

Client Handbook

Residential Treatment Program for Adult Men

Welcome to the residential addiction treatment program at Addictions and Mental Health Services. Congratulations on your decision to take action to change your substance use. Many people have questions about what to expect and what is expected of them. The information in this handbook is provided to answer some of those questions and to offer an outline of the program rules and activities.

Addictions and Mental Health Services is a non-profit organization, governed by a Board of Directors, and funded primarily by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

The Residential Program contains content (educational) and discussion groups and is based on a cognitive/behavioral model. The sessions are designed to: increase understanding of your alcohol/drug abuse; provide an opportunity to discuss ideas with others; develop strategies to avoid and counter high risk situations; learn how to substitute alcohol/drug using activities with constructive and rewarding non-substance using activities. You will also be scheduled each week to meet individually with one of the Staff to discuss your progress. Finally, the merit of involvement with 12 step self-help groups is recognized and strongly encouraged and clients may opt to attend community 12 step meetings in the evenings.

There are typically more rules in a residential treatment program than most people are accustomed to but the rules are important for two reasons:

1. Practicality--it isn't easy for a group of strangers to live, eat, sleep and work the program together, especially when people are leaving and arriving each week. Most of the rules are necessary to run the program and residence in an orderly manner on a day-to-day basis. Successful communal living requires that everyone equally participates in tasks and activities and puts forth equal efforts.
2. Treatment related--one of the purposes of treatment is to assist a person to begin the transformation from chaos to order in his life. Prior to seeking treatment, the daily routine of many people lacked structure, responsibility and accountability. These components are critical in an orderly life. Practice following a strict routine, adhering to rules, being accountable to others, meeting standards and behavioural expectations will reduce personal chaos, re-introduce these critical components and help a person make the transition to order.

Following is an outline of rules and procedures that are listed in alphabetical order for your convenience.

Assigned Chores:

- Assignment of daily chores ensures that all clients share the work created by communal living and helps maintain the house in a clean and orderly manner. It can also help the client to develop or re-develop a sense of responsibility and accountability to others and help re-awaken the feeling of satisfaction for a job well done.
- Chores are randomly assigned. People typically stay on a particular chore for a week and change to another chore the following weeks.
- Two people are assigned as "Kitchen Helpers" per day. Depending on how many people are currently in residence, a person will be help in the kitchen once or twice per week. This chore is related to washing dishes and general cleaning in the kitchen and it does not involve food preparation or cooking. On the days a person is a Kitchen Helper, he is not expected to also complete his other assigned chore.

- **Important Note:** Without exception, Kitchen Helpers are expected to work together at all times and to remain together until the tasks are completed. For example, it is not permissible for one person to start on the tasks while the other is outside having a short break or one person to finish the tasks while the other has left to do something else. If Staff notice that a Kitchen Helper is working alone, for any reason or any amount of time, that person will be requested to cease work on the tasks until the other Kitchen Helper returns to the area. This rule ensures that work is equally shared, prevents someone taking advantage of another's good nature and promotes personal responsibility and accountability to others.
- Two "Rovers" are assigned per week. The task of Rovers is to complete the assigned chore of the Kitchen Helpers each day.
- Written standards for chore completion are posted throughout the residence and program facility. Chores are checked by Staff against these standards and strict adherence is expected. If you have questions about expectations or how to complete a task, please ask Staff to provide clarification.
- Clients are also expected to keep their bedrooms clean and tidy at all times. Standards are posted in each bedroom. Bedrooms must be completed before A.M Assembly/Residence Meeting (Fridays) and are checked by Staff immediately after that meeting.
- Work on assigned chores may not start until after the morning meeting and after a person's bedroom has been checked by Staff. This prevents people having to re-do part of their chore because people have used the area (showers, sinks, etc.) before it is checked by Staff. The exception is the Kitchen Helper Chore, who may start the morning chore before the A.M. Assembly/Residence Meeting as long as they do so together. At a minimum, there is an expectation that the Dining Room tables be cleared and clean before the morning meeting.

Buddy System

- When off the property, a person must at all times be in the company of one or more other clients who are currently participating in the Residential Program. This provides support and safety, and promotes personal responsibility and accountability to others.
- People may not separate at any time, for any reason, and must be in eyesight of one another at all times. For example, during a trip to the Mall on personal time, you will be in violation of this rule if you go into one store while your "Buddy" goes into another. Or, if going downtown, one person stops at the Library while the other goes to the bank is a violation.
- Failing to honor the Buddy System is considered a serious violation of program expectations and will result in unplanned discharge for offenders.
- If you are abandoned by your Buddy while off the property, you can avoid also being discharged by immediately phoning Staff and returning to the residence.

Community Service

- Community Service is a regularly scheduled component of the residential treatment program. Often people seeking treatment for substance use problems have difficulty developing alternate activities that do not involve alcohol and/or drug use. Community service is one way to constructively use free time. In addition, volunteer work can provide a profound sense of satisfaction and contribution, and helps increase feelings of self-worth.
- The rewards of volunteering benefit the person and the community. Addictions & Mental Health Services has volunteer placements at not for profit agencies in the community and clients attend one of these placements for about 2 hours each week. This is followed by a brief group to debrief and discuss the experience.

Dress Code & Footwear

- Casual, comfortable clothing that is appropriate to season and weather is encouraged.
- Shirts must be worn in the downstairs of the residence, in the program facility and when off property.
- No outdoor footwear may be worn in the residence. This is important to reduce chore labor and to maintain a clean environment. Slippers or socks are the only footwear permitted in the residence. The only exception to this rule is that Kitchen Helpers may wear outdoor footwear while completing kitchen chore because the floor often gets wet around the sinks and sterilizer.
- There are racks in the Mud Room for indoor and outdoor footwear for your convenience when switching footwear.
- Ball caps, hats or any type of head covering may not be worn at the Dining Room table during meals or in the Program Facility (group room).
- Articles of clothing or hats are not permitted that, through words or pictures: advertises alcohol, glorifies substance use of any type, demeans men or women, contains sexual or racial slurs or potentially offensive words or are sexually explicit.

Electronic Devices

- No cell phones or other electronics, in particular devices that are 3 or 4G or Wi-Fi capable, may be kept by clients. If brought to the Residential Program, it must be declared and stored in the Staff Office. People may have access to these devices during Personal Time on Saturdays.

Energy Conservation

Addictions and Mental Health Services is committed to conserving energy and, when practical, attempting to reduce overhead costs related to the use of electricity. The residence is an older building, heated by boilers and cooled by separate systems, so it is difficult to maintain a uniform temperature throughout.

- In the heating season, it is necessary to keep the downstairs areas at a maximum of 70 degrees to keep the bedrooms from being overly warm (because warm air rises). Some clients will be more comfortable wearing a sweater when downstairs.
- The main air conditioning unit upstairs is in the attic and ducts run only to the client bedrooms but the thermostat is in the hall. In the cooling season, the bedrooms are often the coolest area of the residence.
- Please do not open bedroom windows when the heating or cooling systems are operating. Opening the bedroom door typically helps solve the problem of a bedroom that is too hot or too cold, but do not hesitate to ask for more or less bedding if the temperature in the bedroom does not suit your level of comfort.
- Please prop the bedroom door open during the day to assist in the movement and distribution of warm or cool air.
- The last person leaving any room (shower, bedroom, living room, etc.) is expected to turn off the light.

Fire Procedures

- Staff is in charge in the case of fire or fire drill.
- In case of fire, clients should notify Staff if needed and go to the nearest exit to leave the building as quickly as possible.
- Re-assemble on the sidewalk across from the residence and wait for further instructions from Staff.
- There is a reminder about this procedure during the Residence Meeting on Friday morning.

Food & Meals

- Clients are expected to be in attendance in the Dining Room for all scheduled meals.
- Breakfast is self-serve and must be completed before 8:00 a.m.
- Punctuality for scheduled meals is a personal responsibility. If a person is late, his meal will only be kept in the Serving Window until the meal ends and then the Chef will dispose of it.
- Special diets cannot be accommodated. Still, allowances will be made when possible and when the Chef is informed prior to serving. For example, a vegetarian can be served extra vegetables or other side dishes instead of meat.
- The meal portions are extremely generous. In fact, it is not uncommon for people to request half portions. Still, you may not keep the “leftover” food from your plate. Food left on your plate at the end of a meal must be disposed of in a designated container or garbage can.
- Requests for second helpings are not accommodated due to the generous portion size but also because of strict controls on food inventories and budget and to avoid waste.
- People may not share their meal or parts of it with another person. Health rules dictate that once the meal has been plated by the Chef, the food may only be consumed by the person to whom it is served.
- The daily meals are posted. Advise the Chef before serving if you wish an adjustment to your plate. For example, prefer to have the peas, half portion, no gravy, etc.
- Personal snacks and beverages are permitted if in unopened containers/packages when brought on to the property (and shown to Staff at Sign In). Note, however, that snacks and beverages may **only** be stored in a person’s assigned bedroom. If found in other areas, it will be confiscated by Staff.
- Meals or any other type of food (including take-out but excluding snack food) may not be brought on to or consumed on the property.
- Beverages are permitted in the group room but no food or snacks.
- Anything in the Dining Room refrigerator may be consumed by clients. Also, a variety of fruit is always available. Clients are permitted to make light meal/snacks (e.g. toast, peanut butter sandwich, other food in the Dining Room refrigerator, etc.). This is not permitted between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Gambling

- It is not uncommon for some people with substance use problems to have difficulties with problematic gambling.
- In order to maintain a safe and comfortable environment for everyone, clients are not permitted to engage in any type of gambling activities while at Addictions and Mental Health Services. Examples, purchasing lottery tickets including scratch and Pro-Line or wagering on in-house activities (cards, board games, etc.) or televised sporting events.

Good Neighbor Policy

- The organization’s residential facility is located in a residential area and we enjoy a respectful and supportive relationship with our neighbors and expect client cooperation to help us maintain the relationship.
- Clients are asked to please monitor the volume and content of conversations when leaving or returning to the residence.
- Do not loiter (or smoke) in front of the building or on the sidewalks.

Group Room (Program Facility) Expectations

- Clients are responsible to be on time for all group sessions.
- Distracting/disruptive behavior will be cautioned once and then the person(s) will be asked to “step out” of the group and wait at the dining room table.
- People in the group sessions are often enthusiastic participants. To ensure everyone has equal opportunity to speak and to maintain a respectful environment, clients wishing to contribute will raise his hand and will be addressed by the group leader in sequence.
- A person can only speak for himself and be responsible for his own thoughts, feelings, behavior and opinions. People will be encouraged to use “I” statements.

Laundry

- Clients may use the residence’s laundry facilities. To accommodate everyone, there is a limit of one load per week. It may be helpful to know that roommates often team up and do one shared white and one shared dark load between them.
- A form is posted weekly on the Client Bulletin Board (by the Staff Office) people may sign up for available time slots. There is a Laundromat nearby that people can use on Thursdays personal time (with a Buddy), if wished.
- All residence laundry (bedding, towels, etc.) is washed by Staff. Please don’t include it in your personal laundry.

Medication

- Any medication, including over-the-counter medication/preparation and vitamins, must be handed in to Staff upon admission and at other times it is obtained. For example, if an anti-biotic was obtained at the Clinic during treatment. This ensures safety for all.
- Medication is counted by Staff, recorded in the client file and stored in a cabinet in the Staff Office.
- Staff is not permitted to dispense medication. Therefore, medication is self-dispensed (by the person) using a very precise procedure called Controlled Access.
- Controlled Access refers to the process of giving a person access to his medication, observing him take the medication and then both people—client and Staff—signing the date, times and their initials on a form in the Medication Log.
- You are responsible to access your medications at the prescribed times. Staff does not monitor access and do not provide reminders to people to take their medication.
- Midnight shift workers are not permitted to provide Controlled Access to person’s medication or to any over-the-counter preparations. If a person needs their medication before the Staff Office reopens after Day Shift arrives (8:15 a.m.), for example insulin before eating breakfast, individual arrangements for access will be made.

Personal Hygiene

- Clients are expected to maintain appropriate personal hygiene at all times. This includes:
 - Daily shower
 - Shaving (unless admitted with beard or moustache)

- Brushed teeth
- Clean clothes
- While in the treatment program, clients are not permitted to shave their head unless it is their typical style and they have brought a personal shaver.
- For health & safety reasons, new piercings, tattoos, etc. are also not permitted during a client's stay in the treatment facility.

Personal Time

- Personal Time is Thursday from noon to 3:45 p.m. Clients may leave the property (with a Buddy or Buddies) to run personal errands or participate in acceptable activities (discuss with Staff if unsure) or simply relax on the property.
- Any time in any establishment in which the sale of alcohol is a prominent activity is prohibited, including pool halls in this community.
- The no visiting or visitors policy (See the Visiting/Visitors section below) during the 21 day program is in effect during personal time.

Program & Behavioural Expectations

People attending the residential treatment program are expected to:

- Participate in the program in a constructive and positive manner. Someone exhibiting significant negativity, complaining about program expectations or acting in manners that suggest or indicate that he does not want to be in the program interferes with the therapeutic environment. In such cases, Staff will have a conversation with the person and if the behavior continues, he will be asked to leave.
- Tolerate different opinions and provide appropriate support for others.
- Respect the right of confidentiality of others.
- Refrain from any form of physical or verbal act or threat of aggression and from inappropriate expressions of anger, e.g. yell, slam doors, throw things, etc.
- Not use any form of derogatory words and/or actions (including jokes) related to race, sexual orientation, gender, religion, etc.
- Respect each other, the Staff, the property and the facility's neighbors.
- Avoid name-calling in any form, including jokes. Also, practical jokes are a form of passive aggressive behaviour and are not tolerated.
- Refrain from the glorification of past substance use, that is "War Stories." Definition of "war stories" – any story or anecdote that glorifies past use, that is, refers to past use in a humorous or entertaining manner or remembrances of the good times, but not the negative.
- Maintain complete focus on treatment at all times and to minimize or eliminate external distractions or disruptions. Experience indicates that people who are able to strictly focus are more satisfied with their treatment experience.
- Maintain complete abstinence from all substances (exception-medications stored in Staff Office) for the duration of the treatment program.
- Lending or borrowing items (cigarettes, money, phone cards, etc.) is strictly prohibited. Considerable experience indicates that doing either is a major source of resentment and conflict in a temporary communal living situation. In addition, each person is expected to be able to support his personal needs in the treatment program and many people have limited means.

Program participants may expect Staff to:

- Do their jobs well and consistently apply rules and standards.
- Treat people with courtesy and respect.
- Provide feedback about focus, participation, impressions, behaviours and attitudes.

Punctuality

- Punctuality for all scheduled activities (group sessions, meetings, individual sessions, meals, etc.) is a program expectation that is monitored with strict adherence.
- The commitment to punctuality demonstrates personal responsibility and accountability to others. Lack of punctuality is disruptive to others involved in the activity and is disrespectful.

Reasons for Unplanned Discharge:

- Failure to fulfill responsibilities and expectations of the program.
- Threats or acts of aggression towards other people (including Staff) or physical violence in any form directed at persons or objects.
- Possession of prescribed medication, over-the-counter medication, illicit drugs or alcohol. The prohibition includes vitamins, supplements, herbal preparations, ointments, etc. All of these products must be declared to Staff upon admission or thereafter.
- **Suspicion** of substance use or possession of same.
- Remaining in the company of a client who uses substances during treatment.
- Any violation (while in treatment) of the Criminal Code of Canada.
- Smoking in the residence.
- Failure to be accountable for whereabouts and actions, which is most notably a violation of the Buddy System.

Residence and Property Expectations:

- Bedrooms are off limits between 8:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., except to briefly retrieve or return items and during personal time on Thursday afternoons.
- No showers between 8:15 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. or after 11:00 p.m.
- Access to the kitchen areas is permitted before 8:00 a.m. (to get breakfast) and from 6:00 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. In respect of the Chef's small work area, only Kitchen Helpers and Staff are permitted in the kitchen at other times. It is recognized, however, that some assigned chores require people to walk through the area.
- The south side of the property is reserved for the privacy of Staff on breaks. Your respect for their privacy is very much appreciated.
- In accordance with Addictions and Mental Health Services "good neighbor policy" no-one is permitted to stand or sit or smoke cigarettes in the front areas on the house (porch, side walk or driveway). Clients are also asked to please be mindful of the content and volume of conversations when leaving or returning to the house.
- Personal music players (that are not 3 or 4G or Wi-Fi capable) with headphones may be used anywhere on the property except group room and dining room table.
- Clients are not permitted in each other's bedrooms for any reason. Also, it is strongly suggested that

valuables, money, cigarettes or identification are not left unattended in bedrooms. Such items should be carried on your person or stored in the locker provided. The organization is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

- Use of the pay telephone is permitted between 6:00 a.m. -- 11:00 p.m., except during meals and activities.

Sign-In/Sign-Out Book

- Clients leaving or returning to the residence must sign in and out in a designated book (at the Staff Office) and must include the time of departure and the specific destination.
- The procedure of signing in and out is important for two reasons: 1) it helps Staff monitor the whereabouts of clients; and, 2) in case of fire, it is the mechanism by which the Staff determines an accurate head count. Please also note that a client is not permitted to sign in or out for another client.

Smoking Areas

- Cigarette smoking is permitted in designated areas. This area includes the large Client deck area beside the Program Facility and the area leading from the deck to the gate to the front yard.
- Smoking is strictly prohibited in any building, on the driveway, any porches and on the sidewalk in front of the residence.
- Please use provided receptacles to dispose of cigarette butts.
- Smoking is permitted when group sessions or other scheduled activities are not in session, on scheduled breaks, and until 11:00 p.m. every evening. Smoking is not permitted between 11:00 p.m. and midnight. In keeping with the organization's "Good Neighbor Policy" only one person at a time may access the smoking area after midnight and until 6:00 a.m.
- It is an expectation that all clients will keep their volume to an acceptable level and only engage in conversation that is appropriate and free of profanities.

Substance Use

- A client may not under any circumstances or for any reason have in his possession or use substances or unapproved medications (prescribed or over-the-counter preparations) while in the program.
- Over-the-counter medications or preparations for legitimate health ailments may be purchased with express Staff pre-knowledge and approval during a person's stay. Any client who remains in the company of a client he knows has used or possesses substances or medications will also be discharged unless he has taken immediate action to remove himself from the situation (in the event it occurs off-site, the non-violating client is expected to return immediately to the residence, even if it requires he return unaccompanied)
- The use or possession of substances by a client in the presence of others in the treatment program is not a symptom of his addictions. It is, however, a clear demonstration of his disrespect for himself, you, your reasons for attending treatment, the other clients and the program. Further, it is disruptive and distracting and pulls the focus from concentration on treatment. Be assured that swift and decisive action will be taken to maintain the therapeutic environment and the safety of other clients when Staff suspects someone is using or has used or is in possession of substances.
- It is important to remember that the "code of the street" does not apply in treatment facilities. Failing to acknowledge the use or possession of substances by others does not help you, the other clients, and certainly not the offender. It is expected that in treatment you will practice making decisions and

acting in ways that are ultimately in your best interests. This primarily involves, of course, learning strategies and techniques to help you better manage your life. While you are here, it may also mean not allowing another person to interfere with your treatment and your needs.

Visitors/Visiting

- Clients are not permitted to have visitors or to visit with anyone during their stay in the facility, including during periods of personal time on Thursday and, if applicable, at 12 Step Meetings.
- This rule helps a person to maintain a focus on treatment and minimize external distractions. It can also, in some cases, provide a needed break when relationships have been strained.
- It is also important because not all relationships are supportive and it can help reduce stress.

May 2016