someone who is without a safe place to sleep. Please reach out to us and we will support you and connect you to services that will ensure both party's needs are met through mediation.

We would like to thank all those who helped make this handbook happen in particular Michelle Lewis and the support from DCJ.

We wish you well and hope you find this handbook helpful during this time.

Yours sincerely

Rabbi Mendel Kastel OAM  
CEO, Jewish House

**Disclaimer:** Any content created by us, whether published on the website or transmitted through any other means: Is not legal advice; is intended to provide a general summary form of legal and other information regarding couch surfing; is not intended to be a substitute for professional legal or financial advice and should not be relied upon as such and is general in nature and does not take into account your circumstances.



# CONTENTS

A couch surfer is a person who typically moves from household to household, who is not regarded as being part of the household, and \*who does not have any form of leased tenure over any accommodation and is therefore regarded as homeless. By providing them with short-term accommodation, a host aims to help them get back on their feet and find more stable housing.

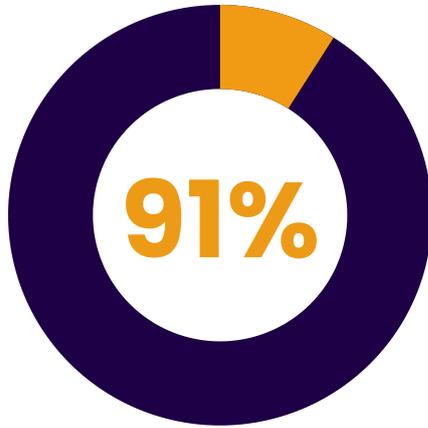
This booklet outlines the following:

- COUCH SURFING STATS IN OUR COMMUNITY
- WHY DO PEOPLE COUCH SURF?
- HOSTING A COUCH SURFER
- IF YOUR COUCH SURFER IS ESCAPING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
- COUCH SURFING ETIQUETTE
- HOST CHECKLIST
- CONVERSATION STARTERS
- COUCH SURFING AGREEMENTS
- LEGALS
- RESOURCES
- WHAT IS MEND? HOW IT WORKS
- TESTIMONIALS

\*Source Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

# DID YOU KNOW?

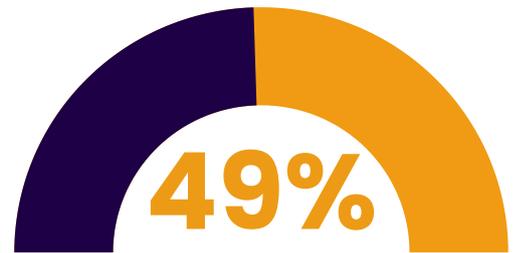
## Couch surfing stats in our community



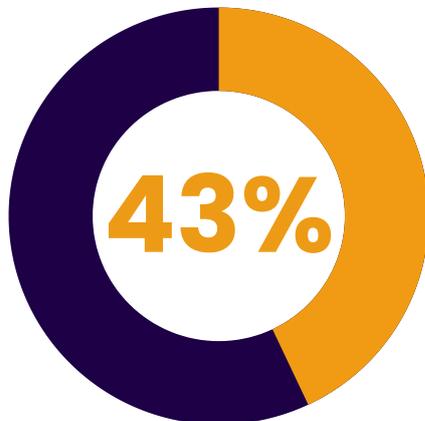
of couch surfers are unemployed\*



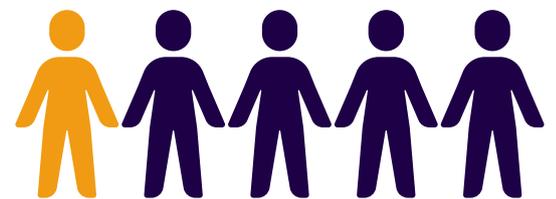
of couch surfers are female\*



of couch surfers are aged between 15 and 24 years

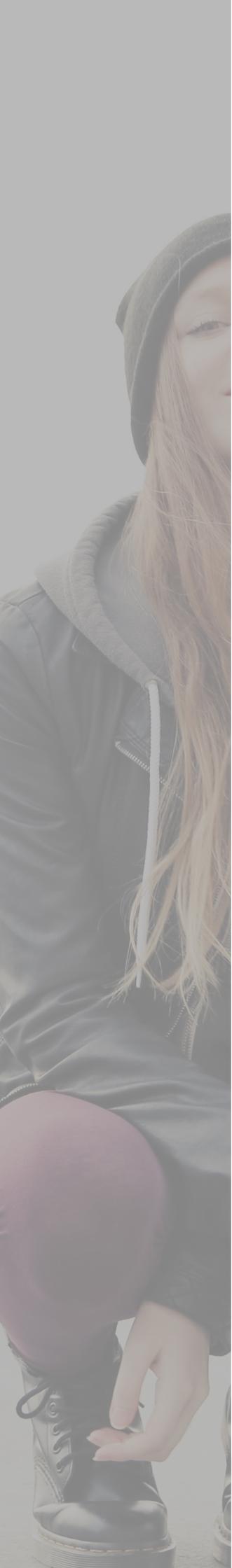


of couch surfers have experienced family or relationship breakdowns\*



1 in 5

couch surfers experience repeat episodes of homelessness\*



# WHY DO PEOPLE COUCH SURF?

## Why do people couch surf?

Individuals couch surf for a variety of reasons, one being that they are currently experiencing homelessness and need to find a safe place to avoid sleeping rough. A person may use couch surfing as a form of temporary accommodation until they find a more permanent arrangement.

There are also couch surfers who are escaping domestic violence.

Although couch surfers are predominantly young people, people of all ages may find themselves couch surfing at times throughout their life, all of them are looking for a safe place to stay while looking for more permanent housing.

It is important to understand the link between someone couch surfing in their hometown and homelessness. Couch surfing comes under the umbrella of 'secondary homelessness'. The definition of this describes an individual who is moving from temporary 'shelter to shelter'.

'Slipping through the cracks' is a common theme among couch surfers who have been failed by the social structures in which they exist. Although couch surfing is considered a secondary form of homelessness, many couch surfers do not consider themselves homeless which excludes them from a system that is intended to support those in their circumstance. This want to remain out of a system, often reflects a lack of trust in how their unique situation would be handled by service providers.

## What are homelessness services, and how do they work?

Homelessness services are a variety of programs that support homeless people or those who are at risk of homelessness. They are usually run by not-for-profit agencies, which are of different sizes and offer different types of assistance. These agencies receive government funding to deliver accommodation and interpersonal services, including crisis/emergency accommodation, accommodation placement and/or support, housing information, public rental housing, advice, and case management.



# HOSTING A COUCH SURFER

## **What can I do as a host to create a safe couch surfing experience?**

Providing a safe and stable environment for a couch surfer is a way to provide relief and assistance to someone who may be vulnerable and in need. It can also improve their mental health and help them lay the foundations for a positive future.

As a host, the most effective way to provide a safe, secure and respectful experience for a couch surfer is to set clear boundaries and come to a mutual understanding of what couch surfing at your home will entail. Clearly communicating and discussing expectations and house rules are an excellent way to avoid misunderstandings, conflict, and negative interactions.

The best couch surfing experience is one where both the host and the couch surfer feel safe, and enjoy the experience. It's an effective bridge between the surfer's last accommodation, and their next, more permanent, secure housing.

## **Is couch surfing an option for people under 16?**

Unless the host has consent from the young person's parent or guardian, couch surfing for people under 16 years old is not permitted under the law. Young people under 16 years of age who are seeking a couch surfing arrangement without the necessary consent, should be referred to child protection authorities.

## **Does the surfer need to make financial contributions?**

Surfers often don't have the means to share expenses such as rent and utilities. They may be able to contribute to food and other expenses and be happy to help out with household chores. This is something that should be discussed with and agreed to by both parties before the couch surfer moves in. Please be reasonable in your expectations, your couch surfer shouldn't be expected to do all the household chores, just their fair share.

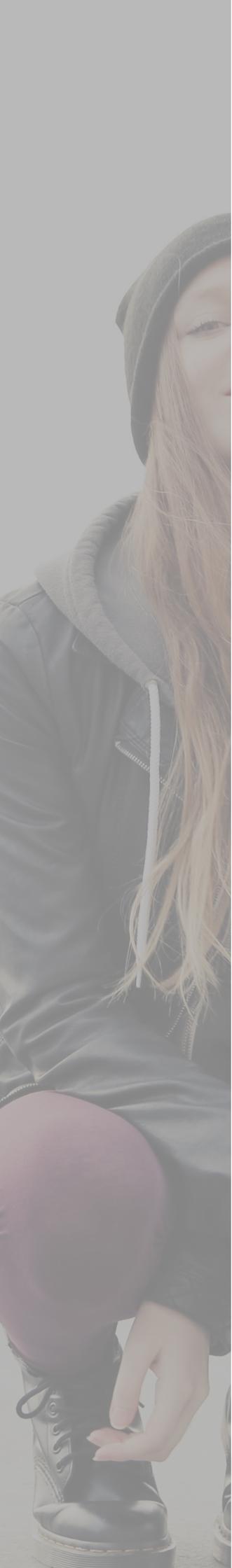
# IF YOUR COUCH SURFER IS ESCAPING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

## IF YOUR COUCH SURFER IS ESCAPING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PLEASE TAKE POSITIVE STEPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR COUCH SURFER

The time after leaving a domestic violence situation can be very dangerous.

**If you or your couch surfer are in immediate danger call 000**

1. Do not share any information or photos about the couch surfer on SMS, social media, or even tell friends. Don't tag them on social media!
2. Let them use your computer and phone until they get new devices that cannot be traced. Or suggest they use public computers at the local library.
3. Check out this helpful link <https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/domestic-family-violence/online-safety-planning/online-safety-checklist-friends-family>
4. Are you concerned that the perpetrator might know the couch surfer is staying with you and might be looking to harm the couch surfer, you, or a family member? Please call DV Line on 1800737732 to help the couch surfer find safer accommodation in NSW.
5. Does the perpetrator know you? If so, your home may not be the best place for your couch surfer. Please encourage your couch surfer to seek help and contact the DV line.
6. Help your couch surfer to make a safety plan. All safety plans are unique to the victim's situation, however, here are some ideas: <https://www.1800respect.org.au/help-and-support/safety-planning>
7. There are many apps for DV. Each app has different information. You might like to take a look at some of them.  
\*Sunny app \* Daisy \*Girls Gotta Know \*Help me \*Positive Pathways \*Penda\*Emergency +
8. There may be more risks to privacy and safety for the couch surfer if someone still has access to their device. Please support them to use the online safety checklist - [www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/domestic-family-violence/online-safety-planning/online-safety-checklist](http://www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/domestic-family-violence/online-safety-planning/online-safety-checklist)



# COUCH SURFING ETTIQUETTE

You are hosting someone in your home, so it's reasonable to ask them to help around the house where appropriate. It's okay to ask the couch surfer to keep their belongings in agreed areas of the home and respect your privacy. It is essential that the couch surfer shows respect for the house rules and abides by things such as curfews, lights out, noise levels, and policies on visitors. Please discuss all of these things with your couch surfer before they move in.

## **Risks for the Couch Surfer**

Given the substantial number of young people and women (and LGBTQIA+ persons) who are couch surfers, there are sometimes expectations of unpaid, forced labour, or sexual favours being exchanged for a place to sleep. This should never be suggested, requested, or (if offered) accepted!

## **Risks for the host**

For you, the host, a negative experience during a couch surfing situation is when you or your housemates or family feel disrespected or unsafe. This could be the case if you think you or your house is not being treated appropriately. Red flags to look out for are things such as the couch surfer bringing unwanted guests into the home, being involved in illegal activities, not maintaining their hygiene, being disruptive, etc. Be sure to set obvious boundaries and insist these are kept.

In an emergency, call the police 000 or if you have mental health concerns, the mental health line 1800 011 511

## **Experiences of couch surfers**

Couch surfing can be a positive experience for individuals who are provided with a much-needed sense of relief in knowing that they will not be sleeping rough for some time. On the other hand, couch surfing can be a dangerous, unstable, and frightening experience for some who are using it as a last resort to a means of shelter, so they don't end up sleeping on the street. As a host, please keep in mind the couch surfer is vulnerable.

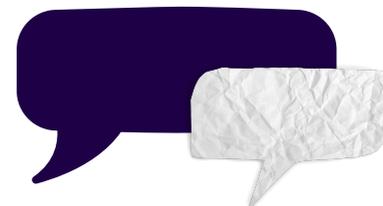
# HOST CHECKLIST

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Below are a list of things for you to consider before agreeing to host a couch surfer. Please have a conversation with your partner and the family to discuss hosting a couch surfer to see how they feel about the idea and what guidelines you will put in place as a household.

The safety and security of you, your family, and the couch surfer are critical. We want to make sure that you feel comfortable about the short-term stay while we help your couch surfer find a longer-term solution.

- ✓ I can commit to having someone stay for an agreed period.
- ✓ I feel comfortable with the couch surfer living in my home.
- ✓ I have clearly communicated the time frame.
- ✓ My couch surfer and I seem to communicate well.
- ✓ I have a comfortable place for the couch surfer to stay.
- ✓ I can offer privacy, and privacy boundaries have been discussed.
- ✓ My family is supportive, and their general well-being isn't at risk.
- ✓ I have discussed financial arrangements with the couch surfer.
- ✓ We have discussed and agreed on chores.
- ✓ I will not make unreasonable requests of my guest.
- ✓ There will be no sexual favours requested, and there will be clear physical boundaries set and maintained.
- ✓ I will provide a welcoming and safe environment.
- ✓ This home is free from dangers and triggers for the couch surfer.
- ✓ There is no violence, illicit drug use, or excessive drinking in my home.
- ✓ I am supporting my couch surfer to connect with services such as Centrelink and Medicare, as well as services to help support education, training, and long-term housing options.

# CONVERSATION STARTERS



*For you to feel comfortable, the couch surfer needs to know the rules of the house. To feel comfortable, you'll want to have a full and frank conversation with the couch surfer so both of you understand the arrangement. The sooner you do this, the better. Be open and find ways to make it work for everyone in the house.*

## LENGTH OF STAY & REVIEW PROCESS

Be sure to agree to a start date and an end date for the stay. Have an agreed review process in place, and schedule regular conversations to check in with each other to see how you're both managing the arrangement.

## RENT, FOOD, CHORES, CLEANLINESS

Are they expected to contribute to rent and food? Is it okay for them to help themselves to anything in the kitchen? Is it all right for them to cook for yourself, do you expect to eat some meals together? What about household chores and keeping the home clean and tidy?

## BATHROOM, SHOWER

How does the house run? Is there a roster for people showering depending on their routines? It's a good idea to discuss this. What are the expectations about people cleaning the toilet or shower screen after they use it? Where they should hang a wet towel is worth mentioning!

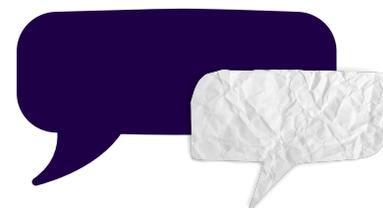
## PRIVACY, DRESS CODE, LANGUAGE, CONFIDENTIALITY

What do you each expect regarding personal privacy? How about a dress code in the house to not make anyone uncomfortable? What language is offensive and shouldn't be used? The confidentiality of information seen or heard needs to be discussed too.

## BRINGING GUESTS OVER, CURFEW, NOISE

Is it okay for them to bring guests home & what about guests for overnight stays? What about a curfew? All households need to consider each other when it comes to noise, music, how loud the TV is, etc, so talk about these things.

# CONVERSATION STARTERS



## KEYS, SECURITY, PARKING

Will the couch surfer have a set of keys? Will they be responsible for setting the alarm or turning it off if they are the last person to leave the house or the first one home? If they have a car, are there places they shouldn't park (i.e. blocking the driveway/garage)?

## INTERNET, TV

What's the arrangement for internet access? Is there an unlimited plan, or is there restricted usage? Discuss streaming, usage limits, and heavy traffic times. This applies to using the TV, both free to air and subscriptions.

## ALONE TIME / TOGETHER TIME

This is a conversation you should have early on. Are there times of the day/days of the week when it would be good for them to be out of the house? On the flip side, what about some together time, eating meals together, etc.

## AIRCONDITIONING, HEATING, LIGHTS

This is as simple and yet as complicated as sharing expectations. We all try to keep the electricity bills down while wanting to be comfortable. Should lights be turned off when leaving the room? Can the aircon/heating be switched on, and how about the temperature?

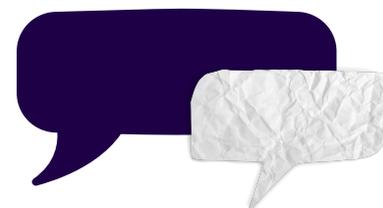
## KITCHEN & COOKING

As well as discussing if you'll sit down to meals together, it's a good idea to talk about the use of the kitchen and the appliances. What can be used, when, and what are the expectations around cleaning up afterwards? Please do be specific.

## STORAGE AND VALUABLES

Is there anywhere for them to store their valuables, hang their clothes, and unpack some of their personal items? How about a safe place for things they won't unpack but need to keep in a secure location?

# CONVERSATION STARTERS



## PHYSICAL / INTIMATE CONTACT

It's important to discuss what's appropriate and have clear boundaries around physical contact, such as horsing around with children living in the home. It's vital to have very firm guidelines for intimacy and intimate touching between you and the host/family.

## PETS

If there are pets involved (hosts or couch surfers), talk about their place in the house. Do they have free reign to wander in any room they like, or are they restricted to certain areas of the house, or do they stay outside? Discuss care and safety issues, too, like toxic foods.

## POOL AND GARDEN

Are the pool and gardens common property in a strata block, or is it a private area? Are there any pool rules, time of day restrictions, noise restrictions, etc? Set expectations about maintenance such as bringing in cushions from the sunbeds, scooping leaves, etc.

## LAUNDRY

Every washing machine and dryer works a little differently. Give a run-through of how the laundry equipment works, washing detergent, access to the clothesline, and the laundry schedule if there is one.

## DRUGS & ALCOHOL

This is a meaningful conversation to have early on. Be honest and open about drug use and alcohol consumption. This affects everyone living in the house, and guidelines need to be set and followed.

## ENDING THE STAY

Discuss with the couch surfer regularly if they need to extend their stay. Hosting a couch surfer gives them the opportunity to re-establish themselves and look for permanent housing options.



# COUCH SURFING AGREEMENTS

## **How important is having a host-surfer agreement?**

It's very important that both the host and the couch surfer have agreed upon the circumstances of the surfer's stay. They'll have agreed on the length of time that they will be in the house and the rules under which they need to operate in order for the situation to be agreeable and successful. They'll know what the boundaries are in terms of times, use of the house's facilities, food, internet, laundry, and other utilities, and what is expected of both parties. This way, there can be fewer misunderstandings, assumptions, and key factors left to chance.

## **What are standard time frames for staying, and how do you implement exit strategies?**

Stay times can vary, from a single overnight stay to stays of multiple days, weeks, or even months. The length of a couch surfer's stay in a host's home can be negotiated at the start of the stay. It's also a good idea for longer stays to have regular reviews to check in with each other.

Regular reviews are a great idea. They give you the chance to extend or end the stay earlier if there are unresolvable issues between you and the surfer.

The couch surfer services can help manage disputes and resolve them through a third party – who can either translate if both host and surfer do not speak the same language or can mediate any issues.

# SAMPLE COUCH SURFING AGREEMENT

This COUCH SURFER AGREEMENT is made on \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Between:

HOST/S \_\_\_\_\_  
("the host/s")

And

COUCH SURFER: \_\_\_\_\_  
("the couch surfer")

Together referred to as "the parties"

FOR THE HOME AT: \_\_\_\_\_  
("the home")

1. \_\_\_ The host hereby invites the couch surfer to stay for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ days/weeks/months ("the Term"), beginning on \_\_\_\_\_ ("the Commencement Date") and ending on \_\_\_\_\_.

2. \_\_\_ The couch surfer agrees to leave on the date agreed unless the agreement is extended through mutual discussion and arrangement

3. \_\_\_ The parties agree that no person other than the couch surfer is permitted to live in or stay at the home during the specified term or any part thereof unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the host.

4. \_\_\_ The host agrees to allow the couch surfer to stay rent-free for the term of this agreement, in return for the carrying out of such duties as are noted in the schedule attached.

5. \_\_\_ 'The host' and 'the couch surfer' agree not to make any claim against the other for personal injury/loss/damage/breakages that may arise during the stay. Both host and couch surfer agrees to investigate necessary insurance cover should they deem it necessary.

6. \_\_\_ The couch surfer agrees to take all reasonable steps in relation to the security, care, and upkeep of the home during their stay.

7. \_\_\_ This agreement may be extended by mutual agreement of the parties, communicated either in writing or by email.

8. \_\_\_ Nothing in this agreement absolves the parties from their statutory and common law duties and responsibilities, nor abrogates their legal privileges, rights, and remedies in respect of the subject matter of this agreement.

# SAMPLE COUCH SURFING AGREEMENT CONTINUED

PAGE 2

9. In the unlikely event that any dispute should arise in relation to this couch surfing arrangement, the parties agree to use their best endeavours to settle the matter in a fair and amicable manner.

10. However, should any dispute arise which they are unable to resolve between themselves, the Parties agree in the first instance to have the dispute mediated by a mediator accredited to the Australian Mediation Associations.

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(signed by host/s)

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(print name of host/s)

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(signed by couch surfer)

---

(print name of couch surfer)

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(signed by witness)

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(print name of witness)

\*In signing this agreement the parties acknowledge that <https://couchsurfer.org.au> is not a party to this agreement, nor will it become involved in any disputes which may arise between the parties, or participate in any other way in relation to this couch surfer arrangement.

# SAMPLE COUCH SURFING AGREEMENT | SCHEDULE

TERMS: (Any terms agreed to by the host and the couch surfer, (e.g., food, privacy, house rules /routine, inviting visitors to the house, etc.)

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HELPING AROUND THE HOUSE: The host and couch surfer may agree that the Couch surfer will help out with some chores around the house, both cleaning up after themselves and contributing to the smooth running and care of the home. (e.g., washing up dishes after eating, helping in the preparation of meals if the host and couch surfer are planning to eat together, cleaning the bathroom after use)

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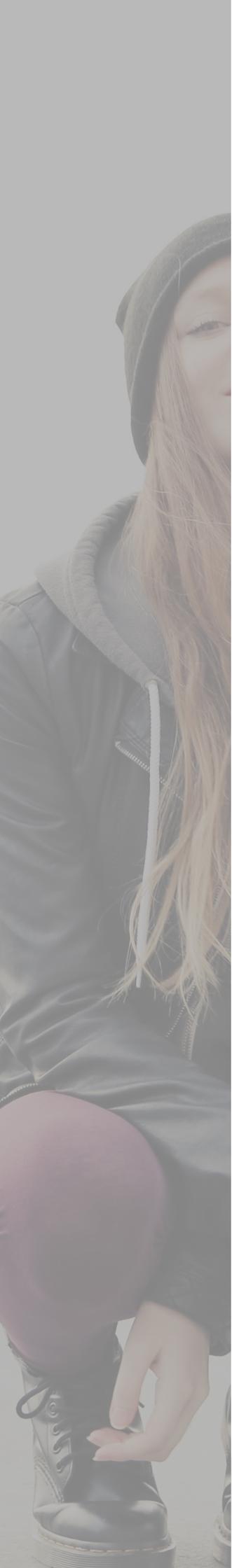
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Signature HOST/S \_\_\_\_\_

This \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 202\_\_

Signature COUCH SURFER \_\_\_\_\_

This \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 202\_\_



# LEGALITIES

## Legalities for couch surfers and hosts

A couch surfer is considered a 'guest' under The Residential Tenancies Act, and therefore they have little to no rights to protect themselves or their belongings. People who are especially vulnerable may not have the resources or means to seek legal advice if needed and often have a lack of knowledge around their legal rights. This leads to further harm and uncertainty being placed upon couch surfers in an already unstable and volatile environment they are navigating.

Because of these legal vulnerabilities, as a host, it is an excellent idea to negotiate and agree on a length of stay and discuss the boundaries which both parties are to abide by before the couch surfing stay begins.

Jewish House and other services are here to help navigate and mediate where required, to make the couch surfing experience as positive as possible for both the couch surfer and host.

### Helpful contacts

Legal Aid NSW 1300 888 529  
Community Legal Centres [www.clcnsw.org.au/find-legal-help](http://www.clcnsw.org.au/find-legal-help)

### Insurance

It's worth checking with your insurer about coverage in the event your couch surfer has an accident, injures themselves, breaks something or anything is stolen.

# Resources NSW

We are here to help you navigate the available resources and advocate for you to achieve the best outcomes.

Register with us and we'll be there for you every step of the way.

In an emergency call **000**

If you need a bed tonight ring **link-2-home 1800 152 152**

If you are a couch surfer and need assistance text **0480 049 922**

- ✓ CALL  
CHILD PROTECTION | 13 21 11  
BEYOND BLUE | 1300224636  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE NSW | 1800737732  
KIDS HELPLINE | 1800551800  
LIFELINE | 13 11 14  
LINK2HOME HOMELESSNESS | 1800152152  
MENTAL HEALTH LINE | 1800011511
  
- ✓ VISIT  
SERVICES AND PROGRAMS  
[www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/services](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/services)
  
- ✓ REGISTER [WWW.COUCHSURFER.ORG.AU](http://WWW.COUCHSURFER.ORG.AU)



[www.couchsurfer.org.au](http://www.couchsurfer.org.au)

Page 11



# National Resources

## **Australia Wide:**

Beyond Blue – 1300 224 636

Kids Helpline – 1800 551 800

Lifeline – 131114

Headspace – 1800 650 890

## **Australian Capital Territory**

Homeless line – Social Housing and Homelessness Services – 1800 176 468

DV Line – Domestic Violence Crisis Services (DVCS) – (02) 62 800 900

Child Protection- Child and Youth Protection Service - 1300 556 729

ACT Policing -131 444 (to report)

Homeless Legal Service- Street Law- 1800 787 529 or (02) 62 187 900

## **Northern Territory**

Homeless line – NT Shelter – (08) 89 854 389

DV Line – Dawn House – (08) 89 451 388

Child Protection- Child Protection Reporting line - 1800 700 250 (Hotline)

Homeless Legal Service- DCLS (Darwin Community Legal Services) - 1800 312 953

## **Queensland**

Homeless line – Homeless Hotline - 1800 474 753

DV Line – Domestic Violence Action Centre (07) 38 163 000

Child Protection- Child Safety (After Hours Service- 1800 177 135)

During hours

Brisbane- 1300 682 254

For North Queensland- 1300 684 062

North Queensland- 1300 706 147

South East - 1300 679 844

South West - 1800 316 855

Sunshine Coast and Central Queensland - 1300 703 362

Homeless Legal Service - Homeless Person Legal Clinic- (07) 38 466 317



[www.couchsurfer.org.au](http://www.couchsurfer.org.au)

Page 18



# National Resources

## **South Australia**

Homeless Line – Homeless Connect – 1800 003 308  
DV Line – Domestic Violence Crisis Services – 1300 782 200  
After-Hours Crisis Care - 131 611  
Child Protection - Child Abuse Report Line- 131 478  
Homeless Legal Service - Justice Net SA - (08) 82 322 282  
SA Helpline - 1800 025 539 (Homeless Person Legal Aid)

## **Tasmania**

Homeless Line – Housing and Homeless Services (03) 6 278 2817  
DV Line – The Family Violence Counselling and Support Services – 1800 608122  
Child Protection - Advice and Referral Line - 1800 000 123 / Child Safety Services  
Homeless Legal Service - Legal Aid Advice - 1300 366 611

## **Victoria**

Homeless Line – Contact Housing Victoria – 1800 825 955  
DV Line – Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre - (03) 99 289 600/ 1800 015 188  
Child Protection- Child Protection Intake - 1300 884 706  
After Hours Emergency Child Protection- 131 278 (5pm-9am)  
Homeless Legal Service- VIC Legal Aid- 1800 825 955

## **Western Australia**

Homeless Line – Entry Point – 1800 124 684 or (08) 64 960 001  
DV Line – Women’s Domestic Violence Helpline – (08) 92 231 188  
Child Protection - Department of Communities - 1800 273 889 (Central intake team)  
Homeless Legal Service - Street Law Centre -1800 752 992  
Mandatory Report Service- 1800 708 704



# WHAT IS MEND?

Mend is a Jewish House strategy to bring innovation to homelessness and homelessness prevention. We want to be game-changers when it comes to homelessness and couch surfing, through our couch surfing platform, textline and rough sleeper App.

- You can register to be connected with a service provider who can help.
- This may be you or someone staying with you. We are here to help you connect with resources that empower you.

Our aim is to help connect the couch surfer with services that will assist in finding longer-term accommodation and for us to mediate so the host can host for a bit longer while the couch surfer finds longer-term options for housing and support.

## How it works



1. A couch surfer or a host who needs assistance simply fills in a web form or send an SMS.



2. You'll answer key questions to be stored in our system, which we'll use to identify how we can help you.



3. Your information is given to a live operator to assist their mediating between couch surfer and hosts, to remove any anxiety and enable everyone to work together.



4. Couch Surfers and Hosts are subsequently connected to the appropriate service to achieve a long-term outcome, rehousing the Couch Surfer if necessary.

# Couch Surfer Textline

The couch surfer text line is a facility to support individuals who needed to couch surf and can communicate in 109 languages. The couch surfer text line supports couch surfers and those hosting a couch surfer. We will connect you with services that can assist.

In an emergency call **000**

If you need a bed tonight ring **link-2-home 1800 152 152**  
If you are a couch surfer and need assistance text **0480 049 922**

or

**Scan this Bar Code**



Powered by Jeeves.plus



扫描寻求帮助  
Chinese



Σάρωση για βοήθεια  
Greek



ابحث عن المساعدة  
Arabic



Quét để được trợ giúp  
Vietnamese



Escanear en busca de ayuda  
Spanish



Cerca aiuto  
Italian



मदद के लिए स्कैन करें  
Hindi



סרוק לעזרה  
Hebrew



# Couch Surfer Support

**Mend-ing our community by connecting couch surfers and their hosts with support services to reduce the risk of homelessness.**



This handbook is supported by:



# Testimonials

"Couch surfing affects many Australians at some stage of their life and is often hidden. Rabbi Mendel and Jewish House are committed to bringing this problem out of the shadows and trying to improve the safety and outcomes of those who have no choice but to rely on the support of family and friends to find temporary accommodation. Homelessness can be ended. While we work on this goal we must bring the problem into the light and provide people with good information and better options." - The Hon Graham West - CEO of ESSC

"Couch surfing is a very important issue. We at Jewish House are very proud to spearhead a campaign to create awareness and provide support services to couch surfers and their hosts through these online resources and handbooks"  
- Rabbi Mendel Kastel OAM - CEO of Jewish House

"One of the main barriers to leaving domestic and family abuse is having nowhere safe to go. In an ideal world, these women would move straight into their own, safe home, but sadly we don't live in an ideal world! The creation of the couch surfer handbooks helps guide both those looking for somewhere to stay in the short-term, and those that want to offer that support, providing useful information and boundaries to help create a positive experience for all."  
- Rachael Natoli - CEO and Founder of LOKAHI Foundation

"I really love the idea of this handbook. It would have been really helpful when I was couch surfing, after finishing high school. It would have helped my hosts and I set clear boundaries while I was staying with them." - Vanessa\*, 20 - Couch Surfer

"It was a privilege to be able to host a friend of a friend recently. We encountered some challenges - this handbook would have made the experience a lot more pleasant. We're so happy to see him settled into permanent accommodation now." - Jenny and Rick\*, Couch Surfer Hosts





PREPARED BY:



[couchsurfer.org.au](http://couchsurfer.org.au)



**Jewish House**

People helping people