



**Freedom Homes**

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# North Country Freedom Homes Community Residential Services

## Resident Handbook 2015

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# North Country Freedom Homes, Inc. Resident Handbook

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**North Country Freedom Homes, Inc.  
Resident Handbook**

# North Country Freedom Homes, Inc.

## Resident Handbook

### Preface

The purpose of resident handbook is provide information on how the Community Residential Services (CRS) program operates. This information includes an overview of the program rules, the point system, expectations for residents seeking services and other important information.

This document is not intended to cover every detail of an issue and/or item discussed, but it offers guidance.

### Mission Statement

North Country Freedom Homes, Inc. offers a clean, safe living environment for individuals seeking to maintain abstinence from alcohol/other mood altering chemicals and requires therapeutic support due to deficits in personal, social and/or vocational skills development.

### Foreword

NCFH provides whole person care to individuals seriously debilitated by chemical dependency.

NCFH recognize chemical dependency as a chronic and primary disease. If left untreated, it is both progressive and predictable in its devastation. NCFH believe with proper diagnosis, treatment and continual personal growth, chemical dependency can be arrested.

Although not affiliated with Smart Recovery, Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous or other 12-Step Programs, residents are strongly encouraged participate. NCFH believe that active participation in and the support offered by these programs is a vital part of the recovery process.

The program addresses basic physiological needs, information about alcohol and other substances, as well as teach the skills necessary to maintain an alcohol/drug free lifestyle.

The goal is to offer a program and atmosphere that will help develop the insights, attitudes, skills and knowledge necessary to continue growth in recovery regardless of the problem substance.

### Voluntary Admission

Admission to NCFH is on a voluntary basis. Regardless to your individual circumstances which may be motivating the need for seeking a residential program it remains a free choice of the individual. Circumstance may include legal difficulties, pending legal action, parole, probation, alternative to incarceration, homeless, marital difficulties etc. No matter what the status is with the legal system, Department of Social Services or other governmental agency, admission is voluntary. NCFH will only admit a client based upon their own free choice.

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### Tobacco-free

NCFH fully supports the OASAS regulations regarding tobacco-free treatment. From financial, health, recovery and relapse prevention perspectives the individual that stops using tobacco wins. Withdrawal from nicotine is hard.

NCFH offers support in in the following ways:

- Staff is always available to talk and offer support
- Nicotine patches, gum and throat lozenges are available
- Referrals are made to other programs or medical providers as available

Tobacco products and paraphernalia is viewed as contraband the same as alcohol or other drugs. If found these products will be confiscated and destroyed.

### Over the Counter Medications and Supplements

Residents may not possess any Over the Counter Medications (OTC's). NCFH cannot dispense any OTC's without either a written prescription or a standing order from a prescribing physician.

If you believe that you need to have these types of medications talk with your counselor. If you are prescribed a OTC you **cannot have any OTC's in your possession without the written approval of the Director of Services**. Any supplements used as a diet additive or similar products applies to these rules.

### Adult Materials

Pornographic tapes, discs etc. will be considered contraband and confiscated. How an item will be disposed of depends on what it is and what we believe is appropriate.

### Bigoted and/or Prejudicial Items

Anything that is determined to insinuate bigoted or prejudicial regardless of who or what is the target will be confiscated. Anything confiscated will not be returned.

If you have questions regarding this issue talk to your Counselor or the Residence Manager. If the material is not appropriate reasonable time will be granted to remove it from the property. In the interval it must be kept totally out of view. NCFH will not store the item(s). If you failed to remove the items in the agreed upon time it will be confiscated and destroyed.

### Religious Services

Spiritual growth is an important part of recovery and is strongly supported without requiring any particular path. If you wish to attend formal religious services you may.

Resident's may attend services whenever they wish as long as they have sufficient time to attend and return within times allowed by their current level and attendance does not conflict with other program obligations.

# North Country Freedom Homes, Inc. Resident Handbook

## Cell Phones and All Other Electronic Devices

NCFH is not responsible for loss, damage or theft of any cell phone or electronic device at any time whether in our possession or not.

**Having a cell phone or other allowable electronic device is at your own risk.**

**Use means any use including texting**

No cell phone or other **allowable** electronic device is to be used after 10:00 pm Sunday – Saturday including all holidays. Residents use of cell phones or other electronic devices, whether talking, texting, playing games, or on the internet puts others at a distance. If these rules are not followed the privilege of having a cell phone or other allowable electronic devices may be permanently removed.

Allowable electronic devices include iPod, MP3 players

- Residents are allowed to have their personal cell phone between the hours of 5:00 pm – 10:00 pm Monday - Friday
- Residents are allowed to have their personal cell phone between the hours of 8:00 am – 10:00 pm Saturday - Sunday
- Resident's may be pick up their personal cell phone at the earliest time convenient to staff after 5:00 pm. There are no exceptions.
- Residents must turn in their personal cell phone to the Resident Manager or designee by 10:00 pm every day of the week. There are no exceptions to these rules.
- If a resident refuses to turn in his cell phone at the required time he will loss all cell phone privileges for 30 days. If a resident violates this rule a second time he will loss all cell phone privileges for the duration of his stay. The cell phone will be kept by staff and returned when the resident goes on pass or is discharged.
- Residents are only allowed to possess one cell phone. If a resident is caught with an additional cell phone he will lose all cell phone privileges for 30 days. If a resident violates this rule a second time he will lose all cell phone privileges for the duration of his stay. The cell phone will be kept by staff and returned when the resident goes on pass or is discharged.
- Other allowable electronic devices will not be collected, but will follow the same time schedule allowed for cell phones. If a resident is caught using an allowable electronic devise during an unscheduled time he will loss those privileges for 30 days. If a resident violates this rule a second time he will lose those privileges for the duration of his stay. The electronic device will be kept by staff and returned when the resident goes on pass or is discharged.

### Cell Phone Courtesy

To respect others these rules are to be followed:

- No use of cell phones at meals.
- Use the phone in private.
- Use the phone quietly. Do not yell.
- No use of cell phones while in the van.
- When attending 12 step program meetings and in similar situations turn the phone off. Do not get up and leave a meeting to answer or use the phone. Do not text during a meeting.

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### Items Not Allowed

Any tobacco products  
Any clothing or fabric item that can't be put in a dryer on high heat  
Anything containing alcohol or any substance that may be abused  
Any health food supplements, liquids or powders to promote muscle growth etc.  
Any kind of energy drink

### Clothing

The amount of clothing and personal items you can have is limited. The clothing you are wearing at admission counts toward the total. There will be no substituting or mix and match

10 pairs of pants – a pair of shorts would be counted as one of the 10.  
10 shirts a suit coat is acceptable but would need to be dry cleaned at your expense before you would be able to access it. It would be counted as one of the 10 shirts.  
10 undershirts  
10 pair of boxers or briefs etc.  
10 pair of socks  
2 sets of sleepwear  
3 pairs of street shoes and 1 pair of slippers and some kind of shower foot ware.  
1 jacket or coat appropriate for the season  
1 hat or head covering  
1 set of gloves  
1 tie  
1 swimming suit

### Valuable Possessions

NCFH will not be responsible for loss or damage to personal property. Don't bring anything that is of high financial, sentimental or emotional value to you.

If circumstances require possession of more than pocket money or items of high value to you, NCFH may accept money or other items and hold them in safe keeping. A written receipt will be given for anything we accept for safekeeping. What is accepted for safekeeping is at the sole discretion of NCFH.

### Personal Possessions

The amount of personal possessions you bring should be quite limited

If circumstances require possession of more than pocket money or items of high value to you, NCFH may accept money or other items and hold them in safe keeping. A written receipt will be given for anything we accept for safekeeping. What are accepted for safekeeping is at the sole discretion of NCFH and are the only things we accept responsibility for.

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### Miscellaneous

Bedding, pillows, towels, wash cloths, fabrics etc. of any kind except those listed in the "You May Bring" section. We have bedding, towels and washcloths you may use while here.

- Stuffed toys, animals etc.
- Suitcases, other storage containers or items that can't be put through the dryer will be bagged and stored. Anything else that exceeds what you can bring will be bagged and stored. Access to stored items will be granted, on a day of our choosing, at the beginning of each of the 4 seasons. Because of limited space we would appreciate it if you wouldn't bring any of these unless you have no choice.

### Personal Hygiene Items

This is your choice as long as:

- they do not contain alcohol or are known to be abused by inhaling
- can fit, without stacking on 2 8 ½ x 11 side by side sheets of paper

### Food and beverages

Candy (gum is included) may be kept and consumed in your room as long as all of it can fit in a single gallon zip lock baggie.

A maximum of six 12 oz. soda or similar beverages may be kept in your room. Any energy drinks are not allowed. No beverage container may be opened or consumed in any bedroom. Failure to comply with these rules will result in losing the privilege.

### Admission Process

Upon arrival all possessions, except those approved, by staff will be placed in plastic bags and stored until they can be checked and then washed and dried. There is a bug policy that requires all your clothing to be washed and dried. Once completed items will be allowed in your room.

### When returning from an overnight pass

We require that you put all of the clothing in a plastic bag on return and go change. Add the clothes you have just removed to the others you brought back and wash and dry them. If it is late and it makes more sense to clean them in the morning give the bag to staff on duty. Wash and dry them immediately once you get them from staff.

### Safety and Security for Residents and Staff

The safety and security of residents, staff and the community are of high importance to NCFH.

- All security measures are intended to keep you safe.
- During the night staff will make rounds of the facility at random intervals but no less than once an hour. Staff may choose at their discretion to verify you are in your room.
- If someone is not in their room and cannot be quickly located the presence of all other residents will be verified in a manner appropriate to the situation. The Addictions Counselor will be advised immediately.



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### Contraband

#### What is Contraband

- Alcohol and any illicit substance. Violation of this may result in immediate discharge.
- Prescription drugs without a valid prescription and written permission from Director of Services.
- All Over the Counter medications unless you have written permission from the Residence Manager.
- Tobacco products of any kind (will be destroyed).
- Anything that will produce an open flame or actual use would require burning. For example a lighter, candle or incense.
- Anything that is a weapon or anything that could be used as a weapon that there is no justification for having. Violation of this may result in immediate discharge.
- Tools of any kind.

#### Search for Contraband

NCFH reserve the right to search property owned or leased by NCFH including individual rooms and vehicles at any time.

Individuals may be searched for contraband on demand. Any materials brought onto the property, this includes anything worn or carried by an individual may be searched.

The following actions are taken regularly.

- Staff will check the entire building including bedrooms on a daily basis.
- Each week at least one room will be searched on a random basis and in more depth than during the daily search.
- Searches will occur whenever staff believes that there is justification for a search.

#### Disposal of Contraband

Any time something is removed from a bedroom or taken from a resident a written receipt will be given. A decision regarding disposal of the contraband will be made and the resident given a copy of that information. If any of the items are to be returned to the resident a Contraband Receipt of Return will be completed and signed by the Resident at the time of the return.

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### What is expected of a Resident

1. A desire to change abstinence into growth in recovery.
2. The self-control to behave in a way that respects peers, staff and self.
3. A commitment to themselves, their peers and this program.
4. A determination to grow through hard and often emotionally painful work.

**This handbook provides information and guidance without any attempt to cover all possibilities.** Each rule supports a value consistent with living in ways consistent with good recovery. These values, ideals, or ideas are much more important than the specific rule because they create and support the atmosphere required for recovery.

*Some of the most important of these ideas are:*

1. Recovery requires abstinence in a drug and alcohol free environment.
2. Recovery requires serious self-examination.
3. Self-examination and growth require safety and an atmosphere of trust.
4. Trust cannot exist without respect for self and others.
5. Recovery requires effort, self-control and the change of many addictive values and the behaviors that support them.
6. Recovery requires a focus on self, but not to the extent that it hurts others.
7. No matter how difficult and damaging life has been in the past; a resident is responsible for both their attitudes and actions today.
8. Residents belong to a community and the health of the community is as important as the health of individual members.

NCFH expects residents to look beyond the exact wording of the handbook and behave according to the values it represents.

In addition the following are to be lived by. There are no specific consequences attached because each violation will be handled as appropriate by staff. This may mean that we use the situation as an opportunity to teach new skills, or decide that another response is appropriate.

1. All peers and all staff are to be treated with the same respect. This is to be at all times, in all situations and whether administrative staff is present or not.
2. Courtesy toward others is expected. Say "Please", "Thank you" and "You are welcome" etc.
3. Yelling and/or swearing at others is not acceptable. "F\*\*\* you" shows extreme disrespect. A continued pattern of disrespect may be grounds for discharge. A specific incident of disrespect based upon race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation will very likely result in discharge.
4. Behavior is to reflect honesty. When a resident reports Twelve Step meeting attendance this means that they stayed in and at the meeting, not went in and then spent the meeting time sitting outside. When a pass is approved to go somewhere and do something, that is exactly where and what is done.

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5. The time and effort necessary to do a job, homework assignment, etc. well, will be taken. Doing just enough to get by is ineffective and not acceptable.
6. Any behavior that would damage or destroy the trust placed in you by staff and your peers is unacceptable. The following are some examples of this unacceptable behavior.
  1. Talking about house issues anywhere other than in the house or at your Outpatient Treatment Provider.
  2. Any behavior or statement that threatens, frightens, or intimidates anyone, anywhere at any time.
  3. Relationships that are new or pre-existing whether sexual or not that interfere with an individual's ability to become a fully integrated group member or impacts the community negatively are not acceptable.
  4. Deliberate behavior or statements that result in misunderstandings, confusion or hurt feelings. We understand that this is part of early recovery and can happen occasionally. This type of situation is an opportunity for all involved to learn and grow. This is unacceptable only when it is part of a pattern clearly intended to defocus or damage.

NCFH is interested in healing, not creating further damage. NCFH wants every person that enters the program to get as much as they can. Upon admission the new resident is trusted and accepted as someone wanting to recover. NCFH are ready and willing to help and guide in this process. It is the experience that anyone willing to work and make necessary changes will benefit from the program.

The staff observes all residents' behaviors and attitudes. If it is determined that an individual's behavior and attitude has reached an unacceptable level that resident will be discharged as positively as possible given the circumstances. The discharge may state that there was a failure to follow program rules or expectations.

## Living In A Way That Supports Recovery

Learning to live in a way that supports recovery involves many changes. Negative attitudes, behaviors, and destructive core beliefs need to be identified and then replaced by positive ones. Taking the 'easy way out' must change to 'doing it in a manner consistent with recovery'. 'Doing it in a manner consistent with recovery' requires practice and more practice. This helps develop increased self-control. This portion of the program provides a major part of the structure required for this process.

**Doing this** reflects real life issues and requires real work. Individuals are held accountable through appropriate consequences for unacceptable behavior. Consequences range from 3 points for violation of minor rules to discharge for a single behavior or the accumulation of a total of 30 points.

### ***Living in a way that supports Recovery:***

- Provides guidelines for behavior
- Involves every resident
- Promotes self-evaluation
- Acknowledges successes
- Identifies areas needing improvement
- Ensures residents consistent and equal responses from staff
- Gives Addictions Counselors information necessary for prompt and accurate feedback

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- Alerts staff to signs of regression or potential relapse
- Helps create an atmosphere conducive to recovery
- Works around the clock, 7 days a week (24/7)
- Increases self esteem

## House Rules and How They Work

### Orientation:

During orientation, a resident receives a **Resident Handbook**, additional information about the program.

## Point System

### Adjustment Period at Admission

New residents may have difficulty in adjusting to the schedule and rules. Therefore, new residents are given time an adjustment period and staff to evaluate different capabilities in each resident. Any points written for violation of three point rules during the first week will be forgiven at the end of the adjustment in period.

If it is determined that a resident is incapable of understanding or following rules and continued residency is not in their best interest. The counselor will consult with the resident to make appropriate discharge plans.

This is not a license to ignore rules, but an opportunity to work at changing your lifestyle. There are a number of conditions that go along with this privilege.

- Everyone starts with a one week adjustment period. If at the end of that week it is obvious someone is experiencing a real problem the Administrative Team may extend the adjustment period. If the problem is the person just needs more time to recover from the impact of use on their brain then additional time is all that is needed. If there is a specific treatable issue the resident must cooperate in getting appropriate care.
- The adjustment period only applies to three point rules. Rules that are broken which result in 10 points or Discharge will be **fully** in effect. There are fewer of these rules and they are important enough that there must be immediate consequences for breaking them. Anyone earning 30 points for violation of 10 point rules may be discharged whether in the Adjustment Period or not.
- Every time staff is aware of any rule being broken it will be documented on a Point System form. The resident will be asked to sign each one so there is no question that problems are being directly communicated concerning their behaviors and there is an expectation of change.
- **All of the points** written during the adjustment period will be entered into the Points Log along with the number of points. At the end of the adjustment period the record of the three point rules broken will remain, but the three points changed to zero. Any ten points assigned will not be removed except by the normal reduction process. This will give the counselor information about past issues addressed should they reappear or that the issue at hand is a new one.
- Anyone being given extended adjustment time will remain on Level I regardless of their point total. If points are consistently low enough to move to Level II further time for adjustment is probably not needed, the adjustment period ended and if appropriate advancement to Level II on the next day that Levels are posted.
- Once the adjustment period has ended it will not be reinstated without the agreement of the Director of Services.

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## **Assignment of Points:**

Staff members write **Point Sheets** whenever appropriate. Usually points are written within 24 hours of the rule violation. Points may be written after the 24 hours but require the approval of the Director of Services or designee. Staff reviews the completed sheet with the resident, who signs it. Upon request, a copy of the **Point Sheet** will be given to the resident.

## **Grievances:**

1. In case of disagreement, **do not argue with the Staff Member**. Use the grievance procedure
2. Submit grievances on a **Point Grievance Form** within 24 hours. The only acceptable proof that the grievance was submitted in a timely manner is the signature of the staff member that receives the grievance and notes the time and date that the grievance is accepted
3. Any grievance submitted after 24 hours will not be considered

## **Point Reduction:**

A maximum of five points will be deducted from a resident's point total for completing seven consecutive days without points. The point total can never be a minus.

## **Program Rules**

**The accumulation of 30 points no matter how earned is grounds for discharge.**

1.	Use of any drug (including alcohol) or substance not prescribed or approved by a qualified medical practitioner. This includes mouthwash and anything else that can be swallowed and contains alcohol.	30
2.	In possession of any prescription medication not prescribed to them.	30
3.	Smoking or chewing on corporate property, in corporate vehicles or buildings.	30
4.	Physical abuse of another person, regardless of provocation.	30
5.	Possession of a 'weapon', including but not limited to, any firearm, blackjack, Billy club, sap, stiletto, switchblade, gravity knife, butterfly knife, any knife with a blade longer than 3 1/2", brass knuckles, "throwing stars," or "chukka sticks etc."	30
6.	Refusal to submit to any test that screens for alcohol and/or substance usage or any search that conforms to OASAS regulations.	30
7.	Theft or willful destruction of individual or corporation property.	30
8.	Engaging in sexual activity with other residents, or any staff member. Staff will be dealt with in an appropriate manner as well.	30
9.	Behavior once brought to the resident's attention, which continues and interferes with their participation, as a fully integrated group member is reason for discharge. This includes failure to abide with any element of a written contract, which is part of the Service Plan.	30
10.	Unauthorized absence of more than 8 hours.	30

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11.	Possession of tobacco products, which includes but is not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing or dipping tobacco. Possession of any tobacco paraphernalia including lighters, matches, pipes, rolling papers etc. All of these materials will be confiscated and destroyed.	10
12.	Over-the-counter medications must be approved by a qualified medical practitioner. Once approved OTC must be stored in the medication cabinet and are available only through staff. Over the Counter and/or prescription medications which require daily use and/or application must have written approval from Resident Manager. IE: foot cream, eye drops, inhalers etc.	10
13.	Failure to return from pass on time. It is the resident's responsibility to arrange for dependable transportation.	10
14.	Failure to treat either peers or staff with respect and consideration. This includes verbal abuse and any behavior that would make continued residency unsafe for another.	10
15.	Failure to respect the property of peers, staff, or the Corporation.	10
16.	Failure to arrive on time, actively participate in and remain at: appointments, house sponsored activities in-house, or elsewhere or at other service providers. This includes failure to reschedule any appointment at least 24 hours in advance.	10
17.	Failure to comply with a staff member's direct request. In case of disagreement, comply with the request, and then submit a grievance within 24 hours. (A direct request includes asking you to sign a Point Sheet.)	10
18.	Entering anyone else's bedroom or personal possessions without permission.	10
19.	Residents will remain on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor from 11:00 pm to 6:00 am unless there is an emergency.	10
20.	Failing to comply or return from signing out with the curfew set by the Level System, unless other arrangements have been approved by the Residence Manager, Addictions Counselor, or Director of Services.	10
21.	Having a car available for personal use without the Director of Services written permission <b>or</b> using unauthorized transportation.	10
22.	Possession of, or viewing, X-rated films or videos is not allowed. (Some R-rated movies may also be judged inappropriate.)	10
23.	Failure to exit the building and meet in the designated location within 2 minutes of the alarm being sounded. The first time 10 points will be assigned. The second time the individual will be discharged.	10

### ***Household Operation and Maintenance***

24.	Failure to contribute to the appearance and daily operation of the facility by doing various assigned chores or by failing to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Complete the work on time and as scheduled.</li> <li>b. Do the work well and as instructed.</li> <li>c. Arrange to have the work done during any absence.</li> <li>d. Help staff when asked. (There will be times that various projects are undertaken that would constitute normal maintenance of a home but beyond daily upkeep. We expect residents to help with these projects).</li> </ul>	3
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25.	Failure to have the bedroom clean and neat including making the bed as instructed before leaving the room. A thorough cleaning at least once a week is also required and covered by these points. <b>Please Note</b> -Our intent is to respect individual privacy as much as possible. We reserve the right to knock, enter and/or search at any time. Neat includes having all clothes either hung or folded neatly. Dirty clothes are to be in the container provided. If the container is full it is time to do the wash not throw the clothes elsewhere. Making the bed in a way that is acceptable requires: The bottom sheet is to be smooth and tucked in on all four sides. The top sheet is to be smooth and tucked in at the foot of the bed. The pillow must have a pillow case. The comforter is to cover the pillow, the rest of the bed and be smooth and wrinkle free.	3
26.	Failing to change and launder bed linens and towels at least once a week.	3
27.	Failure to remove laundry from machines keeping others from using them.	3
28.	Failure to bathe or shower daily or maintain acceptable personal hygiene including the use of deodorant products.	3
29.	Failing to be dressed in street clothes including shoes or slippers Monday through Friday 8:00 am, Saturday and Sunday 10:00 am	3
30.	Obstructing doors, hallways, stairwells or safety exits.	3
31.	Watching television during times other than those posted.	3
32.	Attaching anything to bedroom walls, ceilings, doors (both inside and out) or anywhere else other than the bulletin board.	3
33.	Using a cell phone or any other electronic device during a time that it is not allowed	3
34.	Failure to comply with the 11:00 pm lights out in.	3
35.	Failure to take medication as prescribed. (To stop taking a prescribed medication, complete the appropriate form and return it to staff before the next dosage is scheduled.)	3
36.	When there is a medication that indicates it is to be taken once a day, the resident will be given the opportunity to pick one specific time that meds are available and then take the medication at that time. Failure to take it when agreed upon breaks this rule.	3
37.	No sleeping or lying down from the time breakfast is scheduled until 8:00 pm Monday through Friday. This does not apply to bedrooms after 5:00 pm	3
38.	No one is to be in bedrooms or on the second floor Monday through Friday without the prior permission of staff.	3
39.	Playing a radio, or similar equipment, so loud that it can be heard outside the room, or outside loud enough that it may be disturbing to the neighborhood.	3
40.	Wearing a hat, head covering or sunglasses inside is not allowed. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis for religious or hygienic reasons	3
41.	Wearing or using any device that emits sound is not allowed inside either house or in any corporate vehicle. Wearing includes placed on the head but not the ears, around the neck, or in any other way that allows the device to be heard.	3

### ***Coming and Going***

42.	Failing to personally sign out and in giving accurate information. If it is determined that failure to sign in or out was an attempt to avoid 10 points for failing to stay within the time limits set by the Level System a minimum of ten (10) points will be assigned.	3
43.	Leaving the facility before 10:00 am is not allowed. Exceptions are: scheduled appointments previously approved and noted, church and activities documented in the individual's Service Plan, Assigned chores are to be completed unless an extension is granted before leaving.	3
44.	Failure to submit a written Transportation Request, as soon as you know about it, but no less than 24 hours in advance. Requests for transportation on Monday are to be given to the Residence Manager as early as possible but no later than 2:00 pm Friday.	3

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## *Eating and Food Preparation*

45.	Failure to limit eating to the dining room. The consumption of candy in the bedroom is an exception. Each staff member will decide what is appropriate for their space.	3
46.	Failure to limit drinking to allowed areas. The allowed areas are living room, group room, and basement and staff offices with the staff member's approval.	3
47.	Failure to be on time for meals.	3
48.	Failure to wear either a hair net or gloves while preparing food either for self or others. Hats, cloth or other coverings are not acceptable replacements for a hair net. Gloves do not have to be worn while actively cooking on the stove or putting things in or removing them from a heated oven.	3
49.	Failure to pick up after cooking, eating, snacking etc. Rinse and place in the dishwasher any silver, glassware, china, etc. used. Pots and pans must also be washed and put away.	3
50.	Failure to remain seated for at least 15 minutes at main meals.	3

## Structured Program Elements

There is a Structured Program that all residents participate in. This Program consists of a combination of Groups, Classes and Exercises that are presented or supervised by personnel of NCFH. The exact content of these structured elements changes over time, as the needs of the residents change.

Community Group		Provides an opportunity to enhance interpersonal relationships and communication skills on a feeling level.
Individual Counseling		Provides supportive counseling, formulation of an Individual Service Plan with ongoing revision
Value Clarification		Provides residents with the opportunity to determine personal values.
Destructive Core Beliefs		Teach residents to identify the inaccurate and destructive beliefs that they have accepted about themselves that in turn keep them sick. Once recognized the task is to change them.
Relapse Prevention		Introduces basic concepts of relapse/recovery dynamics. To help residents identify relapse indicators and develop individualized strategies to deal with them.
Senior Peer		Provides individual residents that can clinically benefit from assuming a leadership role an opportunity to do so. This individual is the spokesperson for the residents as a group to staff. Though this gives the Senior Peer additional responsibility to both peers and staff <b><i>there is no additional power.</i></b> The Senior Peer does not have nor is expected to have control over other peers.



# North Country Freedom Homes, Inc.

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Peer Council		Provides a forum for discussion and to make group decisions that are communicated to Staff through their spokesperson the Senior Peer. Appropriate staff will meet with the entire residency upon request.
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### Program Priorities

Scheduling conflicts do occur. Those activities listed in Number 1 have the highest priority; those listed in Number 2 have the second highest priority, etc.

1. All Structured Program Elements. This includes appointments, groups, etc. with Outpatient Services
2. Health Services including medical, dental, etc. appointments may conflict with # 1. In those cases these services take priority. This is allowed only with staff approval in advance
3. Voluntary attendance at 12-Step Meetings
4. Recreational and Social Activities

Residents are to schedule their activities accordingly. Resolve potential conflicts, in sufficient time to avoid problems, by talking with the appropriate staff.

Mornings, Monday through Friday are reserved for groups and classes held within the Community Residence. Afternoons, Monday through Friday are reserved for treatment at a local Outpatient Treatment Provider. Currently this is the St. Lawrence County Chemical Dependency Services. It is expected that residents work on assignments or attend 12-Step meetings in the evenings. During the weekends residents may go on pass (if approved by clinical staff for therapeutic reasons), participate in planned leisure activities and attend worship services.

### Length of Stay

To be discharged, as Program Complete requires the completion of numerous exercises designed to help you:

- Identify the steps in your relapse process and assist you in designing an effective relapse prevention plan
- Identify your Destructive Core Beliefs, identify attitudes and behaviors that support them and change them

There are minimum lengths of time between these exercises. No one can do an exercise before the minimum length of time specified.

The date that an individual will actually do the exercise will most likely be later than the earliest date that it can be presented. This depends on numerous factors. These include, but are not limited to a resident's readiness including level earned, seniority, staff availability.

The final exercise triggers regression in everyone that does them. NCFH require that residents commit to at least 30 days of residency after completing this exercise. This allows time to identify, halt and grow beyond the regression.

Any resident that chooses not to do any exercise will not be discharged as Program Complete.

Any resident that fails to stay at least 30 days after the completion of their final exercise will not be discharged as Program Complete unless an earlier discharge date has been approved by the administrative team. For an approval there must be circumstances, beyond the control of the resident, that make an early discharge in their best interests.

**Because of all of these factors we cannot provide an expected length of stay.**

# North Country Freedom Homes, Inc.

## Resident Handbook

### Program Levels and Privileges

A resident's attitude and behavior over time determines levels and privileges.

Advancement depends upon a combination of things. Some of these are clearly measurable. For example a resident's point total is either zero or a specific number. Other indicators, not so easily measured can be even more important to recovery than the easily measured ones.

For example one peer may not directly threaten another peer but still be threatening. Telling stories that center on the violence done to others by one peer can be threatening to other peers indirectly. The tone of voice, body posture, or the way someone looks at someone else can also be threatening.

Though not a direct threat, this behavior is damaging to everyone involved. The person that makes the implied threat avoids or stops honest feedback and builds a defensive wall that interferes with recovery. Those being indirectly threatened are denied the safety in which their recovery can progress.

If conditions for advancement are limited to objective or measurable items and ignored subjective or not easily measurable items there is a possibility that a complete assessment would not be done. It would make it possible for a resident to complete this program and advance through the levels by keeping a low profile, following all the rules, and doing just enough to get by. Just getting by is not what recovery is all about.

To avoid this kind of situation from occurring, advancement to and retention of levels requires work that is measured both objectively and subjectively.

Every resident begins on Level I. All requirements for advancement in Level must be met prior to advancement. Once a level is earned continued effort is required to keep it.

Each week a resident's progress will be assessed and the Level Earned will be posted. A resident on Level IV could drop to Level I. Length of time in the program has no impact on how low the level may drop.

Once a level is reached it is kept by continued work. This means that anyone on Level III must continue to meet all the requirements of Level I, Level II and Level III to stay on Level III. If advancement in a level creates a privilege the rule for the highest level will be the one followed.

Unless enough work is done to advance to Level II the individual may remain on Level I until discharge. No one will be discharged as Completed Treatment: All treatment Goals Met while on Level I.

Anyone going on a **Pass** must be on the Level necessary for that pass **at the time the pass starts**.

A pass may be approved based upon a resident's actual or anticipated Level status. If the Level changes so that the resident no longer qualifies for the pass or the anticipated Level is not reached, **the pass is cancelled**.

This does not apply to **Emergency, Medical, or Legal Passes**

### Honesty and the Level System

Every new resident is trusted to comply with the rules for their level.

Abuse of this trust or honor system will result in consequences. The consequences may range from a decrease in the Level to discharge, and/or advisement of the appropriate legal authorities (Parole, Probation, Police etc.) depending on the situation.

# North Country Freedom Homes, Inc.

## Resident Handbook

### Level Determination

A resident's level is determined by comparing what the resident has accomplished to the requirements for each level. The resident is then placed on the highest level that all conditions have been met.

There are two sets of conditions.

The first set is objective. This includes anything that is concrete and does not require staff making a judgment to determine. This set includes:

- Length of time in residence. This is determined by counting the number of full days since admission. The actual day of admission does not count toward time in residence
- Total Number of Points
- Has all required documentation been completed (this includes appropriate discharge planning)
- Has the resident been admitted to and continuing satisfactorily with an Outpatient Treatment Provider
- Have all required Clinical Exercises and or Assignments as indicated on the **Requirements for Discharge as Program Complete** been satisfactorily completed
- Is there satisfactory progress in meeting the goals specified in the Comprehensive Service Plan

The second area examined depends on staff judgment. The primary staff members responsible for this area are the Residence Managers and Addictions Counselors. Any staff member may provide additional input. Other sources of information about resident behavior and attitudes may be used in the determination of the Level earned.

### Approval of the Residence Manager and Addictions Counselor

Advancement in Level requires the approval of both of the addiction counselor and resident manager.

The type behaviors and attitudes each person looks for are similar while somewhat different based upon their areas of responsibility.

### Responsibilities While on Level I

All residents are expected to be actively working toward earning Level IV status.

### Privileges during Level I:

May come and go for up to **two (2) hours** once a day from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm Monday through Friday. On Saturday, Sunday and Holidays may come and go for up to **two (2) hours** twice a day. Church attendance must be within the two hours. 12-Step meeting attendance or activities that are approved by either the Residence Manager or Addictions Counselor and documented in the Shift Report does not use two hours for that day. Signing in and out with an accurate destination is required. Attendance at meals and all other responsibilities must still be met. House sponsored and/or staff (Director of Services, Administrative Assistant, Addictions Counselor, Residence Managers only) activities are the only exceptions to the 7:00 pm Curfew.

# North Country Freedom Homes, Inc.

## Resident Handbook

### Earning and Keeping Level II Requires

#### ***Measurable Requirements***

- More than 28 days in residence
- A Point Total of 19 or less
- All NCFH Admission Paperwork and both the Initial and Comprehensive Service Plans Completed
- Admitted to an approved Outpatient Treatment Provider
- All Level I tasks as indicated on the **Requirements for Discharge as Program Complete** must be completed

#### ***Observable by Resident Manager***

- Is honest at all times
- Treats both Peers and Staff with Courtesy and Respect
- Minimal or no isolation
- Works well with at least five peers
- No use of intimidation or threat either direct or implied
- No relationship is interfering with resident progress

#### ***Observable by Addictions Counselor***

- Is honest at all times
- Engaged in Classes and Groups
- Meaningful Self-Disclosure
- Defenses are not a total block to progress
- All Assignments reflect effort not compliance
- No relationship is interfering with resident progress

#### ***Privileges during Level II:***

1. May come and go for up to **five (5)** hours from 10:00 am to 9:00 pm. Signing in and out with an accurate destination is required. Attendance at meals and all other responsibilities must still be met. Planned, staff approved, house sponsored activities are the only exceptions to the 9:00 pm Curfew
2. When requested 24 hours in advance and with the approval of the Addictions Counselor may attend one 12-step meeting per week (every 7 days) with their sponsor
3. May apply for and if approved have a one-day pass once every 28 days\*
4. May apply for and if approved have one weekend pass every 28 days\*

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## Resident Handbook

Approval of Passes is not automatic and will be approved only if it appears that it is in the best interest of the individual.

\*Once every 28 days means that there will be 28 days between the beginning of one pass and the next. Day passes and weekend passes are separate, and the 28-day rule is applied separately to each.

### **Earning and Keeping Level III Requires Everything from Level I and II Plus**

#### ***Measurable Requirements***

- All Level 2 tasks as indicated on the **Requirements for Discharge as Program Complete** must be completed
- More than 123 days in residence
- A Point Total of 14 or less
- Outpatient Treatment is Continuing unless Discharged as Program Complete

#### ***Observable by Resident Manager***

- No isolation
- Works well with all peers. (If there is a peer on Level I that has not become part of the community and is obviously not yet willing to work with other peers it will not be held against a more senior peer. This does not excuse the more senior peer from continuing to be available to the peer on Level I)
- Is a Role Model most of the time in all places? Any more than 1 indication that the resident is not living up to this standard of behavior will result in this advancement indicator being disallowed. Several examples of unacceptable behaviors are:
  1. Fighting over who gets what seat in the van
  2. Fighting about the radio station or cranking up the volume in the van
  3. Acting inappropriately at functions in the community
  4. Making others wait, beyond the agreed 15 minutes after the meeting ends, because they have to speak with someone
- Accepts feedback and makes positive changes in response

#### ***Observable by Addictions Counselor***

- Growth since admission is obvious. Obvious means that specific changes in attitudes and behaviors can be identified.
- Acts as a Role Model in all Clinical settings
- Defenses do not block progress
- Accepts feedback and makes positive changes in response
- Focus is on self and individual change needed to continue personal growth
- Understands need for and is supportive to others. Focus on self and growth in recovery now includes an understanding, with appropriate supporting behaviors, that it is only through being there for and giving to others that recovery can continue

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## Resident Handbook

### ***Privileges during Level III:***

1. May come and go for up to **five (5)** hours from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm. Signing in and out with an accurate destination is required. Attendance at meals and all other responsibilities must still be met. Planned, staff approved, house sponsored activities are the only exceptions to the 10:00 pm curfew.
2. May submit and take\* a one-day pass once every 14 days\*\*
3. May submit and take\* a weekend pass every 14 days\*\*
4. May be absent from one main meal per week by notifying the Residence Manager at least 24 hours in advance
5. With 24-hour advance notification of the Addictions Counselor, the resident may travel, on a voluntary basis, to one 12-Step Meeting per week with their sponsor

\*Passes for Level III residents are usually approved. Passes must be submitted in a timely manner. Staff may discuss the wisdom of a questionable pass with a resident. The decision to go or stay on that pass remains with the resident. When in our judgment the pass is clearly not in the resident's best interest we reserve the right to disapprove the pass. Disapproval will require that the Director of Services be in agreement with the Addictions Counselor that the pass is ill advised.

\*\* Once every 14 days means that there will be 14 days between the beginning of one pass and the beginning of the next. Day passes and weekend passes are separate and the 14-day rule is applied separately to each.

### **Earning and Keeping Level IV Requires Everything from Level I, II and III Plus**

#### ***Measurable Requirements***

- All Level 3 tasks as indicated on the **Requirements for Discharge as Program Complete** must be completed
- More than 159 days in residence
- A Point Total of 9 or less
- Outpatient Treatment is Continuing unless Discharged as Program Complete

#### ***Observable by Both the Residence Manager and Addictions Counselor***

- Shows continued growth
- Fully Engaged in Program
- Is a Role Model everywhere all of the time
- Outside activities further recovery without detracting from Program Responsibilities

### ***Privileges of Level IV:***

1. May come and go from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm. signing in and out with an accurate destination is still required but there is no specific time limit. Planned, staff approved, house sponsored activities are the only exceptions to the 10:00 pm curfew. Attending meals and all other responsibilities must still be met
2. May submit and take\* Day Passes as desired

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3. May submit and take\* Weekend Passes that may start at 7:00 am on Saturday and end at 10:00 pm on Sunday, as desired. If a resident on Level IV wants to leave before 7:00 am on Saturday morning a pass must be submitted to and approved by the Addictions Counselor
4. Make any arrangements desired for transportation to outside appointments, meetings and functions. If you have already requested transportation from NCFH or agreed to go to an event these obligations must be met
5. Policy: Residents on Level 4 may have a motor vehicle for their use with the permission of the Director of Services.

### Procedure for Requesting Permission to have a personal motor vehicle

1. A resident who has achieved Level 4 may request, in writing, permission from the Director of Services to have a motor vehicle for their use. The approval or disapproval to have a motor vehicle will be in writing from the Director of Services.
2. **If a resident loses Level 4 status, permission to have a vehicle is automatically revoked immediately and permanently.**
3. When a person loses the privilege of having a vehicle, the keys must be turned into the staff person on duty, and the vehicle parked on NCFH property as directed by staff.

### Notes:

- The driver is responsible for knowing whether or not a passenger is allowed to ride in the vehicle.
- The vehicle may be used while on pass.

\*When in our judgment any pass is clearly not in the resident's best interest we reserve the right to disapprove the pass. Disapproval will require that the Director of Services be in agreement with the Addictions Counselor that the pass is ill advised

### Loss of Level IV Status and Privileges

Any staff member may speak with the Director of Services about a specific behavior or incident that is believed to be a serious breach of our expectations for those on Level IV. The Director of Services may decide to remove Level IV status including privileges at that time. The Director of Services will also decide what the resident's new Level will be based upon the circumstances. This reduction will remain in effect for a minimum of seven days. On the first Wednesday following the minimum seven days the normal Level determination will resume.

## Transportation

### Transportation Requests

All transportation of residents by corporate, private or public transportation must be pre-approved in writing on an **Individual or Group Transportation Request** with the following exceptions:

- Residents may make any arrangements desired for private or public transportation while on an approved Pass (this does not include normal sign out)
- Residents on Level IV may make any private or public transportation arrangements as desired

### **Individual and Group Transportation Requests:**

- Are available from the Residence Manager

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## Resident Handbook

- Individual requests are to be submitted as soon as possible but no later than one business day in advance for the following:
  - Medical and Dental Care
  - Counseling Appointments
  - All other Professional Appointments

Requests for transportation on Monday are to be given to the Residence Manager as early as possible but no later than 2:00 pm Friday.

- Outpatient Groups
- Group requests, by at least half of the residents not on pass, for activities such as going to the gym, shopping etc. may be submitted to the Residence Manager at any time but at least 24 hours before the proposed event. The Residence Aides have no ability to approve such requests and they will not contact their supervisor for special permission. **Plan ahead!**
- The Residence Manager is to be notified of cancellations and/or changes.
- Consultation with Staff to make the most effective use of the van is expected

Appointments must be rescheduled when transportation is unavailable.

If approval has been granted for an ongoing activity a **Transportation Request** must still be submitted each time the resident is transported.

## Passes

A pass is an approved absence from the facility. A pass request is to be submitted whenever it is likely that a resident will need to be away from the residence more than eight (8) consecutive hours. If in doubt submit the pass request.

A pass may be approved based upon a resident's actual or anticipated Level status. If the Level changes so that the resident no longer qualifies for the pass or the anticipated Level is not reached, **the pass is cancelled.** (Emergency, Medical or Legal passes are not cancelled.)

## Types of Passes

- **Day Pass**

A **Day Pass** starts at the time approved by the Addictions Counselor for **Saturday or Sunday only** and ends at 10:00 pm of that day.

- **Emergency Pass**

An **Emergency Pass** depends on individual situations and is granted by the Addictions Counselor, Residence Manager, or Director of Services.

- **Legal Pass**

A **Legal Pass** starts and ends as approved by the Addictions Counselor. Before any **Legal Pass** is approved it must be verified from the Legal Agency involved or the resident's attorney that a personal appearance is required.



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- **Medical Pass**

A **Medical Pass** must be submitted for any medical procedure that **may** require an absence from the residence of more than 8 hours. Starts and ends as approved by the Addictions Counselor.

Before any **Medical Pass** is approved two conditions must be met:

1. Verification directly from the Medical Provider that the procedure is scheduled.
2. A determine that the procedure makes sense both from a medical and recovery point of view. NCFH will not interfere in the provision of any medical care. Certain choices by a resident however may indicate that this program is inappropriate for them and that a referral to a more appropriate level of care is required.

- **Special Pass**

A special pass may be submitted for situations that would not be covered by any other type of pass. There must be a good reason for the pass to have it approved. Special pass is not determined by a level.

- **Weekend Pass**

A **Weekend Pass** starts on Friday and ends on Sunday at the times approved by the Addictions Counselor.

**For residents on Level IV a Weekend Pass** that only requires submission starts at 7:00 on Saturday Morning and ends at 10:00 pm on Sunday. If a resident on Level IV wants to leave before 7:00am on Saturday morning a pass must be submitted to and approved by the Addictions Counselor.

### **Extension of time for Weekend Passes**

All passes are intended to allow the resident time to work on specific recovery issues. Resident's from St. Lawrence County are in effect given longer time "at home" than resident's that have to travel long distances to get home. Residents that live outside of St. Lawrence County may be allowed additional travel time on Friday only.

The following conditions must be met before a **Weekend Pass** starting on Friday will be considered:

1. All other conditions for the pass must be met.
2. The resident must be going to a location outside of St. Lawrence County.
3. All appointments at other service providers, including Outpatient Treatment must be kept. The failure to keep any appointment will result in 10 Points being assigned. If there is any misunderstanding about whether or not you were supposed to attend an appointment what is stated by the staff member will be acceptable. If you are concerned about this, request a written excuse or appointment card that indicates a change in appointment from the agency providing you with services. This will be the only acceptable proof in any grievance.

If the above conditions are met the pass will start on Friday at the time approved by the Addictions Counselor and end as indicated.

### **Time between Passes**

How often a pass can be taken depends upon the level. If a pass is permitted every 28 days than 28 days must be between passes\*. An individual may not take a pass one weekend for the previous 28 days and then take a pass the following week for the next 28 days.

To determine when the next pass may be submitted, the first day of the previous pass is counted as day one. If the pass began on a Friday that would be day one, day 14 or 28 would fall on a Thursday. The next pass could begin on Friday.

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Each type of pass is considered separately. It would be possible to take a Weekend Pass this weekend and then a Day Pass the following week.

\*Exception: If a previous weekend pass was approved to start on Saturday technically the next weekend pass could not start until Saturday. To allow weekend passes starting on Friday 13 or 27 days between passes will be accepted.

### How Passes Are To Be Requested

To apply for a **Day Pass** or **Weekend Pass**, complete a request form and give it to the Addictions Counselor no later than 5:00 pm on the Wednesday before the pass is to begin. The Addictions Counselor decides if the pass should be approved.

All **Medical Passes** or **Legal Passes** are to be submitted as soon as the resident can after becoming aware of the need for a pass.

**Emergency Passes** are submitted as needed.

**Special Passes** are submitted as needed.

### Resident's Responsibilities for Passes:

- Plan for your pass and have enough money for the pass. ***NCFH will not advance money for a pass.***
- Return from pass on time. The only staff members that may approve the extension of a pass are the Residence Managers, the Addictions Counselors, or Director of Services
- Notify staff on duty of a decision not to use an approved pass
- Arrange for transportation. NCFH will provide transportation to and from the Canton or Potsdam Bus Stations only. Anyone using transportation other than the bus will have to make arrangements for transportation from the residence and to the residence
- Get required medications from the staff
- Make written arrangements to have chores done and give this to the Residence Manager
- Notify staff immediately upon return

Returning to the residence **ENDS** the pass.

## Visitation

**The following are expected whenever a resident has a visitor:**

The resident may have visitors during these hours

Monday through Friday                      1:00 pm. to 8:00 pm

Saturday, Sunday and Holidays 10:00 am to 10:00 pm

The resident is to advise their visitor(s) that this is a tobacco-free program prior to the visitation. Residents are to inform their visitor(s) that the basement, second floor, bedrooms and staff areas are off limits.

- Visitors are not to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Visitors are not to bring tobacco products or paraphernalia onto corporate property. We will advise them of this at the time they sign in.
- Visitors are expected not to swear.

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- There will be no inappropriate physical contact with a visitor.
- Visitations will not excuse residents from regular program activities or responsibilities.
- If the resident would like to have a visitor as a guest at a meal the Residence Manager should be advised in advance. The resident will be responsible for the \$2.00 per guest meal charge.
- Any visitor that chooses not to comply with these expectations will be asked to leave. Repeated violations will result in that person no longer being allowed on corporate property.