



Community Integration Guidebook

A resource provided to you by the Burmese American Community Institute.

2014 Indianapolis, Ind., USA

BACI



Burmese American Community Institute

Advocating • Connecting • Educating • Serving

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Greetings,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome refugees from around the world to Indianapolis. I wish you success as you establish your new life here. You will contribute much to our community.

I know that it is not easy to adjust to a new country and culture, and you will likely face challenges and obstacles. Yet, I believe new circumstances bring new opportunities.

Indianapolis is full of resources that you may use to assist you in your new journey. The Burmese American Community Institute (BACI) and its collaborative partners provide educational resources to our newcomers. This Community Integration Guidebook is an invaluable resource which they have developed to help Burmese and Chin refugees assimilate and learn about American culture.

This guidebook is offered at no charge. I recommend every newcomer receive a copy. It is a practical and valuable tool to assist you in your cultural integration. I know successful integration into a new life does not occur overnight. It is a long learning process. But, I believe that with a positive attitude and perseverance, everyone has the opportunity to achieve the American dream. I look forward to calling you my neighbors.

My best wishes,



Gregory A. Ballard
Mayor
City of Indianapolis

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Preface

Approximately 10,000 refugees from Burma have become a growing part of the Indianapolis community in recent years. The refugees came to join a new society under the U.S. Refugee Resettlement program. According to the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. resettlement program reflects the country's highest values and aspirations of compassion, generosity and leadership. Since 1975, Americans have welcomed over 3 million refugees from all over the world. Refugees have built new lives, homes and communities in towns and cities in all 50 states (USDOS/PRM).

The state of Indiana hosts one of the largest Burmese refugee communities in the US. Approximately 15,000 Burmese refugees currently live in Indiana. Of them, about 73 percent found their new home in Central Indiana while about 27 percent reside in Fort Wayne and elsewhere in the state. Ethnically, about 80 percent of the total Burmese refugee population in Central Indiana is Chin.

We are grateful and thankful to the American people and Hoosiers for welcoming us as we start new lives with them. At the same time, we recognize various challenges and obstacles that newcomers face as they join a new society with different language and culture. However, we do not want to become a population that relies upon public assistance for a long period. We are fully convinced that it is our responsibility and opportunity to step up and assist our community members with their long-term self-sufficiency so that they become contributing citizens of their new society. With this conviction and philosophy, the Burmese American Community Institute (BACI) was established in 2011 with a mission to build a thriving, self-sufficient, and integrated Burmese community in Indianapolis through advocacy, education and employment.

To ensure additional support is provided to refugees that encourages long-term economic self-sufficiency and integration, and with a vision of education for all, BACI has developed and implemented various advocacy and educational programs in the past two years. One of them is the Inform, Navigate, and Direct You Program (INDY), under which the Community Integration Guidebook is one project. The guidebook reflects our belief and philosophy of two-way-street engagement and its reciprocal benefits in the integration process as well as providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services. Accordingly, the material is being translated into Burmese and Chin so that all refugees have access to it.

The topics include understanding American culture, property and garden care, how to be a good neighbor, cooking and home safety, fishing safety, online and physical safety, domestic violence, substance abuse, minor laws, the importance of good moral character as a citizen, mental health, personal health/hygiene, and the Bill of Rights.

As part of our comprehensive approach and effort in cultural and community integration, we intend to disseminate the materials and information through a series of workshops throughout 2014 in collaborative partnerships with the Chin Community of Indiana (CCI), local churches, and experts in each of the subject areas.

Finally, I admit that the Guidebook project has been quite a huge undertaking. As much as we would like to produce the highest quality possible, the book will still be treated as a work-in-progress, and therefore may be revised in accordance with feedbacks, suggestions, and expert opinions received. Nevertheless, we have a high and sincere hope that many newcomers will find the Community Integration Guidebook helpful and that it will bring a positive and long lasting impact on the process of their economic self-sufficiency and community integration in the United States.

Elaisa Vahnle
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Table of Contents

Foreward from Mayor Ballard

Acknowledgements

Preface

Section One 8

Understanding American Culture

- Bodily Norms
- Socializing and Sports
- Popular Culture

Section Two 14

Property and Garden Care

- Neighbors
- Yard Maintenance
- Basic Gardening

Citizenship: How to Be a Good Neighbor

- Introductions
- Respecting Property
- Respecting the Lifestyles of Others
- Gardening Responsibilities

Section Three 18

Cooking and Home Safety

- Cooking Safety
- Garage Safety
- Fire Safety
- Outdoor Safety

Fishing Safety

- Polluted Water
- Fishing and Watersport Safety
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
- Public Intoxication Laws

Internet and Physical Safety

- Home Safety
- Internet Safety
- Scams
- Sexual Predators

Section Four 26

Welfare Benefits

- Food Stamps
- Medicare
- Unemployment Benefits

Section Five 30

Domestic Violence

- Definition of Domestic Violence
- Recognizing a Domestic Violence Victim
- How to Seek Help
- Safety Precautions
- Legal Consequences of Committing Domestic Violence

Substance Abuse

- Definition of Substance Abuse
- Types of Substances
- Recognizing the Symptoms of Substance Abuse
- Legal Consequences of Substance Abuse
- How to Take Action

Laws Regarding Minors

- Curfew
- Laws Regarding Driving a Vehicle
- Alcohol
- Legal Marriage Age Requirements
- Age of Sexual Consent

Good Moral Character

Section Six 48

Mental Health

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD/ADD)
- Autism Spectrum
- Bipolar Disorder
- Depression
- Eating Disorders
- Self-Harming
- Suicide

Personal Health/Hygiene

- Hand Washing
- Body Odor and Care
- Dental Hygiene

Section Seven 56

The Bill of Rights

Renting Apartments and Your Rights

- Overcharging for Damages
- Fair Housing
- Equal Housing Act
- National Fair Housing Alliance

Workplace Etiquette and Your Rights

- Affirmative Action
- Sexual Harassment
- Rights When Terminating Employment

Section 1

Moving to a new country and culture can be a difficult transition.

The content in this section identifies acceptable social behavior, explains popular American sports, and provides information about popular culture in America including music, movies, and television.

Understanding American Culture

Bodily Norms

Socializing & Sports

Popular Culture



Understanding American Culture

After immigrating to a new country, the differences in culture can cause several issues. Those who have grown up in the country may feel as though they do not know how to act around or respond to those who are new to the country, and new comers can be confused about why those around them act the way they do. The following is an explanation of some basic principles of American culture. This list is not a required list to which one must conform, but instead is an explanation of some key behaviors that will help one adjust to life in the United States (US).

Bodily Norms

Introductions

According to Etiquette International, an organization that defines professional behavior, the basic American handshake is very simple and most often used as a greeting between friends or new acquaintances. The handshake is also used as an official greeting in the business and professional world. When meeting a new person, it is polite to share your name while shaking their hand, and for them to do the same in return. When introducing yourself to a group of multiple people, be sure to shake hands with everyone. Practicing handshakes with friends and family members can help to determine what feels comfortable, and prevents giving an improper handshake, which can affect first impressions. Trying it out on a friend is much easier than starting out with strangers (“6 tips for;”).

Hugging

In America, hugging is another acceptable greeting gesture, especially in informal settings. While the handshake is widely accepted for first-time interactions and for use in the business world, hugging can be used in friendly settings, especially with people one interacts with regularly or close friends. According to journalist Linda Nickerson, an etiquette instructor for Chicago Examiner, the following are some basic rules for hugging.

First, always respect the other person’s space. An individual’s family background, culture, age and gender play a major role in the acceptance or displeasure of a hug. Often, you can tell from a person’s body language if they would be willing to receive a hug or not. When in doubt, ask first. Asking permission shows respect to the receiver and provides an opportunity to voice their willingness to hug.

Keep hugs short and avoid placing arms too low around the other person. Longer hugs have a certain connotation and could have negative repercussions if a person’s spouse or significant other is present. A short hug is a proper hug most of the time.

When sick, it is polite to avoid getting too close to others who are not sick in order to prevent the spread of illness. Additionally, perspiration may not be the best condition for hugs. Hugs are more enjoyable when the hugger smells nice and is not sweating on the other person.

When interacting with a group of people, if you know some people better than others give new acquaintances a handshake first and then follow with hugs for those you know well. Always be considerate of the boundaries of the people around you.

Hugs do not need to be given at every opportunity. There may be more appropriate occasions for a hug such as when you have not seen a person for an extended period of time or if attending a social gathering. A hug is not necessary to be given to someone seen on a regular basis (Nickerson, 2012).

Understanding American Culture

High Fives

According to Merriam-Webster, a high five is a gesture in which one slaps the palm of their hand against the palm of someone else's hand in the air, usually in celebration or in a form of social greeting (high five, 2013).

High fives are often shared in celebration of something done well between two people or groups (such as sports teams). Occasionally, it is in celebration of something the two high-fivers did not actually do but still celebrate their shared interest in, such as a favorite sports team scoring points. High-fives will generally be shared between men more than women, especially among the younger generations. One popular variation on the high-five is the fist bump, in which two people appear to punch knuckles very lightly in celebration.

Personal Space

Personal space is the notion that every person has a space around them that in public should not be encroached upon unless necessary. This is generally an unspoken social rule among Americans. Generally, once greetings have been shared at gatherings or interactions, each person will stand close enough to hear the other person in conversation, but not so close as to be touching the person. Dr. Bakari Akil II, professor of communication at Florida State college of Jacksonville says, "We adhere to unwritten rules of personal distance in order to maintain our perceptions of safety and to protect ourselves. After recognizing our own needs it is also useful to be aware of the needs of others." Personal space is especially important to respect when there is a difference in gender, or when the other person is a stranger (Akil II, 2010).

Socializing and Sports

Cellphones

The most common way Americans keep in contact is through telephones, especially cellular (or portable) phones. According to the Pew Research Center, an empirical social science research center that seeks to study American trends, most Americans have a cellular phone on them constantly, and use them in public for, among other things, texting, calling, emailing, playing music, playing games, or looking up information. Using a cell phone is not required in America, but it will make maintaining contact easier. It may be helpful to at least have a home phone for family use, especially in case of emergencies. If you have a phone, make sure to remember your phone number in case it is necessary to share it with others (Smith, 2011).

Conversation Topics to Avoid

Certain topics are risky to bring up in conversation in most social settings. According to a conversation tips website, these topics mainly include religion, politics, sex, and crude humor. Viewpoints on religion and politics differ from person to person. These often spark heated discussions and become divisive issues. These topics are normal parts of everyday life, but everyone does not share the same opinion. Sex and crude humor are risky conversation topics and one should consider the comfort levels and maturity of the audience present. Talking about sex is not a good idea at family functions or around spouses or children. Crude humor can offend some people, especially jokes about gender, race, religion, or cultural affiliations ("Conversation tips —").

Sports

Sports are very popular in America. While soccer is the most popular sport in the world, it falls short on the list of top sports in America. The top three are American football, baseball, and basketball ("Most popular sports,").

Understanding American Culture

American Football

The British Broadcasting Company (BBC) composed an article explaining the basics of America's most popular sport. The following is a description of the fundamentals of American football.

Basics:

- 11 players from each team on field (22 total on field at all times)
- Four 15 minute quarters, totaling one hour of play
- Three time-outs per half-game for each team
- 100 yard field, with two scoring zones (end-zones) on each end

Scoring:

- A touchdown is scored when a team crosses the opposition's goal line with the ball, or catches or collects the ball in the end zone, earning six points.
- Field goals are usually attempted on fourth down (see below) if the kicker is close enough to the end zone to kick the ball through the posts, also called uprights.
- An extra point is earned by kicking the ball through the uprights after a touchdown (similar to a rugby conversion). Two points are earned by taking the ball into the end zone again.

The purpose of the game is to move the ball towards, and ultimately into, the opposition's end zone. This is achieved by either running with the ball until tackled, or throwing the ball downfield to a teammate. "Downs" are the most fundamental part of American football. The attacking team, or offense, needs to move the ball forward in advances of at least ten yards. They have four chances, or downs, to gain those ten yards. When the ball has advanced past the ten yard marker, another first down is earned, with four more chances to go a further ten yards. If the offensive team fails to move ten yards within four downs, possession is surrendered, although the ball is usually kicked, or punted, to the defending team on the fourth down.

While the majority of the scoring comes from near the defending team's end zone, a touchdown can be scored from anywhere on the field, and on any down.

"Plays" are the complicated movements, involving all eleven of their players, teams use to move the ball downfield. Plays are called by the head coach or quarterback, who is the attacking lynchpin of any team. While the term usually refers to attacking teams, defending teams also use set plays to stop their opponents' forward movement. The offensive team has 30 seconds to get the ball in play or kick a field goal.

Although there are only eleven players from each side on the field at any one time, an American football team is made up of forty-five players, ranging in size, speed, and their roles on the team ("NFL in a," 2005). Football is played at all ages, from childhood, to local high schools and colleges. The professional football league in the US is the National Football League (NFL).

Baseball

Baseball is a popular sport around the world, and has been called "America's past time." Baseball is a game played by two teams, and each team has nine innings in which they attempt to score runs. The game is played on a diamond-shaped field, with four bases at the four corners of the field. The home team always bats second (the "bottom" of the inning), and the visiting team always bats first in the "top" of the inning.

In each inning, the batting team sends one player known as the hitter or batter, in turn, to bat (known as "at bat") until three hitters are "out". An "out" happens one of three ways. First, when the pitching team catches the ball before it hits the ground. Second, if an opponent who is holding the ball touches the runner with the ball or touches the base before the runner does. Third, if the pitcher throws a "strike" to the hitter at bat three times before they successfully hit the ball. The pitching team has nine players on

Understanding American Culture

the field trying to prevent the batting team from scoring.

One of the fielding players, known as a “pitcher” stands on the pitching mound and throws the ball to the hitter who stands at home plate. The hitter tries to put the ball into play by hitting it inside the foul lines (the ball must go in front of first or third base and first land inside the foul lines) and then running to first base without being tagged out. The hitter can stop at first base if he wishes, or continue to second base, third base or home plate. If a hitter stops on a base (becoming a “base runner”), then he can advance again when the next hitter is “at bat”. Thus any time a hitter puts the ball into play, not only do they run, but any teammates on other bases may run as well. If a hitter manages to hit the ball over the outfield wall (a “Home Run”), then he and any other base-runners automatically advance to home plate. A run is scored by a runner reaching home plate, where the ball was originally hit, having first touched first, second and third base. Only one runner is allowed on any one base at any one time (“A guide to,”).

Basketball

Basketball is a team sport in which two teams of five players each try to score by shooting a ball through a hoop elevated ten feet above the ground (Breakthrough basketball). The game is played on a rectangular floor called the court, and there is a hoop at each end. The court is divided into two half sections by the mid-court line.

The ball is moved down the court toward the basket by passing or dribbling (bouncing the ball on the floor while in forward motion). The team with the ball is called the offense. The team without the ball is called the defense. They try to steal the ball, block shots, deflect passes, and grab rebounds. When a team makes a basket, they score two points and the ball goes to the other team. If a basket, or field goal, is made outside of the three-point arc, then that basket is worth three points. A free throw is worth one point. Free throws are awarded to a team according to rules involving the number of fouls committed in a half and/or the type of foul committed. Fouling a shooter always results in two or three free throws being awarded the shooter, depending upon where they were when they shot the ball. If they were beyond the three-point line, then they get three shots. Other types of fouls do not result in free throws being awarded until a certain number have accumulated during a half. Once that number is reached, the player who was fouled is awarded a ‘one-and-one’ opportunity. If they make their first free throw, they get to attempt a second. If they miss the first shot, the ball is live on the rebound.

Each game is divided into sections. All levels from elementary school to NBA have two halves, though the times and breaks differ among levels. Each team is assigned a basket or goal to defend. This means that the other basket is their scoring basket. At halftime, the teams switch goals. Basketball games usually tend to have high scoring games, especially in the professional level (“Basketball basics for,” 2013).

Popular Culture

Music

According to the Top Tens website, a site that researches the top ten subjects of many categories, music in America is ruled by four main genres (or types) of music, each with many subgenres within them: Rock ‘n Roll, Pop, Rap/R&B, and Country (“Most popular types,” 2013). People may like one certain style or a mix of multiple styles. Music artists or groups (often called bands) usually fall into one specific category of music, though some mix two or more styles together or change between two or more styles. Many people often share interest in the same bands or artists or music genres, which can be a topic of conversation or a basis for socializing. The radio, such as the one in a car, is a good place to start discovering American music.

Understanding American Culture

Movies

Movies are another popular interest in American culture. According to Filmsite, a website operated by AMC (American Movie Classics), a leader in television and movie production and a popular television channel in America, some major movie categories include action, adventure, horror, comedy, science fiction, war, and drama (Dirks). Movies are played at local venues called movie theatres or cinemas, which charge money to view one movie on a very large screen. Movies can also be rented from rental facilities such as a Redbox location (redbox.com), purchased from many stores, or seen on television. Movies come with ratings which note if they are suitable for certain ages or if children are not be advised to watch them. To learn more about ratings and the appropriate age-audience for movies, log onto www.filmratings.com.

Television

Television is similar to movies in America. According to the TV Guide website, a website operated with the purpose of providing the programming schedule for television channels, television shows have many categories, such as drama, comedy, reality, or cartoon ("TV guide most," 2013). Television shows generally run from 30 minutes to one hour in length and are collected in seasons, which are a number of episodes shown weekly, then released together to own. Television services are available from many local service providers, such as the use of an antennae, cable (such as Brighthouse Cable Company) or satellite (such as DirecTV or Dish network). Antenna use is free but only offers a limited number of local channels, while cable and satellite charge money for a wide variety of channels to view. Television shows, like movies, have rating systems that indictate which age groups are suitable to watch the show. To learn more about television show ratings and the appropriate age for audiences, log onto www.tvguidelines.org.

Tips for understanding American culture:

Become acquainted with American neighbors, coworkers, and friends. Getting to know them can help in understanding American culture.

Try watching some American television shows and movies at home and listen to American radio.

In public, pay attention to how Americans act around others: how they introduce themselves, how much personal space they give each other, and the topics they discuss.

Section 2

Owning real estate in America carries along with it expectations of how the property will be maintained. The content in this section identifies how to treat neighbors' property with respect, how to properly maintain a yard and garden, and respecting the lifestyles of your neighbors.

Property and Garden Care

Neighbors

Yard Maintenance

Basic Gardening

Citizenship: How to Be a Good Neighbor

Introductions

Respecting Property

Respecting the Lifestyle of Others

Gardening Responsibilities



Property and Garden Care

Moving into a neighborhood in the United States requires quite a few new responsibilities, especially when it comes to maintaining real estate property. Here are some guidelines to follow that will help when it comes taking care of a yard.

Neighbors

According to Appraisal Institute, the nation's largest association of real estate appraisers, the price of your property can decrease by 5 to 10% if a neighbor is not taking care of their own property. It is one of the main reasons why it is important to keep your garden clean, tidy, and attractive. This can easily be done by picking up trash, cleaning up after animals, storing children's toys out of sight, planting a few flowers, painting the front door, and refraining from damaging your property in any way.

In return, it is important to treat a neighbor's property with respect as well. It is not only disrespectful to leave trash on the street or on a neighbor's yard, it is also illegal. According to www.indy.gov, leaving trash on someone's property is called "illegal dumping" and can bring up to a \$2,500 fine.

Yard Maintenance

Not only are they ugly to look at, but weeds can attract mosquitos and other insects to a yard. According to This Old House, a home and garden care website, the easiest and most effective way to remove weeds is by hand. Most people get rid of weeds by manually removing them from the root (it is best to use gloves), or by using a weed killing spray which can be purchased at Lowe's or Walmart. However, the chemicals in some weed killing products can be hazardous, especially to children and animals. A simple and inexpensive option to avoid weeds is to grow a full lawn of grass, which will not allow room for weeds to grow. It is best to keep grass between two to four inches tall.

Basic Gardening

The climate in Indiana includes several months of drought during the summer followed by months of rain, and then frost and snow. During the dry summer months, it is important to remember to water plants and trees frequently so that they do not die. According to Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, a local environmental nonprofit, plants and trees require one to two inches of rainfall, which means that they need extra help during the summer. Plants should be watered in the morning and no more than once per week, while trees should be watered at night and need several gallons of water.

According to Lowe's, a home and garden improvement corporation, grass should be cut when taller than four inches. Depending on weather, the frequency of mowing varies. Do not mow grass when it is wet as the grass will not cut correctly, and it may cause damage to the lawn mower. During drier months, a lawn can be mown every 10 to 14 days. Remember, it is best to keep grass between two and four inches long; if it gets much longer it will clog the mower or be damaged by the sun when cut.

It is important to remember to be respectful of your property and that of your neighbors', and to understand that taking care of your garden is an important aspect of being part of a community. If unsure about how to care for property, turn to the Home Owners Association rules received when moving to a new property. These documents explain all the rules and guidelines that are important to a neighborhood.

Citizenship: How to be a Good Neighbor

In any American community where people live closely together there are basic social norms which, when followed, help a family to be good neighbors to those around them. These usually prevent problems from arising between neighbors and also help neighbors to get to know each other and develop a community bond between them. According to the Community Association Institute, an organization that informs citizens about good community living, the following are basic steps to being a good neighbor (“Pearls of wisdom,” 2003).

Introductions

When moving into a new community, it is customary in America to introduce yourself to those living around you, especially your immediate neighbors. Knock on a neighbor’s door, but do not walk into a home without permission. If they are not home, try again sometime soon at a reasonable hour. When you do get to meet a neighbor, tell them about yourself, where you come from, and ask them about themselves. The more you know about them and they know about you, the easier it will be for your two families to live next to each other. If there is a language barrier, try to find a friend who can help translate. After formally introducing yourself to a neighbor, take time to build a relationship. Have more conversations, say hello when you see each other, ask questions about their lives to show interest, and, most importantly, share a smile.

Respecting Property

In America, homeowners retain the right to use their property how they desire, and therefore dictate what their property gets used for. In American culture, it is considered normal to respect the property of others as much as possible. This includes (but is not limited to) respecting the lawns, fences, and items on neighbors’ property. Avoid parking on others’ lawns, walking through them, leaving trash on them, or damaging them in any way. If a neighbor has a fence between your yard and theirs, respect it by not harming it or climbing over it. Never use a neighbor’s personal property without first talking to them about it. If they allow you to use it, show appreciation by taking good care of it.

Respecting the Lifestyles of Others

Be considerate of a neighbor’s lifestyle, and avoid habits that could cause conflict. It is easier to prevent problems from happening than to try solving problems with a neighbor. If a neighbor needs to rise early, try to keep the noise level down in the evenings. Warn neighbors before having a large amount of guests over and discuss parking rules with them. Monitor your children and establish rules and boundaries for them. Allowing children to run around on their own is dangerous and can also cause legal troubles. Always limit your children to playing where you can see them to promote safety. Also, have children gain permission before entering a neighbor’s property.

Gardening Responsibilities

Your yard and its appearance can have an impact on neighbors, so please try and keep it clean-cut and attractive. Lawn mowing is important in American community living. If you do not own a lawn mower, perhaps discuss borrowing one from a neighbor. Trees are useful in neighborhoods to provide shade and oxygen. Trimming trees might be necessary. Unsightly neighborhood yards can lower the value of a homeowner’s house. Keep your yard looking nice to ensure neighbors get as much value out of their home as they can, and they will do the same for you. Gardening can be beneficial to you and your family, but allowing your garden (or lawn) to become overgrown or unmanaged can create unhappy neighbors.

These guidelines for community living are important, not only for you but also for neighbors. Establishing a good neighbor relationship is crucial to living in many American neighborhoods. Showing courtesy to neighbors can help when you are new to

Citizenship: How to be a Good Neighbor

the community. If you are working to try and become a U.S. citizen, being involved with and getting to know other Americans will be useful. The process of becoming a US citizen will test English and civic knowledge. By getting to know the Americans around you, you can learn valuable information for your testing. Subsequently, the Americans you become acquainted with will gain knowledge about your culture, which may be new to them.

Tips for property and garden care:

A full lawn of grass will prevent weeds from growing.

Dumping trash is illegal.

Water plants and trees frequently, especially during dry weather.

Keep grass between two and four inches tall, otherwise grass looks unsightly and can be damaged by the sun.

Tips for how to be a good neighbor:

Greet neighbors, a friendly “hello!” creates a good neighbor relationship.

Respect the property of others.

Be considerate of neighbors’ lifestyles and schedules.

Keep your yard tidy.

Section 3

The phrase “Safety First” is a common one in the U.S. The content in this section identifies how to maintain safety while cooking, working in the garage, fishing, using the Internet, and other various situations.

Cooking and Home Safety

- Cooking Safety

- Garage Safety

- Fire Safety

- Outdoor Safety

Fishing Safety

- Polluted Water

- Fishing and Watersport Safety

- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

- Public Intoxication Laws

Internet and Physical Safety

- Home Safety

- Internet Safety

- Scams

- Sexual Predators



Cooking and Home Safety

According to the National Fire Protection Association, in 2011, over 350,000 home fires were reported in the United States. Cooking is the leading cause for home fires, and the following are some important precautions to take to ensure home and family safety.

Cooking Safety

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, every room that is used to for cooking food should have a fire alarm. Fire alarms should be installed 10-20 feet from a cooking appliance. These alarms should have a 'hush' feature, which temporarily reduces the alarm's sensitivity. When the alarm sounds during cooking, this feature momentarily silences the alarm. However, the hush feature should only be used when there is no fire or smoke danger. If a fire alarm has no 'hush' feature, simply open windows and use a towel to fan the alarm and get the air moving. Never disable a fire alarm by removing its batteries.

Always plug cooking appliances directly into an outlet. If using a power cord (extension cord), it could cause an electrical surge which can start a fire.

Barbeque grills should only be used outside and never left unattended. When using charcoal grills, only dispose of coals once they have cooled and never dispose of them in a trash can. Coals should be kept in a tight-fitted metal container and stored away from other flammable items.

Propane grills can be dangerous, so make sure to leave the lid open or off while cooking. When storing a propane grill in a garage, disconnect the cylinder and leave it outdoors. Remember to check propane cylinder hoses for leaks by applying a light soap and water solution to the hose. If bubbles appear, it is a sign that propane is leaking. If there is a leak, turn off the propane tank and grill. If this stops the leak, have a professional look at it before using it again. If it does not stop the leak, call the local fire department.

While cooking, never leave the stove, oven, or grill unattended. Even if needing to leave briefly, turn off cooking appliances until you return. Stay alert while cooking. Sleepiness, drinking alcohol, or taking medications that cause drowsiness decrease alertness. Keep cooking area clear of items that could catch fire. This includes oven mitts, paper or plastic bags, towels, or curtains.

Keep small pets or children away from hot cooking surfaces. Children should be kept three feet away from any hot cooking surfaces.

Remember to roll sleeves up while cooking to ensure they do not catch fire. If clothing should catch fire, remember to stop, drop, and roll. Stop immediately, drop to the ground and cover your face as you roll back and forth to put out the fire. Immediately cool burns with cold water for three to five minutes and cover burns with a dry, clean cloth. Seek medical attention.

Allowing aluminum foil, or any metal, to heat up in a microwave can cause fires, so remember to remove any foil or metal from food before heating.

Garage Safety

The following information, from safetyresource.org, is provided to help ensure that your garage is a safe environment.

Gasoline should only be stored in very small amounts and only in containers designated specifically for gasoline. Remember to store the container out of children's reach.

Cooking and Home Safety

Any running motor, such as a lawn mower, chainsaw or car can cause a garage to fill up with carbon monoxide, which is extremely dangerous and can lead to death. Carbon monoxide cannot be seen or smelled. Leaving a garage door closed while allowing motors to run is an extreme hazard and should never be done. Carbon monoxide detectors can be purchased at any home improvement store such as: Home Depot, Menards, or Lowe's.

An organized garage is much safer, especially for children. Sharp, poisonous, and otherwise dangerous items should be stored out of reach so that accidents can be avoided. Spills of any kind should be mopped up from the garage floor to prevent slips and falls.

Fire Safety

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, if a fire breaks out in a home leave immediately and close the door after leaving to contain the fire. Make sure everyone is out of the house and call 911 while waiting from a safe distance for help to arrive.

When cooking with grease, keep an oven glove nearby. If a small grease fire ignites, place a lid over the pan to smother the fire. Leave the lid on the pan until it has completely cooled to ensure the fire will not restart. *Never pour water on a grease fire.* It will only feed the fire, making it harder to contain. Baking soda can also be used to put out a grease fire. DO NOT use baking powder or flour, which may look similar to baking soda.

In case of an oven fire, keep the oven door closed and turn off the heat. Before using the oven again, have it checked by a professional to ensure it is safe to use.

In case of a microwave fire, turn it off, keep the door closed, and unplug the appliance from the outlet. Before using the microwave again, have it checked by a professional to ensure it is safe to use.

Outdoor Safety

According to the official website of the City of Indianapolis and Marion County, the following items are illegal to burn on personal property in Marion County:

- Leaves
- Grass clippings
- Stumps
- Household garbage/trash
- Waste lumber
- Furniture/mattresses
- Land-clearing debris
- Dead animals
- Tires
- Asbestos material
- Wire
- Hazardous materials

Any illegal burning of these items can result in a fine up to \$2,500.

In Marion County, residents are only allowed to burn dried limbs, twigs, and branches that are from their personal property and only for the purpose of disposal. The following rules must be followed when burning a fire on personal property:

- Keep a means to extinguish the fire close by
- Use a non-combustible container with a ventilated mesh covering containing openings no greater than ¼-inch
- Burn only between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Cooking and Home Safety

- Place the container at least 15-feet from any structure, trees, or other object that could catch fire
- Tend to the fire until it is completely extinguished

Open burning that is permitted includes cooking fires such as barbeque grills, camp fires, patio fire pits, chimneys, personal comfort fires, and ceremonial bonfires conducted by groups such as schools, churches, or other recognized organizations. To learn more about guidelines to follow when burning a fire on personal property, please visit <http://www.indy.gov/eGov/City/DCE/envsvcs/Pages/Open-Burning.aspx>.

Tips for cooking and home safety:

Keep garage organized and keep all dangerous items out of reach of children.

Buy a fire alarm for each room where there is a cooking appliance.

Never leave a cooking appliance unattended.

In case of a fire, leave the house immediately and call 911.

If a piece of clothing catches fire, remember to stop, drop, and roll.

Fishing Safety

U.S. fish and wildlife report that in 2001 one out of every five Americans went fishing. Although some people fish for a source of food, many fish for entertainment.

Polluted Water

According to takemefishing.org, in some urban areas of Indianapolis there is polluted water. In most cases of pollution, the water is contaminated with chemicals. Certain chemical substances can affect the skin and may cause rashes or acne. If wading in the water, protect ankles by wearing high top shoes or wading boots. Pollution can cause murky waters, making it difficult for fishers to see any dangers lurking in water. Long lightweight pants can protect from dangerous fish or snakes.

Fishing and Watersport Safety

It is not advisable to fish alone. In case of an emergency, a second person can stay with the individual injured, while a third person can leave to seek help. When going fishing, it is best to inform relatives and friends of where the intended fishing hole is located.

Preventing Fishing Injuries

Fishing is an enjoyable recreational activity that has a low risk of injury. However, fishing hooks and rods can be dangerous if not handled with care. Also, fishing in murky, polluted water and wading out too far from the side of the bank can cause injury because of unknown dangers within the water.

Drowning

Fishing and alcohol, or other mind-altering substances, do not mix well. Alcohol and drugs impair judgment which lead to a higher likelihood of injury or drowning.

If you do not know how to swim, a life jacket should be worn. Life jackets save lives, especially when someone who cannot swim falls into the water. Remember to fish ten meters away from the person next to you to avoid accidentally causing injury to them if you fall in the water (betterhealth.vic.gov).

Reach, Throw, Row, and Go

Reach, throw, row, go is a method of rescuing a person who falls overboard or a swimmer in trouble. The first step is to reach out with an oar, tree limb or other object if the person is close to you. If there is not a lifesaving device, use anything that floats to throw. If there is a small boat in the area, row out to the troubled swimmer, collect them, and go back immediately to shore.

Call 911 for Help

If an individual falls into the water you can get help by calling 911 (Emergency)

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

According to the American Heart Association, follow the steps below to assist someone who has experienced drowning.

-Check the victim for responsiveness. If the person is not responsive or not breathing

Fishing Safety

normally, call 911 and return to the victim.

- If the victim is still not breathing normally, coughing or moving, begin providing chest compressions. Push down in the center of the chest at a depth of 2 inches 30 times. Pump hard and fast at the rate of at least 100/minute, faster than once per second.
- Tilt the head back and lift the chin. Pinch the nose and cover the mouth with yours and blow until you see the chest rise. Give 2 breaths. Each breath should last 1 second.
- Give another round of chest compressions.
- Repeat this cycle until the victim regains consciousness or professional/medical help arrives.

Public Intoxication Laws

The following are legal consequences of abusing alcohol while fishing (or otherwise) in public:

In Indiana, it is against the law to be in a state of intoxication while in a public place if it is endangering your life or the life of others, harassing, annoying, alarming or breaching the peace or is in imminent danger of breaching the peace.

A public intoxication charge is a B misdemeanor that carries a penalty of up to 180 days jail time and/or fines up to \$1,000.

You may also have problems proving during the immigration process that you have good moral character because of an alcohol conviction. If you have many alcohol related convictions, you might be considered a "habitual drunkard" under immigration law.

If the intoxicated person is unmanageable or causing personal or property damage, the arresting police officer may take the intoxicated person to the county jail or "lock-up" (nbcnews).

Tips for fishing safety:

Never fish alone.

Notify someone of your fishing trip and the location.

Carry a cellphone.

Do not become intoxicated in public.

Internet & Physical Safety

Home Safety

According to the Memphis Police Department, to ensure home and family safety it is important to keep all doors and windows locked at all times, but especially at night. Remember to lock garage doors as well. If keys are lost or stolen, change all locks immediately to avoid a break-in.

Break-ins are more likely to occur when a house appears to be unoccupied. Leave lights on when you go out and make sure you have a trusted friend or family member who can pick up your mail for you while away for an extended period of time so that mail does not accumulate in your mailbox.

Some locks are easy to break, so installing deadbolt locks on the front or back door will offer additional security. Some doors, such as sliding glass doors, may be more vulnerable. Special locks can be found at your local home improvement store to ensure those doors do not become an easy entrance for burglars.

Internet Safety

Although it is common to make purchases online, credit card information can easily be stolen for the purpose of credit card fraud. According to the FBI, it is important to ensure a website's credibility and legitimacy before providing information. Some sites display a small icon of a padlock in the address bar which symbolizes a higher form of internet security, but it is not a guarantee of complete safety of information.

Verify that the organization provides a telephone number and a physical address rather than just a P.O. Box address. Call or email the organization to ensure their legitimacy. If no information is provided, strongly consider taking your business to a more reputable website.

Remember to keep a detailed account of all online purchases as well all credit card information. Review your bank statements frequently and if anything looks suspicious, contact the card issuer immediately to cancel your card.

Scams

OnGuardOnline.gov, a federal website that ensures safety online, recommends to never wire money to someone that you do not know. Wiring money is just like sending cash to someone. If you receive messages or emails that ask for money or personal information, do not divulge any information and do not click on any links.

Foreign lotteries are the most common type of online scams. If a message pops up on a computer screen that claims you have won a large amount of money and states all you have to do is click to accept the winnings, do not click on anything. Many will ask you to fill out forms regarding personal information and then ask for money regarding "tax, fees, or custom duties." If you fill out that information or wire money, you will never see that money again.

If you or someone you know has been scammed, visit the Federal Trade Commission website to file a complaint.

Sexual Predators

According to Enough Is Enough, a nonprofit dedicated to making the internet safe for children and families, 18% of youth spend time in online chat rooms. A majority of the sexual crimes committed against children originate in these online chat rooms.

Parents, pay attention to what children are doing online. Talk to them about their activities and warn them about talking to

Internet & Physical Safety

strangers on the internet. If a child is talking to strangers online, do not overreact. Ask them if a stranger has talked to them about sex, offered gifts, or asked for photos or personal information such as home or school address. In case of a sexual predator, visit www.cybertipline.com or call 1-800-843-5678 to file a complaint.

Tips for internet and physical safety:

Lock all doors to the home at all times; install deadbolt locks on doors to offer additional security.

Only purchase items from online businesses that offer a phone number or address.

Keep a detailed list of all online purchases and credit card information.

Never wire money to someone you do not know.

Monitor the online activities of your children.

Section 4

The U.S. government has created welfare programs that assist residents that are in financial distress. The content in this section identifies how to apply for and responsibly use the resources of Food Stamps, Medicare, and Unemployment Benefits.

Welfare Benefits

Food Stamps

Medicare

Unemployment Benefits



Welfare Benefits

Food Stamps

According to foodstamps.com, Food Stamps is a federally funded program that is provided to residents who are struggling financially and need assistance paying for food. There are certain income requirements that must be proven to be eligible for Food Stamps. There is an application process that is completed prior to being considered for Food Stamps. You can apply for Food Stamps at any local Children and Family Services Office or apply online and someone from the Children and Family Services office will contact you when an appointment becomes available.

Families with children who meet certain income criteria, depending on household and other qualifications, are eligible for Food Stamps. The income requirements will vary for each family. Unemployed individuals may also qualify for Food Stamp benefits. Persons over the age of 65 who receive Medicare or Social Security benefits may also be eligible for Food Stamps. Food Stamps can be available to college students with little or no income who depend on their parents for financial support.

The application process may appear complicated but is actually easy. Make sure all the information that is provided on the application is correct. When completing the application, make sure each individual who is in need of assistance is entered onto the application forms. Contact information such as address and telephone number should be correctly entered onto the application because anything entered incorrectly can prohibit contact from a Food Stamp representative to each potential applicant. Applicants must be honest when giving information about their own income as well as that of their spouse.

Dishonesty can prohibit one from receiving the benefits of Food Stamps and can cause one to be barred from applying for any other beneficial program. Dishonesty can also lead to conviction of Welfare Fraud which results in having to pay all benefits back to the state funded program. Recipients must report any changes in income, savings, or assets quarterly or else be sanctioned from the program. If your income exceeds more than 2,000 dollars a month, Food Stamp benefits are typically revoked.

For more information visit the local government website <http://food-stamps.com/resources>

Medicare

According to socialsecurity.gov Medicare is one of the country's largest health insurance programs available for people age 65 years or older. Some individuals under the age of 65 qualify for the Medicare program. Qualifications include United States citizenship (or lawfully admitted for five consecutive years) and having chronic disabilities such as permanent kidney failure or Lou Gehrig's disease. Medicare is financed by taxpayers, their employers, and a premium deductible from Social Security. Recipients apply for Medicare through the Social Security office. There are four major components of the Medicare program called "parts".

Medicare Part A pays for the care of hospitalized inpatients or those in a skilled nursing or rehabilitation facility. Part A Medicare will also cover some home health and hospice care. Eligibility for Part A is determined by age (65 or older) and ability to receive social security benefits or railroad retirement benefits. Some are eligible if their spouse has received social security or railroad retirement benefits. Eligibility is also granted to those (living, deceased, or divorced) who worked a sufficient number of years at a government job where Medicare taxes were paid and to the spouses of such recipients. One can also be a parent of a dependent deceased child and be eligible.

Medicare Part B covers payment for doctors' services and other medical services and supplies that the hospital does not cover. Anyone who qualifies for Part A coverage can enroll in Medicare Part B. One can also pay a monthly premium to receive the benefits of Part B health coverage. One must be a United States citizen or a lawfully admitted noncitizen that has lived in the United States five consecutive years.

Medicare Part C is available to any individual who has Part A or Part B advantages. If Part A or B benefits are received from the government or from a Medicare Advantage organization, the recipient can join the Medicare Advantage Plan through private

Welfare Benefits

companies or through Medicare.

Medicare Part D covers all the prescription drugs that a physician orders for treatment. Anyone who has Medicare Part A, B, or C coverage is eligible for Medicare Part D.

Many individuals confuse Medicare with Medicaid health insurance. Although Medicaid is dictated by the same government agency as Medicare, Medicaid's focus is on low-income families with children. Medicaid is a state-run program and qualifications are similar to that of the Food Stamp program. For more information concerning Medicaid insurance, visit your local Family and Social Services Administration.

For more information concerning the Medicare or Medicaid healthcare coverage, visit the website www.socialsecurity.gov or call toll free at 1-800-772-1213.

Unemployment Benefits

According to Hoosierdata.in.gov, since 2012 the unemployment percentage in Indiana has maintained at roughly 8%. Fortunately, for those who are temporarily unemployed, there are many resources that provide assistance until hired at another job.

Unemployment Insurance Benefits

According to "benefits.gov," a website that provides information about government benefits and programs, unemployment insurance benefits temporarily provide financial assistance to those who are unemployed through no fault of their own. Interested individuals must meet Indiana's eligibility requirements. In order to qualify, one must have spent the past 12 to 18 months working in Indiana and have earned a minimum amount of wages determined by specific guidelines. The individual is also required to be available and able to work each week benefits are received.

Unemployment Fraud

According to "Unemployment Handbook," a website that provides resources to the unemployed, unemployment fraud is committed when: 1) an individual is receiving unemployment benefits while working a job, 2) information is intentionally falsified on applications forms, or 3) an individual is physically and mentally able to seek work but refuses to do so. Unemployment benefits were created to offer support to those who genuinely need it; those who abuse them are not only committing a crime, but they are also taking tax money away from those for whom the system was created. Those found to be committing unemployment fraud are punished with fines, jail time, and a criminal record.

Tips for using welfare benefits:

Dishonesty can prohibit one from receiving the benefits of Food Stamps and can cause one to be barred from applying for any other beneficial programs.

The website socialsecurity.gov provides more information about applying for Medicare benefits.

Unemployment benefits provide assistance to those who are temporarily unemployed.

The punishments associated with committing unemployment fraud include fines, jail time, and a criminal record.

Section 5

Social health issues commonly go unrecognized in the U.S. The content in this section includes information on how to identify persons who are being victimized by domestic violence or abusing substances. This section also includes information on laws regarding minors and how to maintain good moral character.

Domestic Violence

- Definition of Domestic Violence

- Recognizing a Domestic Violence Victim

- How to Seek Help

- Safety Precautions

- Legal Consequences of Committing Domestic Violence

Substance Abuse

- Definition of Substance Abuse

- Types of Substances

- Recognizing the Symptoms of Substance Abuse

- Legal Consequences of Substance Abuse

- How to Take Action

Laws Regarding Minors

- Curfew

- Laws Regarding Driving a Vehicle

- Alcohol

- Legal Marriage Age Requirements

- Age of Sexual Consent

Good Moral Character



Domestic Violence

According to the American Medical Association, intimate partners in the United States experience rape, physical abuse, or stalking. In 2010, more than 12 million men and women attested to being a victim of domestic abuse.

Definition of Domestic Violence

The United States Justice Department defines domestic violence as “a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person.”

Domestic violence can include, but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse: hitting, biting, kicking, shoving, smacking, hair pulling etc. This also includes forcing a partner to drink alcohol or take drugs, or withholding medical care.
- Emotional abuse: name-calling, criticizing or making a partner feel worthless, and stalking.
- Sexual abuse: coercing sexual contact on a partner without consent, marital rape, forcing sex after physical violence has occurred, or being sexually demeaning.
- Economic abuse: denying access to money, forbidding employment.
- Psychological abuse: intimidation, domination, manipulation, causing fear, threatening to hurt oneself, one’s partner, or partner’s family/friends.

To learn more about the signs of domestic violence, visit <http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/domviolence.htm>

Recognizing a Domestic Violence Victim

According to domesticviolence.org, anyone can become a victim of domestic violence. Age, religion, gender, income, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and marital status have no influence on whether someone will or will not become a victim of domestic abuse. However, the majority of victims are women.

According to helpguide.org, individuals should never remain silent if suspecting that someone is being abused by his or her partner. In most cases, victims of domestic violence are unable to speak out because they are afraid of being deported back to their country of origin, because they are afraid of what others might think, or because they do not wish to compromise their home and living situations.

Most victims display one or more of the following symptoms:

- Deprived of contact with their family members and friends.
- Deprived of his/her own money or forbidden from getting a job or going to school.
- Checks in with partner to notify of his or her activities.
- Frequent injuries and explains them as “accidents.”

If you suspect that someone you know has been abused, visit hotlineguide.org or call 1.800.332.738

Signs That You Are In an Abusive Relationship:

- When you are afraid of your partner
- When you avoid certain subjects out of fear of irritating or upsetting your partner
- When a partner makes you feel insignificant, or incapable
- When you justify to yourself or to others that your partner is not hurting you on purpose

Domestic Violence

How to Seek Help

According to Helpguide.org, domestic abuse frequently transitions from intimidation and verbal abuse to physical abuse. Although physical injury may be the most noticeable risk, the emotional and psychological consequences of domestic abuse are also severe. When an individual is involved in an abusive relationship, it can adversely affect one's life or personal relationships. Recognizing abuse is the first step toward getting help.

If you or someone you know need someone to talk to about domestic abuse, call: 1.800.332.7385

Where to Go

The following is a list of domestic violence shelters that will offer assistance to individuals that are in need of assistance for themselves or their family such as food, clothing, and shelter. When you call one of the hotlines listed below as a victim of domestic abuse, state what your situation is and notify them of the steps that you took before you called them.

Shelters:

Holy Family Shelter
907 North Holmes Ave, Indianapolis, IN
(317) 635-7830

Quest for excellence
2501 North College Ave, Indianapolis, IN
(317) 283 – 5730

Coburn Place Safe Haven
604 East 38th Street, Indianapolis, IN
(317) 923 -5750

The Julian Center
2011 N Meridian St, Indianapolis, IN 46202
(317) 941-2200

If you feel unsafe in your home, inform a family member, friend, co-worker, church member, or community member. Do not be afraid to ask for help. If someone you know approaches you because they are a victim of domestic abuse, it is important that you offer support and comfort so that they know they are not alone.

To learn more about how to seek support, or how to provide support, please visit domesticviolence.org.

Safety Precautions

According to the National Domestic Violence Hotline, ensuring your safety in your own home is important. The following are tips to consider that may help victims of domestic violence.

- Detect the abusive partner's strength so that the victim can evaluate the danger before the abuse escalates
- If an individual plans on escaping from his/her home, do not get involved in an abusive situation
- Locate any dangerous weapons that are in your home
- If an argument breaks out, have a planned escape route so that you can remove yourself from the abuse while attempting to escape from your abusive partner and home
- Make sure you have access to a cell phone that cannot be traced by your partner. You can always locate a public phone

Domestic Violence

- near your home so that you can call someone immediately after leaving your home.
- Have access to money or a credit card. Make sure your partner does not have access to this account or its information.
- Do not hesitate to call the police
- Have a small bag packed at all times so that you are always ready to leave your home
- Plan your escape from home before leaving and practice it if you can
- Make sure you have somewhere to stay. It's best if your partner does not know this location.

Legal Consequences of Committing Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence Laws in Indiana

In Indiana, incidents of domestic violence can result in the filing of criminal charges and an order to protection being issued for the victim by the court. If a person further violates the order of protection, additional criminal charges (invasion of privacy) will be filed. A domestic violence conviction carries harsh penalties and steep fines.

Indiana does not have a "domestic violence" statute. Instead, offenses such as harassment, criminal trespass, kidnapping, battery, stalking, domestic battery and criminal confinement can be filed in both domestic and non-domestic violence.

Domestic Battery

A person commits domestic battery by causing physical injury through the intentional touching of another person who is a current or former spouse, an individual who lives or lived with the person as a spouse, or an individual with whom the person has a child. (Ind. Code §35-42-2-1.3)

Domestic battery is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in jail and a \$5,000 fine. If the defendant commits the domestic battery in the physical presence of a child under the age of 16, or if the defendant has a prior unrelated domestic battery conviction, the new conviction for domestic battery is a Class D felony, which may be punished by up to three years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

A defendant convicted of a crime involving domestic violence may be required to participate in a batterer's intervention program. (Ind. Code §§ 35-33-8-11, 35-50-9-1)

Law Enforcement Duties

When a person reports to the police an allegation of domestic violence, the police have a duty to investigate the report. The police also have the duty to prevent further domestic violence by reasonable means. For example, police will assist the victim to gather all belongings, and provide transportation for the victim and children to a safe place. The police may also take away any firearms such as guns and ammunition at the scene if they believed the weapons were used in the incident. (Ind. Code 35-33-1-1.5)

Protective Orders

"Domestic or family violence" occurs when one family or household member commits one or more of the following acts:

- causes physical harm or attempts or threatens to cause physical harm to a family or household member,
- places a family or household member in fear of physical harm,
- makes a family or household member engage in sexual activity by force, the threat of force, or duress, or
- abuses or kills an animal, without justification, for the purpose of threatening, intimidating, coercing, harassing, or terrorizing a family member.

Domestic Violence

For purposes of a civil protection order, the definition of domestic violence is expanded to include stalking and sex offenses. (Ind. Code § 31-9-2-42)

How to Obtain a Protective Order

A person who is the victim of domestic or family violence may request (called filing of a Petition) of the court an order of protection against the abuser. A parent or guardian may file the petition for a child who is the victim of domestic or family violence. When one is filed, the court may issue an order of protection ex parte, meaning without holding a hearing or notifying the person accused of committing the abuse if, based on the petition, it appears the person (known as the respondent) has committed domestic or family violence. The ex parte order may contain many provisions, including requiring the respondent to move out of the home, to have no contact with the victim (known as the petitioner), and to surrender the use of property such as an automobile to the petitioner, even if the respondent owns the property.

Where a court issues an ex parte order of protection, it must hold a hearing within 30 days of issuing the ex parte order, and the respondent must be notified of the hearing. If the court determines at the hearing that protection order is necessary to protect the petitioner from a credible threat of violence, it may issue an order that lasts for two years, unless the court specifies a different duration. The order may contain any provisions found in the ex parte order. The order may also include provisions that set or deny the respondent visitation time with children of the petitioner and respondent, require the respondent to pay for expenses such as the petitioner's counseling or medical expenses, and prohibit the respondent from possessing firearms. (Ind. Code §§ 34-26-5-2, 34-25-5-9)

Criminal Stalking & Violation of an Order of Protection

A person who commits the offense of stalking while under an order of protection is guilty of a Class C felony, although a court may find the respondent guilty of a Class D felony if mitigating circumstances exist such as the respondent not having a prior criminal history. Class C felonies carry up to eight years in prison and a \$10,000 fine, while a Class D felony carries a maximum sentence of three years with a \$10,000 fine. (Ind. Code §§ 35-38-1-7.1, 35-45-10-5, 35-50-2-6, 35-50-2-7)

Many states are now making Domestic Violence convictions non-expugnable. Non-expugnable convictions will permanently remain on the record of the convicted. In addition to any penalties involving jail or prison, financial penalties, such as the following, also apply:

- Missing time from work for court, probation, counseling, etc.
- Paying a Victim's Fund fine
- Paying a Domestic Violence Fund fine
- High court fines

Domestic violence is a serious crime and should never be ignored or taken lightly. According to domesticviolence.org domestic abuse cases often involve a number of criminal charges, such as assault, battery, and sexual assault. In addition, abusers may face other legal consequence such as:

- Damage to cover financial losses of the victim (hospital bill, or pain and suffering)
- Restraining order
- Rehabilitation course for anger management
- Loss of custodial rights
- Loss of firearm, driver's license, and immigrate status in the US

Domestic Violence

Tips for preventing domestic violence:

Domestic violence does not only mean physical abuse. Violence is also emotional, sexual, or economic abuse.

If you feel unsafe in your home, inform a family member, friend, co-worker, or other person.

A protective order can be obtained to provide legal physical between the victim and the abuser.

Substance Abuse

If you or someone you know is affected by the following, or has any questions or concerns, please call your local Burmese American Community Institute (BACI) at (317)731-5537 or email info@baci-indy.org, or call the Chin Community of Indiana (CCI) at (317)300-1078 or email chincenter@outlook.com

Definition of Substance Abuse

According to the Ohio State University medical center, a health and medical research facility located at Ohio State University, "substance abuse" describes the recreational use of mind-altering substances. Substances can be used at harmless levels, although infrequent use typically leads to harmful addictions. These addictions can cause significant problems or distress in the life of the user, such as physical damage to the body, personal life stress, harmful effects to social relationships, and criminal charges. "Abuse" can be one time use or extended periods of addiction. Even one time use of many of these substances can be life-threatening. Many substances are illegal to possess in any quantity, though some are common household items that may be used in improper fashions. Alcohol and tobacco are not illegal to possess, though there are laws regulating their possession and consumption.

Types of Substances

Substances frequently abused include, but are not limited to, the following (with examples in parentheses):

- Alcohol (Beer, Liquor)
- Tobacco (Cigarettes, chewing tobacco)
- Marijuana
- Hallucinogens (LSD, " Magic Mushrooms", PCP) [ceida.net]
- Cocaine
- Amphetamines (Speed, ADHD medication, Meth) [ceida.net]
- Opiates (Opium, Morphine, Heroin, Codeine) [livestrong.com]
- Anabolic steroids
- Inhalants (Paint thinner, gasoline, glue, spray paint, nitrous oxide)

To learn more, please visit www.drugfreeworld.org.

Recognizing the Symptoms of Substance Abuse

Some of the signs that someone is abusing a substance can include the following:

- Frequent use of substance(s)
- Weight loss
- Lying about frequency of using substance(s)
- No longer partaking in activities such as sports or hanging out with non-using friends
- Missing work or school
- Work performance or grades suffer
- Talking about substances
- Need substance(s) in order to have fun
- Avoidance of friends and family

Substance Abuse

Legal Consequences of Substance Abuse

If caught possessing or using illegal forms of the types of substances listed above in the state of Indiana, you can face arrest, fines, and jail sentences.

Driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol is dangerous, and illegal. You can be charged with Operating While Intoxicated under the Influence ((DUI/OWI). It can lead to death (of user/driver, passengers, other drivers/passengers, or pedestrians) and jail time for the user/driver. If you are not a citizen of the United States, conviction of any drug offense can lead you to deportation.

According to the Indiana state website, Indiana's laws regarding Operation While Intoxicated are as follows:

Indiana Impaired Driving Laws

Operating a Motor Vehicle While Intoxicated (OVWI)

In Indiana, driving while under the influence of alcohol or drug is a serious offense. It can lead to many criminal charges, fines, loss of driving privileges (license suspension), and long probation.

A driver can be charged with OVWI many ways.

-A driver that has alcohol concentration level of greater than or equal to .08 grams and less than .15 grams of alcohol per 100 milliliters of blood or 210 liters of breath commits a Class C Misdemeanor. Driving with any schedule I or II substance as defined by IC 25-48-2 (such as marijuana, methamphetamine or cocaine) or its metabolite in his/her body commits a Class C Misdemeanor. Class C Misdemeanor is punishable by up to 60 days in prison and up to a \$500 fine. (IC 9-30-5-1)

-A driver whose alcohol concentration is greater than or equal to .15 grams per 100 milliliters of blood or 210 milliliters of breath commits a Class A Misdemeanor. Class A Misdemeanors are punishable by up to one year in prison and up to a \$5000 fine. (IC 9-30-5-1)

-A driver who, while driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol endangers a person (including him/herself) commits a Class A Misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in prison and up to a \$5000 fine. (IC 9-30-5-2). Here, the driver's alcohol concentration level is not a factor.

With any OVWI conviction, driving privileges can also be suspended for periods ranging from 30 days to two years.

A second DUI/OVWI violation is a Class D Felony if there has been a previous conviction within the past five years of a DUI/OVWI. (IC 9-30-5-3) D Felonies are punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000 and up to three years in prison.

A person that causes serious bodily injury to another person while operating a motor vehicle with an alcohol concentration of .08 grams or more per 100 milliliters of blood or 210 liters of breath, or has a schedule I or II substance or its metabolite in his/her body, commits a class D Felony. If there has been a previous, unrelated conviction within the past five (5) years for operating a vehicle while intoxicated it is a Class C Felony; punishable by up to eight years in prison and up to \$10,000 in fines. (IC 9-30-5-4)

It is a separate offense for each person injured by the impaired operator. (IC 9-30-5-4)

An operator of a motor vehicle that kills another person with an alcohol concentration of .08 or more, or with a controlled schedule I or II substance or its metabolite in his/her body, commits a Class C Felony punishable by up to eight years in prison and up to \$10,000 in fines. (IC 9-30-5-5)

Substance Abuse

If the operator who kills another person has a previous conviction under IC 9-30-5 within the previous five years the penalty is a Class B Felony; punishable by up to 20 years in prison and up to \$10,000 in fines. (IC 9-30-5-5)

It is a separate offense for each person killed by the violation of (IC 9-30-5-5).

If You Are Arrested for Operating a Motor Vehicle While Intoxicated:

- You will be handcuffed and taken to the police station.
- Your car and your person will be searched.
- Your car will be towed at your expense.
- You will be asked to take a certified breath test. If you refuse, your license will automatically be suspended for one year. (Implied consent law IC 9-30-6-1)
- If you take a breath test and it shows that your blood alcohol content is .08% or more, your driver's license will be suspended for a minimum of 30 days.
- To be released from jail, bail will have to be posted.

If You Are Convicted of Operating a Motor Vehicle While Intoxicated:

First Offense:

- You will have to pay court costs and fees in excess of \$300.
- You may receive a jail sentence of up to one year.
- You will be fined up to \$5,000.
- Your license may be suspended up to two years, or
- You may be placed on probation and be required to enroll in, and pay for, a substance abuse education course. Your license may also be suspended for a minimum of 30 days followed by a 180-day probationary period in which you can only drive for employment purposes.
- You may be required to have an Ignition Interlock Device installed on your car, which is a breath-analyzing device connected to the car's ignition. The driver must breathe into the device before the car will start, if the device detects alcohol on the breath, the vehicle will not start.
- You may be required to attend a victim impact panel, which is a group meeting program that seeks to inform others about the dangers of driving under the influence.
- You may be required to submit to urine testing for drugs and alcohol.
- You may also face other terms of probation.

Second Offense:

- You will be imprisoned for a minimum of five days or up to three years, and/or be required to perform community service.
- You will be fined up to \$10,000
- Your license will be suspended at least 180 days and up to two years.
- You may be placed on probation and be required to enroll in, and pay for, a substance abuse education course.
- You may be required to have an Ignition Interlock Device installed on your car.
- You may be required to attend a victim impact panel.
- You may be required to submit to urine testing for drugs and alcohol.
- You may also face other terms of probation.

Substance Abuse

Third Offense:

- You may be imprisoned for a minimum of ten days and up to three years and/or be required to perform community service.
- You will be fined up to \$10,000
- Your license will be suspended for a least one year and may be suspended for up to ten years.
- You may be adjudged as a habitual traffic violator.
- You may be charged and sentenced as a habitual substance offender, for which you may be imprisoned for an additional term of one year and up to an additional eight years.
- You may be placed on probation and be required to enroll in, and pay for, a substance abuse education **course**.
- You may be required to have an Ignition Interlock Device installed on your car.
- You may be required to attend a victim impact panel.
- You may be required to submit to urine testing for drugs and alcohol.
- You may also face other terms of probation.

Open Containers & Consumption in a Motor Vehicle (IC 9-30-15-3):

A person in a motor vehicle who, while the motor vehicle is in operation or while the motor vehicle is located on the right-of-way of a public highway, possesses a container:

- (1) that has been opened;
- (2) that has a broken seal; or
- (3) from which some of the contents have been removed; in the passenger compartment of the motor vehicle commits a Class C infraction.

A violation of this section is not considered a moving traffic violation:

- (1) for purposes of IC 9-14-3; and
- (2) for which points are assessed by the bureau under the point system.

If a person has a previous unrelated judgment under this law or a previous unrelated conviction or judgment under 9-30-5 within 12 months before a judgment under this chapter, the court may recommend a driver's license suspension for up to a year (IC 9-30-15-3)

An operator of a motor vehicle who knowingly consumes an alcoholic beverage while the vehicle is being operated on a public highway may be fined up to \$1000 (B infraction) (IC 9-30-15-4).

Minors

According to the Indiana state website, if you are a minor and lie about your age or present false evidence that you are not a minor (such as a fake ID or using someone else's ID), the court may fine you up to \$500. Using a fake ID will also result in a license suspension for up to 1 year (IC 7.1-5-7-1).

It is a class C misdemeanor (up to 60 days in jail and \$500 fine) for a minor to possess, consume, or transport alcohol on a public highway (if you're not riding with at least one parent). If you are driving a motor vehicle while doing any of the above, the court may order your license suspended for up to 1 year. If you are less than 18, however, the judge must suspend your license for at least 60 days (IC 7.1-5-7-7).

If you are under 21 years of age and drive a motor vehicle with a blood alcohol content between 0.2-0.8, you will be fined up to \$500 and your license suspended for up to 1 year (IC 9-30-5-8.5).

Substance Abuse

In addition to these penalties, local school systems also impose their own penalties such as expulsion, in-school suspension, and exclusion from athletic participation and other extracurricular activities. (in.gov)

Substance abuse can halt or hinder the citizenship process. Since criminal activity that is recorded can be used against an immigrant during the process of obtaining citizenship, substance abuse is a problem. Not only does using substances in illegal ways (possession, consumption, or selling of illegal drugs especially) cause legal issues for the short term, it can prevent a user from obtaining citizenship. (addictiontreatmentmagazine.com)

How to Take Action

If you know someone who abuses substances you can:

- Talk to a health practitioner
- Talk to a teacher, school psychologist, parent, or authority figure in your community
- Call a substance abuse hot line such as:
 - 1-800-943-0566 or visit their site at www.drugabuse.com. Here, they can help you in confronting a loved one who uses, or help you to find treatment programs, where trained professionals help addicts break their addictions.
 - 800-784-6776 or visit their site at www.addictioncareoptions.com. Here, they offer multiple ways to access their national database of treatment programs and help to match you up with the best program for your loved one.

Abusing substances or becoming involved with others who abuse substances can be dangerous and have severe consequences. If you know anyone who is abusing substances:

- It is best to confront the loved one in a way that will not make them violent. Intervention is the best way, by gathering a group of loved ones who care for the individual to show how much they care and want to help them.
- If they are violent or could become violent, report it immediately before they, or others are hurt.
- Hotlines (listed above) can be good for finding a treatment program to enroll your loved one in.
- Don't go about this alone. Gather friends and family that also want to see the individual stop abusing substances.

Tips for preventing substance abuse:

Substances can be used at harmless levels, although infrequent use typically leads to harmful addictions.

Even one-time use of many substances can be life-threatening.

Do not drive a car while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Do not drink alcohol while in a vehicle.

Substance abuse can halt or hinder the citizenship process.

Laws Regarding Minors

In Indiana, there are stipulations that minors under the age of 18 should abide by unless they are accompanied by a parent or guardian. It is vital that every minor in the state of Indiana follow these laws or it can result in penalties within the state of Indiana. In many cases, the parents or guardians are held accountable for the actions of their minors. The following information was provided by the website curfewclass.com, a resource that offers legal information concerning minor laws.

Curfew

IC 31-37-3-2

Children 15 through 17 Years of Age; Requirements for Detention or Custody

Sec. 2. (a) It is a curfew violation for a child fifteen (15), sixteen (16), or seventeen (17) years of age to be in a public place:

- (1) between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. on Saturday or Sunday;
- (2) after 11 p.m. on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday; or
- (3) before 5 a.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday.

(b) A law enforcement officer may not detain a child or take a child into custody based on a violation of this section unless the law enforcement officer, after making a reasonable determination and considering the facts and surrounding circumstances, reasonably believes that:

- (1) the child has violated this section; and
- (2) there is no legal defense to the violation.

IC 31-37-3-3

Children Less Than 15 Years of Age; Requirements for Detention or Custody

Sec. 3. (a) It is a curfew violation for a child less than fifteen (15) years of age to be in a public place after 11 p.m. or before 5 a.m. on any day.

(b) A law enforcement officer may not detain a child or take a child into custody based on a violation of this section unless the law enforcement officer, after making a reasonable determination and considering the facts and surrounding circumstances, reasonably believes that:

- (1) the child has violated this section; and
- (2) there is no legal defense to the violation.

IC 31-37-3-3.5

Defenses

Sec. 3.5. (a) It is a defense to a violation under this chapter that the child was emancipated:

- (1) under IC 31-37-19-27 or IC 31-6-4-15.7 (before its repeal);
- (2) by virtue of having married; or
- (3) in accordance with the laws of another state or jurisdiction;

at the time that the child engaged in the prohibited conduct.

(b) It is a defense to a violation under this chapter that the child engaged in the prohibited conduct while:

- (1) accompanied by the child's parent, guardian, or custodian;
- (2) accompanied by an adult specified by the child's parent, guardian, or custodian;
- (3) participating in, going to, or returning from:
 - (A) lawful employment;
 - (B) a school sanctioned activity;
 - (C) a religious event;

Laws Regarding Minors

(D) an emergency involving the protection of a person or property from an imminent threat of serious bodily injury or substantial damage;

(E) an activity involving the exercise of the child's rights protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or Article 1, Section 31 of the Constitution of the State of Indiana, or both, such as freedom of speech and the right of assembly; or

(F) an activity conducted by a nonprofit or governmental entity that provides recreation, education, training, or other care under the supervision of one (1) or more adults;

(4) participating in an activity undertaken at the prior written direction of the child's parent, guardian, or custodian; or

(5) engaged in interstate or international travel from a location outside Indiana to another location outside Indiana.

IC 31-37-3-4

Advancement of Curfew Time by Local Ordinance

Sec. 4. Whenever a city, town, or county determines that any curfew time established by section 2 or 3 of this chapter is later than is reasonable for public safety under the conditions found to exist in the city, town, or county, the city, town, or county may, by ordinance, advance the curfew time within the jurisdiction of the city, town, or county by not more than two (2) hours.

IC 31-37-3-5

Cemeteries and Other Facilities to Memorialize Dead

Sec. 5. A city, town, or county may:

(1) determine that a curfew time is necessary for the peace, order, and safety of a cemetery or other facility used to memorialize the dead; and

(2) by ordinance impose upon cemeteries or other facilities to memorialize the dead within the jurisdiction of the city, town, or county legislative body a curfew time that is earlier than the curfew times established by sections 2 and 3 of this chapter by not more than four (4) hours.

Laws Regarding Driving a Vehicle

The following information was provided on the Indiana government website (in.gov).

Indiana's Graduated Driver's Licensing

(GDL) Law

Requirement

Learner's Permit

15 years with Driver's Education, 16 years Without Driver's Education

Driver's Education

Minimum starting age of 15 years

Permit Holding Period

180 days

Probationary License

16 years 180 days with Driver's Education; 16 years 270 days without Driver's Education

Telecommunications Restrictions

Telecommunications devices (e.g. cell phones) are prohibited until the age of 18, with the exception of a 9-1-1 emergency call

Passenger Restrictions

No passengers for the first 180 days unless there is another licensed driver at least 25 years old, a certified driving instructor or parent/guardian over the age of 21 in the front seat, with exceptions of child, sibling or spouse

Night time Driving Restrictions

10pm-5am-every day for the first 180 days of holding a license; Sunday-Thursday 11pm-5am; Friday-Saturday 1am-5am until age

Laws Regarding Minors

18, with exceptions for school, work and church-related functions.

Certified Driving Hours

50 hours of supervised driving practice, 10 of which must be at night, with a certified driving instructor or licensed driver that is at least 25 years old or the individual's spouse that is at least 21 years of age

Minimum Age with No Restrictions

18 years old

Alcohol

The following information was provided by the Indiana government website (in.gov).

- Minors (those under 21 years of age) need to know that, in accordance with Indiana Code 7.1-5-7-7, it is illegal to knowingly:

-Possess alcohol

-Consume alcohol

-Transport alcohol on a public highway when not accompanied by at least one of his/her parents or guardians.

Legal Marriage Age Requirements

The following information was provided by the Indiana government website (in.gov).

IC 31-11-1-4

Minimum age for marriage.

Sec. 4. Except as provided in section 5 or 6 of this chapter, two individuals may not marry each other unless both individuals are at least eighteen (18) years of age.

As added by P.L.1-1997, SEC.3.

IC 31-11-1-5

Consent to underage marriage.

Sec. 5. Two (2) individuals may marry each other if:

(1) both individuals are at least seventeen (17) years of age;

(2) each individual who is less than eighteen (18) years of age receives the consent required by IC 31-11-2; and

(3) the individuals are not prohibited from marrying each other for a reason set forth in this article.

IC 31-11-1-6

Issuance of marriage license to underage persons; procedure; confidentiality of records.

Sec. 6. (a) Two (2) individuals may marry each other if:

(1) the individuals are not prohibited from marrying for a reason set forth in this article; and

(2) a circuit or superior court of the county of residence of either individual considers the information required to be submitted by subsection (b) and authorizes the clerk of the circuit court to issue the individuals a marriage license.

(b) A court may not authorize the clerk of the circuit court to issue a marriage license under subsection (a) unless: (1) the individuals have filed with the court a verified petition that includes allegations that:

(A) the female is at least fifteen (15) years of age;

(B) the female is pregnant or is a mother;

(C) each of the individuals who is less than eighteen (18) years of age has received the consent required by IC 31-11-2;

(D) the male is at least fifteen (15) years of age and is either: the putative father of the expected child of the female; or the father of the female's child; and the individuals desire to marry each other; the court has provided notice of the hearing required by this section to both parents of both petitioners or, if applicable to either petitioner:

Laws Regarding Minors

(A) to the legally appointed guardian or custodian of a petitioner; or

(B) to one (1) parent of a petitioner if the other parent:

(i) is deceased;

(ii) has abandoned the petitioner;

(iii) is mentally incompetent;

(iv) is an individual whose whereabouts is unknown; or

(v) is a noncustodial parent who is delinquent in the payment of court ordered child support on the date the petition is filed;

(3) a hearing is held on the petition in which the petitioners and interested persons, including parents, guardians, and custodians, are given an opportunity to appear and present evidence; and

(4) the allegations of the petition filed under subdivision (1) have been proven.

(c) A court's authorization granted under subsection (a):

(1) constitutes part of the confidential files of the clerk of the circuit court; and

(2) may be inspected only by written permission of a circuit, superior, or juvenile court.

Age of Sexual Consent

The following information was provided by a government website at in.gov

(a) A person at least eighteen (18) years of age who, with a child at least fourteen (14) years of age but less than sixteen (16) years of age, performs or submits to sexual intercourse or other sexual conduct (as defined in IC 35-31.5-2-221.5) commits sexual misconduct with a minor, a Level 5 felony. However, the offense is:

(1) a Level 4 felony if it is committed by a person at least twenty-one (21) years of age; and

(2) a Level 1 felony if it is committed by using or threatening the use of deadly force, if it is committed while armed with a deadly weapon, if it results in serious bodily injury, or if the commission of the offense is facilitated by furnishing the victim, without the victim's knowledge, with a drug (as defined in IC 16-42-19-2(1)) or a controlled substance (as defined in IC 35-48-1-9) or knowing that the victim was furnished with the drug or controlled substance without the victim's knowledge.

(b) A person at least eighteen (18) years of age who, with a child at least fourteen (14) years of age but less than sixteen (16) years of age, performs or submits to any fondling or touching, of either the child or the older person, with intent to arouse or to satisfy the sexual desires of either the child or the older person, commits sexual misconduct with a minor, a Level 6 felony. However, the offense is:

(1) a Level 5 felony if it is committed by a person at least twenty-one (21) years of age; and

(2) a Level 2 felony if it is committed by using or threatening the use of deadly force, while armed with a deadly weapon, or if the commission of the offense is facilitated by furnishing the victim, without the victim's knowledge, with a drug (as defined in IC 16-42-19-2(1)) or a controlled substance (as defined in IC 35-48-1-9) or knowing that the victim was furnished with the drug or controlled substance without the victim's knowledge.

(c) It is a defense that the accused person reasonably believed that the child was at least sixteen (16) years of age at the time of the conduct. However, this subsection does not apply to an offense described in subsection (a) (2) or (b)(2).

(d) It is a defense that the child is or has ever been married. However, this subsection does not apply to an offense described in a subsection (a) (2) or (b) (2).

(e) It is a defense to a prosecution under this section if all the following apply:

(1) The person is not more than four (4) years older than the victim.

(2) The relationship between the person and the victim was a dating relationship or an ongoing personal relationship. The term "ongoing personal relationship" does not include a family relationship.

Laws Regarding Minors

(3) The crime:

(A) was not committed by a person who is at least twenty-one (21) years of age;

(B) was not committed by using or threatening the use of deadly force;

(C) was not committed while armed with a deadly weapon;

(D) did not result in serious bodily injury;

(E) was not facilitated by furnishing the victim, without the victim's knowledge, with a drug (as defined in IC 16-42-19-2(1)) or a controlled substance (as defined in IC 35-48-1-9) or knowing that the victim was furnished with the drug or controlled substance without the victim's knowledge; and

(F) was not committed by a person having a position of authority or substantial influence over the victim.

(4) The person has not committed another sex offense (as defined in IC 11-8-8-5.2) (including a delinquent act that would be a sex offense if committed by an adult) against any other person.

Tips about laws regarding minors:

Children between the ages of 15-17 must not be in a public place without an adult after 11 p.m. or before 5 a.m. on any day.

It is illegal for those under the age of 21 to possess or consume alcohol.

Good Moral Character

There are many required stipulations that must be met when applying for citizenship in the United States. It is very important that applicants maintain good moral character so that there is no criminal history report which could inhibit citizenship eligibility. These are some examples of specific ways to maintain good moral character. According to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, the following is information on good moral character:

(a) Requirement of good moral character during the statutory period.

(1) An applicant for naturalization bears the burden of demonstrating that, during the statutorily prescribed period, he or she has been and continues to be a person of good moral character. This includes the period between the examination and the administration of the oath of allegiance.

(2) In accordance with Section 101(f) of the Act, the Service shall evaluate claims of good moral character on a case-by-case basis taking into account the elements enumerated in this section and the standards of the average citizen in the community of residence. The Service is not limited to reviewing the applicant's conduct during the five years immediately preceding the filing of the application, but may take into consideration, as a basis for its determination, the applicant's conduct and acts at any time prior to that period, if the conduct of the applicant during the statutory period does not reflect that there has been reform of character from an earlier period or if the earlier conduct and acts appear relevant to a determination of the applicant's present moral character.

(b) Finding of a lack of good moral character.

(1) An applicant shall be found to lack good moral character, if the applicant has been:

(i) Convicted of murder at any time; or (Revised 9/24/93; 58 FR 49913)

(ii) Convicted of an aggravated felony as defined in Section 101(a)(43) of the Act on or after November 29, 1990. (Revised 9/24/93; 58 FR 49913)

(2) An applicant shall be found to lack good moral character if during the statutory period the applicant:

(i) Committed one or more crimes involving moral turpitude, other than a purely political offense, for which the applicant was convicted, except as specified in Section 212(a)(2)(A)(ii)(II) of the Act;

(ii) Committed two or more offenses for which the applicant was convicted and the aggregate sentence actually imposed was five years or more, provided that, if the offense was committed outside the United States, it was not a purely political offense;

(iii) Violated any law of the United States, any State, or any foreign country relating to a controlled substance, provided that the violation was not a single offense for simple possession of 30 grams or less of marijuana;

(iv) Admits committing any criminal act covered by paragraphs (b)(2)(i), (ii), or (iii) of this section for which there was never a formal charge, indictment, arrest, or conviction, whether committed in the United States or any other country;

(v) Is or was confined to a penal institution for an aggregate of 180 days pursuant to a conviction or convictions (provided that such confinement was not outside the United States due to a conviction outside the United States for a purely political offense);

(vi) Has given false testimony to obtain any benefit from the Act, if the testimony was made under oath or affirmation and with an intent to obtain an immigration benefit; this prohibition applies regardless of whether the information provided in the false testimony was material, in the sense that if given truthfully it would have rendered ineligible for benefits either the applicant or the person on whose behalf the applicant sought the benefit;

(vii) Is or was involved in prostitution or commercialized vice as described in Section 212(a)(2)(D) of the Act;

(viii) Is or was involved in the smuggling of a person or persons into the United States as described in Section 212(a)(6)(E) of the Act;

(ix) Has practiced or is practicing polygamy;

(x) Committed two or more gambling offenses for which the applicant was convicted;

Good Moral Character

- (xi) Earns his or her income principally from illegal gambling activities; or
- (xii) Is or was a habitual drunkard.

(3) Unless the applicant establishes extenuating circumstances, the applicant shall be found to lack good moral character if, during the statutory period, the applicant:

- (i) Willfully failed or refused to support dependents;
- (ii) Had an extramarital affair which tended to destroy an existing marriage; or
- (iii) Committed unlawful acts that adversely reflect upon the applicant's moral character, or was convicted or imprisoned for such acts, although the acts do not fall within the purview of Sec.316.10(b)(1) or (2).

(c) Proof of good moral character in certain cases

(1) Effect of probation or parole. An applicant who has been on probation, parole, or suspended sentence during all or part of the statutory period is not thereby precluded from establishing good moral character, but such probation, parole, or suspended sentence may be considered by the Service in determining good moral character. An application will not be approved until after the probation, parole, or suspended sentence has been completed.

(2) Full and unconditional executive pardon.

- (i) Before the statutory period. An applicant who has received a full and unconditional executive pardon prior to the beginning of the statutory period is not precluded by Sec.316.10(b)(1) from establishing good moral character provided the applicant demonstrates that reformation and rehabilitation occurred prior to the beginning of the statutory period.
- (ii) During the statutory period. An applicant who receives a full and unconditional executive pardon during the statutory period is not precluded by Sec.316.10(b)(2)(i) and (ii) from establishing good moral character, provided the applicant can demonstrate that extenuating and/or exonerating circumstances exist that would establish his or her good moral character.

(3) Record expungement.

(i) Drug offenses. Where an applicant has had his or her record expunged relating to one of the narcotics offenses under Section 212(a)(2)(A)(i)(II) and Section 241(a)(2) (B) of the Act, that applicant shall be considered as having been "convicted" within the meaning of Sec. 316.10(b)(2)(ii), or, if confined, as having been confined as a result of "conviction" for purposes of Sec. 316.10(b)(2) (iv).

(ii) Moral turpitude. An applicant who has committed or admits the commission of two or more crimes involving moral turpitude during the statutory period is precluded from establishing good moral character, even though the conviction record of one such offense has been expunged.

Section 6

Like the social issues mentioned in the previous section, mental health issues are commonly undiagnosed in the U.S. The content in this section includes information on diagnosis and treatment of several mental health issues. This section also provides information on personal hygiene such as proper hand washing, body care, and dental care.

Mental Health

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD/ADD)

Autism Spectrum

Bipolar Disorder

Depression

Eating Disorders

Self-Harming

Suicide

Personal Health/Hygiene

Hand Washing

Body Odor and Care

Dental Hygiene



Mental Health

ADHD/ADD

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) are used interchangeably by the general population. According to add.org, ADHD and ADD are diagnosed in adults and children who display distractibility (poor sustained attention to tasks), impulsivity (impaired impulse control and delay of gratification), and hyperactivity (excessive activity and physical restlessness).

Diagnosis

To be diagnosed with ADHD or ADD you have to display the symptoms listed below for at least 6 months and they must affect at least two of the following: school, home, work, or social interactions.

Symptoms

- often fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes;
- often has difficulty sustaining attention to tasks;
- often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly;
- often fails to follow instructions carefully and completely;
- losing or forgetting important things;
- feelings of restlessness, often fidgeting with hands or feet, or squirming;
- running or climbing excessively;
- often talks excessively;
- often blurts out answers before hearing the whole question;
- often has difficulty awaiting turn.

Treatment

Treatment of ADD/ADHD normally includes medications and therapy or counseling. In counseling sessions, those diagnosed are taught skills to help them cope with living with ADD/ADHD.

For more information and facts about ADD/ADHD visit http://www.add.org/?page=ADHD_Fact_Sheet

Autism Spectrum

According to autismspeaks.org, autism spectrum disorders are characterized by difficulties in social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication, and by repetitive behaviors. Autism is found in roughly 1 of 88 Americans and most commonly in boys.

Symptoms

WebMD lists the following symptoms for Autism:

- Problems developing nonverbal skills such as looking someone in the eye, facial expressions, and posture
- Hard time establishing friendships
- Lack of interest in being open to other people
- Lack of empathy (understanding someone else's feelings)
- Delay or lack of learning to use speech
- Difficulty starting conversations and continuing conversations
- Repeating a phrase over and over again
- Failure to catch implied meanings and understanding sarcasm
- Focus on unusual pieces such as the wheels of a car and not the whole car
- Fascination with certain topics
- A need for routine

Mental Health

Treatment

According to WebMD, individuals with autism are generally not prescribed medications but will undergo therapy. One type of therapy is behavioral training and management, which uses positive reinforcement, self-help, and social skills to improve the behavior of individuals and their social skills. There are also many support groups for the families of individuals with Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders.

For more information, visit autismspeaks.org, a website dedicated to spreading awareness of autism and advocating for individuals, and <http://www.webmd.com/brain/autism>, which has medical facts about autism.

Bipolar Disorder

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, bipolar disorder is a brain disorder that causes unusual shifts in mood, energy, activity levels, and the ability to carry out day-to-day tasks. Bipolar disorder is also known as manic-depressive disorder.

Symptoms

Symptoms vary between the manic stage and the depressive stage. The manic stage is when an individual is overly joyful and excited for a period of time, and the depressive stage is when an individual exhibits extreme sadness and/or hopelessness for a period of time.

The manic stage includes behaviors such as:

- extreme irritability
- the feeling of being overly happy
- talking very fast, jumping from one idea to another, having racing thoughts
- being easily distracted
- increasing activities, such as taking on new projects
- being overly restless
- sleeping little or not being tired
- having an unrealistic belief in one's abilities
- behaving impulsively and engaging in pleasurable, high-risk behaviors

The depressed stage includes behaviors such as:

- loss of interest in activities normally enjoyed
- feeling tired
- having problems concentrating, remembering, and making decisions
- being restless or irritable
- changing eating, sleeping, or other habits
- thinking of death or suicide, or attempting suicide

An individual may not experience an extreme state of mania or depression in order to be diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

Treatment

Treatments include medications such as antidepressants, mood stabilizers, and antipsychotic medication and can include different types of therapy.

How to Help

To help someone with bipolar disorder, it is important to offer emotional support and to be patient and understanding when talking to them. During the depressed state of bipolar disorder, individuals may experience thoughts of suicide. To seek help or to talk to someone call 1-800-273-8255.

Mental Health

Depression

According to the National Institute for Mental Health, depression is a combination of symptoms that impair an individual's ability to work, sleep, study, eat, and enjoy activities. Depression can be caused by biological, environmental, and psychological factors.

Symptoms

- persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" feelings
- feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
- feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- irritability, restlessness
- loss of interest in activities or hobbies once pleasurable, including sex
- fatigue and decreased energy
- difficulty concentrating, remembering details, and making decisions
- insomnia, early-morning wakefulness, or excessive sleeping
- overeating, or appetite loss
- thoughts of suicide, suicide attempts
- aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems that do not ease, even with treatment

Treatment

Most people that are diagnosed with depression are prescribed antidepressants. Individuals may also seek counseling to find the cause of the depression.

It is important for individuals to get help because they may feel suicidal when depressed. To talk to someone about depression or suicidal thoughts call 1-800-273-8255

Eating Disorders

According to the National Eating Disorder Association (NEDA), there are many types of eating disorders. Anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating are the most common eating disorders.

Anorexia nervosa (Anorexia)

Anorexia is diagnosed when an individual does not eat. They may experience dramatic weight loss, have a negative self-image, and withdraw from friends. Individuals tend to avoid mealtimes with others to avoid being questioned. They may experience dehydration, fatigue, and muscle loss.

Bulimia

Bulimia is diagnosed when an individual takes in large portions of food at one time and then forces oneself to vomit it back up shortly after. People afflicted with bulimia feel the need to burn the calories off as soon as they have eaten the food. Over a long period time this can be serious because the acid from purging food causes the esophagus to deteriorate.

Binge Eating

Binge eating is the frequent intake of large portions of food. Individuals may do this to help cope with feelings of depression or if they feel guilty about a situation. Unlike bulimia, individuals who binge do not feel the need to purge; therefore they may experience many health problems such as diabetes, high cholesterol, elevated blood pressure, and obesity.

Mental Health

How to Help

Express concern for the individual. They are likely exhibiting this behavior to feel as though they fit in to a certain social group. Call 1-800-931-2237 between 9AM-9PM Monday through Thursday and 9AM-5PM on Fridays for help or for more information about eating disorders and to talk to someone if you think you may have one. Also, <http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org> is a website that provides more information and facts about eating disorders.

Self-Harming

According to helpguide.org, self-harming is intentionally hurting oneself.

Signs of Self-Harming:

- cutting or severely scratching one's own skin
- burning or scalding of oneself
- hitting oneself or banging of the head
- punching things or throwing of the body against walls or hard objects
- sticking objects into one's skin
- intentionally preventing wounds from healing
- swallowing poisonous substances or inappropriate objects

Individuals may claim that they have "accidents" to cover up the fact they are hurting themselves. They also may tend to be isolated and cover up their arms and legs to hide the wounds.

How to Help

To help someone who partakes in self-harming, be patient in letting them tell their story. Don't judge them or speak harshly to them. Show that you care and offer them support. Help them figure out why they do it and other ways to express themselves. Call (800) 366-8288 for help with self-harming and counseling. To learn more about self-harming visit http://www.helpguide.org/mental/self_injury.htm.

Suicide

According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), suicide occurs when a person intentionally ends their own life. It is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States with more than 38,000 lives being taken in 2010. People ages 45 to 64 and ages 85 and older are most at risk to commit suicide. Males are 4 times more likely than women to commit suicide. Indiana has a suicide rate of 13.3 people for every 100,000 people.

The most common methods of suicide are: self-inflicted gunshot wounds, suffocation, and poisoning.

Risk Factors

Risk factors for suicide are not the same as warning signs. They are simply factors that may make it more likely for a person to attempt suicide.

- Mental disorders, particularly mood disorders, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, and certain personality disorders
- Alcohol and other substance use disorders
- Hopelessness
- Impulsive and/or aggressive tendencies

Mental Health

- Major physical illnesses
- Previous suicide attempts
- Family history of suicide
- Job or financial loss
- Loss of relationship
- Easy access to lethal means, such as guns or poison
- Multiple suicides have happened in the community
- Lack of social support and sense of isolation
- Stigma associated with asking for help
- Lack of healthcare, especially mental health and substance abuse treatments
- Cultural and religious beliefs, such as the belief that suicide is a noble resolution of a personal dilemma
- Exposure to others who have died by suicide (in real life or by the internet and media)

Warning Signs

If an individual is showing any of the warning signs below, they may be considering suicide. Seek help immediately.

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill themselves
- Looking for a way to kill themselves, such as searching online for methods or buying a gun
- Talking about being hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about being trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or isolating themselves
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings

How to Help

To help individuals that are showing symptoms of suicide risk, show them that they have people who care about them and value them. Always take the threat of suicide seriously. It is not a matter to take lightly. There are support groups for suicide in every city. For immediate help, individuals can call 1-800-273-8255 anytime 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for someone to talk to about depression and suicidal thoughts.

Tips about mental health issues:

To be diagnosed with ADHD or ADD you have to display certain symptoms for at least 6 months and the symptoms must affect at least two of the following: school, home, work, or social interactions.

Individuals with autism spectrum disorders are generally not prescribed medications but will typically undergo therapy.

Individuals with bipolar disorder experience two stages, manic and depressive. The manic stage is when an individual is overly joyful and excited for a period of time and the depressive stage is when an individual exhibits extreme sadness and/or hopelessness for a period of time.

Express concern for friends or family that you believe may be experiencing an eating disorder. This is often the first step toward healing.

Individuals who are considering suicide can call 1-800-273-8255 anytime 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to discuss concerns with a trained counselor.

Personal Hygiene

According to the Erie Department of Health, “Personal hygiene is a routine of personal care that keeps you clean and healthy. It involves regular care of your hair, skin, face, teeth, ears, hands, nails, and feet.” Good personal hygiene is important because it lowers risk of diseases, infections, loss of teeth, and loss of friends. Good hygiene helps keep one’s body clean and in optimum condition. Although personal hygiene habits differ from culture to culture, the following are the habits most practiced in the United States.

Hand Washing

According to the “Better Health Channel,” washing hands is one of the most effective ways to protect from spreading bacteria from oneself to others. Bacteria can spread when unclean hands come in contact with our mouth, the hands of others, or food. By washing hands with warm water and soap and then drying them with a clean paper towel, the risk of spreading germs is lowered significantly. According to Oxford, a London-based medical practitioner, each year, over 5.5 million people suffer from food poisoning because the population does not take washing of hands very seriously.

Hands should be washed:

- After using the toilet
- When handling food and before eating
- After touching dogs or other animals
- When you or someone around you is coughing or sneezing
- After changing a diaper or wiping a toddler’s nose

Most people do not realize that:

- If you are right handed you tend to wash your left hand more than the right hand
- We tend to have more bacteria in our finger tips and elbow
- If your hands are wet you can spread more germs than with dry hands
- Germs can actually stay in your hands for more than three hours
- Millions of germs can hide under jewelry such as rings, watches, etc. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/4291124.stm>

Body Odor and Care

According to the “Better Health Channel,” body odor is a result of sweat, caused by physical activity or nervousness, bacteria, or wearing unwashed clothes. To help keep skin clean and healthy, it is important to bathe or shower regularly. How often depends on skin type and level of daily physical activity, but the U.S. population generally showers daily. When bathing, lather well with soap before rinsing to remove dirt and germs. Dry all areas well to avoid chapped skin. After bathing, use a form of deodorant to prevent odor by killing germs. It is beneficial to keep bedding and towels clean by changing them every one to two weeks. Allow towels and washcloths to dry after use and refrain from sharing them with others. Remember to keep undergarments clean and change them every day.

Causes of Body Odor

According to Gard, the human body is equipped with sweat glands which release fluid to help us cool off. This process is referred to as sweating. The sweat glands release fluids when stimulated, which allows the body to feel cooler. The more fluid is released, the cooler the body feels. During the process of sweating, skin pores are open which can introduce bacteria into our bodies. Bacteria causes body odor, and multiply more rapidly in moist environments such as under arms and feet.

Personal Hygiene

How to Tell a Friend

It is not easy to tell someone you know that they have poor hygiene. Here are a few suggestions to make breaking the news somewhat easier:

“How about a breath mint?”

“I just tried some of those charcoal inserts for my shoes they really work.”

Dental Hygiene

Dental hygiene is an important aspect of maintaining good personal health. According to Erie County Public Health, plaque, which contains invisible bacteria, forms on teeth every day. Brushing teeth thoroughly removes plaque and prevents disease. Sugar turns into acid and causes teeth to slowly decay which can cause cavities. In order to combat poor dental hygiene, the American Dental Association recommends brushing your teeth at least twice a day, flossing daily, and scheduling regular trips to the dentist for a check-up.

Dental Hygiene Practices:

- Eat a healthy diet with fresh fruits and vegetables that have Vitamin C, which protects against gum disease
- Replace toothbrush every three to four months, or sooner if the bristles are worn
- Use toothpaste that has fluoride to prevent cavities
- Brush tongue with toothbrush to remove bacteria and promote fresh breath
- After using toothbrush, clean well with water and let air dry
- See a dentist for a regular cleaning at least once a year
- Avoid smoking and tobacco products, tobacco will stain the teeth and contributes to bad breath.
- Onion, garlic and alcohol products will contribute to bad breath

Tips for personal health / hygiene:

Good hand washing is the best way to prevent the spread of disease.

Keep bedding and towels clean by changing them every one to two weeks.

Wash and comb hair daily.

Change razor blades regularly before they become dull.

Keep feet dry to avoid athlete's foot.

Keep nails trimmed short.

Section 7

The U.S. government is based on a document called the United States Constitution. After the Constitution was published, several rights were written and included as amendments to the Constitution. The first ten amendments are called the “Bill of Rights”. The following section explains each of the ten bills, or amendments. This section also covers the rights given to renters and the rights given to employees at any workplace.

Bill of Rights

Renting Apartments and Your Rights

Overcharging for Damages

Fair Housing

Equal Housing Act

National Fair Housing Alliance

Workplace Etiquette and Your Rights

Affirmative Action

Sexual Harassment

Rights When Terminating Employment



Bill of Rights

The United States of America, in its conception, was founded on the principle that the individual citizen is entitled to certain rights. These rights were written down as amendments, or additions, to the U.S. Constitution. The first ten, called the “Bill of Rights” are what the foundation of America was built upon, and are still central to American society. Understanding these rights is important, especially when planning on becoming a citizen of the United States. Below are the words of the Constitution’s Bill of Rights, with explanations of each amendment given by the Scholastic website, an organization that provides the public with educational tools and books (Feinberg, 1987).

The First Amendment

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances (“The bill of,” 1789).”

The First Amendment protects a person’s freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition. Freedom of religion means that the government cannot force religious beliefs or doctrines upon a person, nor can they interfere with how religious groups worship. Freedom of speech gives people the right to say what they want and voice their opinion without fear of punishment from the government. This does not permit the use of threat or falsely accusing another person. Freedom of press allows citizens to have access to writing that will keep them informed on what is going on in the government, and prevents government censorship on public publications. Freedom of assembly allows all Americans to join groups or parties and have meetings that represent their own beliefs or views, no matter how popular or unpopular they are. Freedom of petition means that citizens can tell the government their views and ideas on how the country is being run.

The Second Amendment

“A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed (“The bill of,” 1789).”

The second amendment allows citizens to purchase an own guns for private use. This does not allow one to harm or kill another person with the gun, but instead to use them for recreational purposes or self-defense on private property.

The Third Amendment

“No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law (“The bill of,” 1789).”

Though unheard of today, the practice of being forced to house troops was common in the colonies that formed early America. The amendment prevents people from being forced into housing troops in their home without consent.

The Fourth Amendment

“The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized (“The bill of,” 1789).”

Bill of Rights

The Fourth Amendment protects citizens from unwarranted searches or seizures of their body, property, or homes. Without a warrant (a document signed by a judge granting access to personal property) being shown to the person, the police or other government agencies cannot search a person or their property, nor can they take it away. There must be sufficient evidence gathered before a warrant can be given.

The Fifth Amendment

"No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation ("The bill of," 1789)."

The Fifth Amendment protects many of the rights of citizens. First, it establishes that all accused people are innocent of their suspected crimes until proven guilty. Instead of being immediately imprisoned, suspects must first be proven to be guilty of their crimes in a criminal court case. To prevent someone from being charged unlawfully, a grand jury must first approve the charges and then a court case can be summoned. Second, this amendment protects a citizen from testifying against themselves. A person may plead guilty to their accusations on their own free will, but they cannot be forced to do so. If they plead innocent and are not proven guilty on the charges, they cannot be charged again for the same crimes.

The amendment designates that a 'due process of law' must be followed by the government in order to try a person for a crime. There are steps they must take and rules to follow in order to hold a trial. With the changing times of the country, the 'due process' has changed as well. Police must follow this process today in order to collect evidence for trial.

Finally, the Fifth Amendment states that the government must pay a reasonable sum of money for the taking of a person's property for governmental use. If they plan to turn private property into public property, they must purchase it for a price that suits the owner.

The Sixth Amendment

"In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defense ("The bill of," 1789)."

The Sixth Amendment establishes more regulations for criminal case trials. It guarantees a speedy (as opposed to a long, drawn-out, time consuming), public trial by a jury who is not biased by self-connections to the trial, and must be held in the area where the crime was committed. The defendant is granted the ability to question their accusers and to collect witnesses to testify in their favor. The accused has a right to a lawyer, and if they cannot afford one, they will have one appointed for them.

The Seventh Amendment

"In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law ("The bill of," 1789)."

The Seventh Amendment guarantees that citizens will receive a jury trial in civil (as opposed to criminal) cases involving property worth more than twenty dollars. Civil cases are held not between the government and a suspect (as in criminal cases), but

Bill of Rights

between two citizens who are having legal disputes regarding property or money. The twenty dollar base amount was established at a time when it was a substantial sum of money. Today, most people do not come to trial on such small amounts.

The Eighth Amendment

“Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted (“The bill of,” 1789).”

The Eighth Amendment states that bail, the money paid to free the accused person from being held in jail before a trial occurs, cannot be excessively high in comparison to the extremity of their accused crimes. For example, an accused murderer would get higher bail than an accused thief. Fines for minor crimes, called misdemeanors, also cannot be set too high either. Finally, it prevents torture from being used in the investigative process to force the suspect to plead guilty to a crime.

The Ninth Amendment

“The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people (“The bill of,” 1789).”

The Ninth Amendment states that not all the rights of people are defined in the document, and that if they are not, or they are not defined in the Constitution, they still cannot be infringed upon.

The Tenth Amendment

“The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people (“The bill of,” 1789).”

The last amendment, the tenth, states that political or legislative powers not given to the federal government, or powers prohibited in the federal government, belong then to the State governments or to the people of the U.S.

These Amendments are not the only amendments to the United States Constitution. There are twenty-seven total amendments that have been ratified, or made official. There have been others that have been suggested, but not made official by the states. These first ten are the most important to know, especially for those planning to become citizens. For those who are now officially citizens of the United States of America it is important to know the rights they have as residents.

Renting Apartments & Your Rights

If you or someone you know is affected by the following, or has any questions or concerns, please call your local Burmese American Community Institute (BACI) at (317)731-5537 or email info@baci-indy.org, or call the Chin Community of Indiana (CCI) at (317)300-1078 or email chincenter@outlook.com

According to the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), over two million individuals experience housing discrimination every year, but less than one percent of cases are reported. Most people are unaware they experience housing discrimination because most renters and homebuyers do not completely understand their rights. A common issue is that homeowners or apartment tenants are overcharged when moving out of their housing and are asked to pay for damages that never occurred.

Overcharging for Damages

According to the Center Township of Marion County, landlords are not allowed to charge tenants for general wear and tear of the housing. Upon moving, tenants are expected to leave their housing in a clean condition as it was when moving in. A landlord may also not keep any portion of a damage or security deposit unless back rent is due or there is proof of damages to the property. Some or all of the deposit can be kept if housing requires thorough cleaning or damages are in need of repair.

To prevent any false claims of damages, go over the property inspection with your landlord when moving out. This ensures that issues can be addressed immediately. You may also want to take photos and make note of any damage present when moving in as well, so that you have proof that it was not caused by you if the landlord tries to charge you upon moving out.

Fair Housing

According to HUD, the Fair Housing Act ensures no individual is refused housing based on race, sex, religion, nationality, or disability. Age, sexual orientation, and military service veteran status is only included in the Fair Housing Act in Indianapolis and Marion County.

Equal Housing Act

According to HUD, under the Fair Housing Act, the following are illegal if they are only applied to a specific individual or group instead of all potential tenants:

- Refuse to rent or sell housing
- Refuse to negotiate for housing
- Make housing unavailable
- Set different terms, conditions, or privileges for sale or rental
- Falsely deny that housing is available for inspection, sale or rental
- Refuse to make reasonable accommodations in rules or services if necessary for a disabled person to use the housing
- Threaten or interfere with anyone making a fair housing complaint
- Refuse to provide municipal services, property insurance or hazard insurance for dwellings, or providing such services or insurance differently

Renting Apartments & Your Rights

Take Action

If you or someone you know has experienced housing discrimination, please file a complaint at a local HUD. Remember to include:

- Your name and address
- Name and address of the individual you are filing a complaint against
- The address of housing that is involved
- A brief description of the events that caused you to feel discriminated against
- A date of when the discrimination occurred

To find a local HUD office, visit HUD.gov, or call 1-800-669-9777.

National Fair Housing Alliance

The National Fair Housing Alliance is an organization that works to eliminate housing discrimination and provide equal housing through education, advocacy, outreach, membership services, public policy initiatives, and enforcement. This organization offers workshops, conferences, and collects data in order to eliminate as much housing discrimination as they can. To become involved or remain up to date on housing discrimination policies, visit nationalfairhousing.org.

Help

If you or someone you know has been treated unfairly by a landlord, contact the BACI center to speak to a civil attorney. They can help verify that discrimination took place. Call the BACI center at (317)731-5537 or email at info@baci-indy.org.

You may also contact the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI) if you feel that you or another person faces housing discrimination. FHCCI is located at 615 N. Alabama Street, Suite 426, Indianapolis, IN 46204. They can help figure if discrimination took place. Call toll-free: 855-270-7280 Relay: 711 or tel: (317) 644-0673 or email: info@fhcci.org

Tips for renting apartments and your rights:

Landlords are not allowed to charge tenants for general wear and tear.

When moving out of a rented living space, leave it as clean as it was when you moved in.

The Fair Housing Act ensures that no individual is refused housing based on race, sex, religion, nationality, or disability.

Workplace Etiquette & Your Rights

According to Columbia University Center for Career Education, how an employee acts in the business setting is very important. It is important to know who fellow employees are and to treat them with respect. Returning phone calls and emails promptly and professionally, staying alert, and always being punctual are also important when making a good impression.

According to the Houston Chronicle, how an individual acts at a workplace varies based upon the culture of the business. Some businesses, like Google, have very open, carefree environments but other businesses have quiet, subdued atmospheres, such as an office complex. In all settings it is important to be kind and courteous to coworkers and to show respect to everyone.

If any conflict ever arises in the workplace, first talk to the individual it is concerning. Some issues are just misunderstandings and talking to the individual will help resolve the conflict. If the problem does not improve, approach the supervisor. If the situation does not get better after the supervisor has helped, continue following the chain of command. If the issue is with a supervisor, meeting with their boss or a representative in the human resources department can help (Mediation of Workplace Disputes).

Affirmative Action

Affirmative action, according to the Cornell University Law School, is defined as:

Employment programs required by federal statutes and regulations designed to remedy discriminatory practices in hiring minority group members; i.e., positive steps designed to eliminate existing and continuing discrimination, to remedy lingering effects of past discrimination, and to create systems and procedures to prevent future discrimination; commonly based on population percentages of minority groups in a particular area. Factors considered are race, color, sex, creed, and age.

In short, affirmative action means businesses cannot discriminate against individuals based upon race, ethnicity, gender, or religion. The percentage of workers from minority groups must match those percentages of the community that the company is based in. Companies cannot hire an individual based on qualifications related to race, gender, or religion.

Sexual Harassment

According to the Indiana State Personnel Department, sexual harassment is defined as "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual;
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment."

The law does not prohibit teasing or offhand comments, but it is problematic when these become frequent and/or so severe that the workplace environment becomes hostile or offensive and when the results end with the employee being fired or demoted

Workplace Etiquette & Your Rights

(Equal Employment Opportunity Commission).

It is important to remember that the harasser can be male or female and can be harassing someone of the same or opposite gender.

If someone has been sexually harassed by a supervisor, coworker, client or other individual, they should report these actions by notifying a supervisor immediately. If it is a supervisor that the claims are being filed against, then go to the department head or to the human resources department. The consequences of an individual who harasses someone could include job termination and legal charges.

Rights when Terminating Employment

According to Nolo, a website that provides legal information, most companies do not have to give employees a severance package that have been laid off or fired. Some states require companies to do this but many do not. A severance package can include continuation of insurance and pay for a limited amount of time, a letter of recommendation, and services for finding another job such as counseling or training.

If an employee quits, then the final paycheck will be sent to them on the next payday. If an employer fires an employee, then the company will either give their ex-employees the paycheck immediately or within a certain amount of time. This is dependent upon state laws. In Indiana, employers must provide the paycheck on or before the final pay period, states the Indiana Government website.

When an employee quits or is fired they may receive extended insurance coverage from the company. Employers must follow the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). This act states that employers must provide employees with the company's group insurance coverage for 18 months (Nolo).

Tips for workplace etiquette and your rights:

If conflict arises in the workplace, discuss first with the individual the conflict is concerning.

If issues persist after discussing with a superior, follow the chain of command until resolution is achieved.

Do not make sexual jokes or innuendoes in the workplace, and report if someone makes innuendoes toward you.

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A resource provided to you by the Burmese American Community Institute.

“We are pleased that the community guide book is now ready for our community. We understand the importance of learning to adjust to our new community in Indianapolis. This community guide book may not cover everything in detail but it covers most of the concerns and issues that our community commonly faces. I strongly believe that this community guide book will be a useful tool to learn the norms, practices, rules and regulations, and laws of this land. I, therefore, encourage every Chin Community member to read it.”

San Hlei Thang, President, Chin Community of Indiana



“Indiana is home to refugees from all over the world. Our office partners with community organizations like BACI to make the resettlement processes seamless for you. Together, we build a stronger Indiana and help you and your family towards self-sufficiency. This community guidebook will play an important role in successful integration into this community.”

Matthew P. Schomburg, Indiana State Refugee Coordinator

“Through strong leadership by and collaboration among newcomer and receiving groups, immigrant/community integration holds the potential to create a vibrant, cohesive community. As an intentional effort, this integration engages and can transformation community members, reaping shared benefits and creating a new whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.”

Ralph Taylor, Welcoming Indianapolis