FOR THE PARTNER AGENCIES OF DRESS FOR SUCCESS SACRAMENTO

REFERRAL AGENCY MANUAL

This is **NOT** merely a Guidebook nor Instruction Manual...

This is a “**WORKING**” Book

Make it “**work**” for

- **your clients** who will benefit from Dress for Success services
- **your colleagues** who may not know about Dress for Success
- **you** as a representative of a partner agency

Pass this book around among colleagues. Make copies.
Dress for Success Sacramento is very pleased to have you as a new referral agency and we look forward to a long, mutually beneficial relationship.

This manual is designed to help you function effectively as a referral agency of Dress for Success Sacramento. We appreciate your attention and adherence to our policies and procedures. Please make copies of this manual for any contacts at your agency who will be referring clients to Dress for Success Sacramento.

**LOCATION**

1600 Sacramento Inn Way Suite 135
Sacramento, CA 95815

**Website:**
http://sacramento.dressforsuccess.org

**Hours:**
Suitings are by Appointment Only. No exceptions

**Phone:**
916-243-1282

**Email:**
sacramento@dressforsuccess.org

**Point of Contact:**
Cheryel Davis
Project Assistant
Mission:
The mission of Dress for Success is to empower women to achieve economic independence by providing professional attire, a network of support and the career development tools to help women thrive in work and in life.

Who are Partner Agencies:
Nonprofit or government agencies and some churches in Sacramento and surrounding counties who have been approved by Dress for Success Sacramento.

Programs:
The next page contains brief descriptions of all Dress for Success Sacramento programs. Call to talk with Cheryel if you have a client with special circumstances and you believe would benefit from a specific program but have not followed the usual route of services.

All Services and Programs are FREE to clients and typically at no cost to the partner agencies.*

Services and Programs:
All services and programs are free to clients and typically at no cost to the partner agencies. * See Administrative Fee
**ADMINISTRATIVE FEE**

There is a $200 Administrative fee to become a referral partner. This fee can often be waived, as we understand that some of our referral partners are operating with little capacity.

If you cannot afford this fee, please submit a request to sacramento@dressforsuccess.org and ask that it be waived.

**Fee for Service:** For City and County Social Service Programs and/or Human Assistance Programs that are funded by State, Federal, and/or Philanthropic sources, we charge a fee for service per client. Please contact us to discuss further.

**How to Pay Your Administrative Fee:**
Please make checks payable to: Dress for Success Sacramento and remit to 1600 Sacramento Inn Way Suite 135, Sacramento, CA 95815

**Modes of Transportation for Getting to Dress for Success Sacramento**

- **Bus:** Regional Transit. The bus stop for our location is now limited to the Sears Stop at Arden Fair Mall. It is approximately a 10 – 15 minute walk from Sears to our building. Please plan accordingly or arrange for a RideShare
- **Car:** Check mapquest.com for the best route.
- **Parking:** Available in front of building
SO HOW DO YOU FIT INTO THIS?

As our contact, your main duties involve the screening and scheduling of clients who come to Dress for Success Sacramento to receive professional attire and other services. Dress for Success Sacramento does not interact directly with the women in scheduling appointments. We work with them in the office, but otherwise, you are the primary link between Dress for Success Sacramento and the women we serve. So how exactly does this process work? The following steps outline the typical process for an interview or employment-suiting appointment, which also includes our Career Center services. Women are eligible for an interview suitting when they have at least one interview confirmed, and they are eligible for an employment suitting when they have landed a job.

INTERVIEW SUITING/CAREER CENTER

1.) Make sure that the prospective client has undergone thorough job training and has a concrete interview date and time scheduled. This is especially important if your organization does not offer its own job-readiness program but refers its women to an outside training program. Dress for Success Sacramento wants to suit women who are job ready, and it is your responsibility as a referral agency contact to screen the women you refer to us.

2.) Complete a copy of the Client Referral Form and email it to us at least three days in advance of the appointment.

3.) Give a copy of the referral sheet to the client and keep a copy at your agency. The client MUST bring the referral sheet with her when she arrives for her suitting. There is no guarantee we will suit her if she does not have this form. She must also bring a copy of her resume.

4.) Remind the client the day before the date of her suitting. If she cannot make the scheduled time, contact us to re-schedule. If a client does not arrive for her appointment, we take note of which agency referred her. If your agency repeatedly produces no-shows, we reserve the right to re-voke membership. Anytime a client does not show, it takes limited spaces away from someone else.

5.) Make sure the client arrives alone and on time. If she is more than 15 minutes early, we will ask her to return at her scheduled time, and if she is over 10 minutes late we will not serve her that day. Please stress this to your clients. Also make sure clients know that the only clothing item we guarantee is a suit. If we have shoes and accessories appropriate to the suit, we will gladly give them to your clients, but our supply is contingent upon our donations. We also require that each interview suitting client meet with volunteers in our Career Center during her first appointment. They will review her resume and conduct a
brief mock interview. This ensures that she is completely prepared and confident for her interview.

6.) Follow up with your client after the appointment to make sure that her experience ran smoothly. If there is relevant feedback, whether positive or negative, please let us know!

7.) Make sure the client contacts you after the interview and notifies you if she has received a job. After she is hired, she can visit Dress for Success Sacramento for a second suit and separates to build an appropriate wardrobe for the workforce. During the employment suiting, clients are also invited to join our Professional Women’s Group and other employment retention programs. If she does not immediately secure a job, she can return to Dress for Success Sacramento for our Career Workshops, Coaching, and Mentoring Services.

EMPLOYMENT SUITING

1.) Once your client has received a job, or if she already has a job but never came in for an interview suit, schedule an employment suiting for her. If she never had an interview suiting, she can still come to Dress for Success Sacramento for an “employment suiting” if she is currently employed.

2.) The process is the same for the employment suiting as it is for the interview suiting, so please follow the steps in the preceding section. It is vital to remember to schedule the client for this suiting and not to let her slip through the cracks.

3.) Before your clients go to their employment suiting, be sure to remind them that they are eligible to take advantage of our workforce retention and mentoring programs. Through this program, women receive support, advice, additional clothing, and access to our mentoring program. You can find more information about these services in this packet.

4.) All suiting’s are done with a Dress for Success Sacramento stylist who typically pulls clothing in advance for clients and works with them to select work appropriate and body appropriate fashions. We are not a traditional clothing closet. We have more of a “Macy’s by Appointment Type” of process.
THE CLIENTS

The clients are the most important part of Dress for Success Sacramento. They are the reason we exist. So what do we provide for our clients and what do we expect from them in return?

POLICIES

• **Clients must be on time.** We understand that trains may be slow or people may get lost or babysitters can be late, but clients should give themselves extra time to allow for unforeseen delays. We think of client appointments at Dress for Success Sacramento as rehearsals for their interviews, and lateness sends a damaging message to potential employers. If a client is five minutes late we will most likely see her, but if she is 15 minutes late she must leave and you must call us to reschedule her appointment. Please remind clients that if they get lost, the Client Referral Sheet has directions to Dress for Success Sacramento on it.

• **Clients may not bring any guests.** No siblings, friends, husbands, pets, and especially no children. Even if a babysitter or caretaker cancels, we cannot allow children in the office for liability purposes. If the client brings any sort of guest, we will not see her unless she has a disability that requires outside assistance and you have notified us in advance.

• **Clients must present a professional attitude.** Cursing, weeping, giddiness or negativity indicates a lack of readiness to enter the workforce and retain a job. If we see a client who we do not think is job-ready, we will contact you. But if you consistently refer women who are not employable, we have the right to reassess your membership.

• **Remind your client that this appointment is practice for her job interview and to act accordingly.** If she cannot follow the above guidelines, she likely needs additional training and preparation before commencing job interviews.
WHAT DOES SHE RECEIVE?

FIRST VISIT
For her interview, the only item we guarantee is a suit. Rest assured that we only provide suits in excellent condition, whether they are gently worn or new. If we have accessories, we will gladly offer them as long as they complement the suit.

SECOND VISIT
After she has received a job, a client may be referred for the first or second time. For this employment suiting, a client will receive separates (jackets, sweaters, skirts, slacks, accessories, etc.) to begin building her wardrobe. We do not give away a specific number of separates, as it depends on our stock and her size, but she will receive professional separates. Depending on the client’s job and the availability of her size, she may also receive a second suit. Please do not forget the employment suiting because it is the gateway to our valuable employment retention programs.

THE REFERRAL FORM
We have provided a sample Client Referral Form to assist you. On that form are numbers (#) that correspond to explanations below.

#1 We typically only schedule clients **Monday thru Thursday between the hours of 11am – 6pm by Appointment Only.** We can occasionally accommodate evening or weekend appointments for clients that have dire situations and cannot make a suiting during normal suiting hours.

#2 Please fill out the form yourself. Each agency is allowed up to two contacts and whoever fills out the form should put his/her own name. If we do not recognize the name on the form, we cannot accept the client. Do not let other people use your name.

#3 and #4 If the client has no telephone number or cannot put the address for a certain reason, use the agency’s phone number and address, but do not leave it blank.

#5 Make sure this part is filled out accurately. If the children do not live with the mother, make sure to note that. Do not leave this part blank. If the answer is “0,” check “none.”

#6 and #7 If neither you nor the client knows the exact shoe and suit size, please estimate and circle a size. Our personal shoppers are experienced and will be able to adjust sizing according to the client’s needs, but an estimated size (no more than two) must be indicated.

#8 and #9 Fill out this part for either suiting. If the client has an interview, put the company name and position for which they are applying. Also complete this for an employment suiting.
The name of the employer and the position must be filled out to the greatest specificity possible.

We have also included a blank copy of the form so you can make additional copies for your use when referring clients.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Can I schedule clients to receive a suit for a job fair or a temp job?** We encourage referral agencies to send clients to us who have actual job interviews scheduled. But we can make exceptions if you contact us in advance, and in rare cases we will accept those clients. In order to schedule clients who will be attending a job fair, you must contact name and e-mail/phone number.

**What if I have someone who needs to be suited tomorrow?** If a woman needs to be suited before the three-day notice, call before you email a referral. We will try to accommodate her, but with the volume of women we serve, we cannot guarantee an appointment unless the form is faxed three days in advance. In addition, Dress for Success Sacramento DOES NOT see clients the day of their interviews, so plan accordingly.

**What if the client has an emergency and can't make her appointment?** If you know that the client cannot make her appointment, let us know—then reschedule. If a client calls our office directly because she can’t make her time, we tell her to contact her agency to reschedule. Only an agency can reschedule a client. The client cannot change an appointment under any circumstances. Make sure your client is aware of this policy prior to her suiting.

**Can I schedule a client to be suited if she is attending a job-training program?** We only suit clients who have job interviews. We understand that some job-training programs require business casual attire, but our policy is to suit women ready for the workforce.

**My organization also serves men. Can you suit men or is there anywhere else that does?** Dress for Success Sacramento suits only women.

**My organization shares a client with another organization on the referral agency list. Who is responsible for her?** It is possible that your client may be affiliated with more than one agency, particularly if one agency sends its clients to another agency for job training. When referring the client, the organization that handled her case originally will remain responsible throughout the process. Make sure that both agencies are not referring the same client.

**WHAT ELSE IS INVOLVED**

**FREE CLOTHING PICKUPS**

Dress for Success Sacramento often receives clothing that we cannot use because of our strict guidelines. However, much of this clothing is in good condition. We know that many of our
referral agencies have their own clothing closets or give away clothing to their clients, and we would like to aid this process. If your organization accepts clothing and has the means to pick up the clothing from our office, please let us know.

PRESENTATIONS
As an additional service of Dress for Success Sacramento, we offer free “Image Presentations” to your clients. On request, we can come to your facility and teach your clients how to prepare for an interview, what to expect and what to do after the interview. These presentations are a great way to help individuals unfamiliar or out of touch with the interviewing process.

CONTACTS
We request that if possible, each organization have both a primary and a secondary contact for Dress for Success Sacramento.

This is to ensure consistency of services and referrals for our clients and a strong relationship between our organizations. If contact information (address, phone, email, fax) for your contacts changes, please let us know so we can update our database. If our contacts leave your agency or the contacts change, we require a letter on company letterhead, stating the new contact person and their information. Every contact, whether he/she is primary or secondary, must attend a partner program orientation before they can refer clients.

Our preferred method of communication is email, so your primary and secondary contacts should have regular access to email. We use email to inform referral agencies about upcoming events, policy changes and Dress for Success Sacramento news.

WHAT OTHER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES DO WE OFFER

Advocacy and Awareness
Our advocacy and awareness efforts were designed to give a voice to the silent issues that our clients face. We regularly host community conversations and panel discussions that promote thought provoking dialogue and action around the socio and social economic issues that affect the clients (and their families) that we serve.

Suiting Program
Our Suiting Program is the first of many steps in a client’s path towards self-sufficiency and the actualization of her professional goals. Once they have secured an interview, clients are referred to us from one of our local partner agencies. Once a client secures employment, she is invited to return to our offices, where she receives one week’s worth of office-appropriate clothing.

Workforce Readiness
Our Workforce Readiness Programs provide clients with career advancement, life-skills, and mentoring program designed to teach networking skills to improve job searches and careers. This Program presents an opportunity for participants to access to mentors, additional support
and the resources needed to secure meaningful employment. Clients will also have access to the following:

- **Career Center:** The Dress for Success Career Centers provide DFS clients with a safety net—and a competitive edge—while searching for new employment, vying for a promotion, or strategizing career advancement.
- **One-on-One Mentoring:** Clients are teamed with successful businesswomen in the community for guidance, support, and personal consultation on employment-related issues and career building, personal growth, workplace strategies, financial literacy, and interpersonal relations.

**Women’s Reentry Initiative**
This Program was designed to address the needs of formerly incarcerated (nonviolent offender) women and girls. This Program will address the holistic needs of women and girls to position them to become their best selves and reduce their likelihood of returning to prison. This Program will connect clients with and/or direct address mental health services, housing referrals, employment training, financial literacy, and direct job placement. Learn more about the Initiative by [Click Here](#).

Learn more about becoming a Women’s Reentry Success Ambassador by [Clicking Here](#).

**Young Women and Girls Initiative (YWGI)**
This Program was designed to impact the lives of young women and girls from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds and communities by promoting economic parity, quality health, education, high self-esteem, viable life-skills, and transformative mentoring; advancing the next generation of young women business leaders, community advocates, and entrepreneurs.
PARTNER AGENCY GUIDELINES

Partner Agencies determine if a client is qualified for services at Dress for Success Sacramento. Our core requirement is that the Partner Agency pre-qualify the client as “disadvantaged” and secondly, she is actively looking for employment. She does not have to have an interview scheduled.

The one exception to the referral requirement is for veterans. Women veterans or wives of veterans or wives of active duty military may self-refer. A valid military identification is required and they must be seeking employment.

Case Managers/Advocates/Counselors, please call Dress for Success Sacramento for the initial suitting. Please do not have the client call to make an appointment. When the case manager calls, the rate of appointments “kept” is much higher. An appointment made by phone with the client with you, is more efficient than if done by email. Please allow 24 business hours for email referral replies. Please allow 2 hours for an Interview/Career Assessment Appointment.

You may provide client with a copy of the Client Guidelines, Client Profile Form and Career Assessment prior to the appointment. Please ask them to read and sign before visiting Dress for Success, especially our Guidelines. These Guidelines should be clearly understood by both client and case manager. Forms are located in this “Working” book.

Please, provide an interpreter for non-English speaking or hearing impaired clients. Although we do not allow guests* to accompany the client, non-English speaking clients should be accompanied by an interpreter. We ask that the interpreter not interfere with the Dress for Success volunteer and the suitting process. Dress for Success reserves the right to reschedule clients that do not have an interpreter. We want this to be a positive experience for the client.

*Guests include girlfriends, spouse/boyfriend, children, mother, etc.

Notify Dress for Success if the client has particular emotional or physical issues that may require special attention. It is best to do so when scheduling the initial visit. This will enable us to appropriately accommodate each client’s needs and ensure that they are comfortable with our services and programs.

Please stress the importance of keeping appointments and being on time to your clients. All clients should arrive 30 minutes before their appointment time. This allows time for our volunteers to go over Dress for Success programs with clients and answer any questions or concerns that they might have. These few minutes extra helps create a more enjoyable experience for the client, especially those that might be unsure of what to expect.

We will notify the client’s case manager by phone after a client does not make two scheduled appointments. Volunteers call clients after the first and second no-show.

Updated January 2019
Client Guidelines

In order to receive the best possible service, please observe the following guide-lines when participating in any of the Dress for Success Sacramento programs.

All first-time clients must be referred by one of our approved partner agencies.

1. Dress for Success Sacramento is here to support you. Please afford the same etiquette, conduct and attitude during your appointment as you would with a potential employer at a job interview, including:
   - **Be prompt.** Should you need to reschedule your appointment or you anticipate being late (of more than 15 minutes), please call 916-243-1282 and advise Dress for Success Sacramento staff. Plan for your appointment to be approximately 2 hours.
   - **Be mindful of your time during the appointment.**
     There is another client waiting to be helped right after you. Work efficiently with your Image Consultant in order to be done on time.
   - **Please do not bring guests to your appointment.** This includes friends, children, spouse, sibling, partner, friend or other family members.
   - **Turn off your cell phone.** We need your undivided attention to make this a positive and productive experience for you.
   - **Please treat your Image Consultant with respect.** She is a volunteer (not an employee) who is donating her time and expertise to help you.

2. **Clients must try on ALL clothing for the Image Consultant to observe and determine proper fit and appropriateness.** Once you take items home, they cannot be returned or exchanged.

3. **Please maintain proper hygiene and wear panties.** Other clients will try on the same items of clothing you will be trying on.

4. **Please remember, we are not a retail store.** Our items are largely donated and our inventory may not reflect the latest media fashion trends. However, our over-all goal is to help you achieve a look that is nice, professional, appropriate and will help you feel confident and ready for your interview.

5. **Dress for Success Sacramento ensures client confidentiality and privacy.**

   Your personal information will never be discussed or shared without express permission.

   I, ________________________________, have read and agree to the Client Guidelines.

   (printed name)  
   ________________________________  ________________________________  
   (signature)  (date)

Updated January 2019
Career Assessment

Client Name: ___________________________________________ Date: ____________________

Describe any career guidance you have received through your referral agency. (Resume and cover letter writing, interview practice, etc.)
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________

How would you rate your ability to use a computer? (circle) Excellent* Good* Fair Poor No Skills
(*means you can use Microsoft Word and Excel and navigate the worldwide web efficiently and safely.)

What other kind of career guidance can we help you with?
_____ Resume writing  _____ Create a Cover Letter
_____ Online application help  _____ Job Search Assistance
_____ Interview practice (mock interview)  _____ Building Self-Confidence
_____ Discovering hidden talents and strengths  _____ Goal Setting
_____ Enrollment in a class for in-depth training in preparation for job interviews
_____ Other help needed:

What kind of job or promotion are you seeking?
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________

What challenges/barriers do you face in your job search or professional development?

What are your immediate goals?

Career Assessment by (volunteer name):
________________________________________________________

_____ Life/Job Coaching  _____ Women 2 Women  _____ Career Center
_____ Going Places Network  _____ Professional Women’s Group  _____ Goal Setting
_____ Computer Literacy Workshop  

Recommended Next Steps: ________________________________________________

Other Resources Provided or Recommended: __________________________________

Updated January 2019
Additional Observations? *(Record on back of this page)*