

**STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS**  
**6 VAC 15-70**

BOARD OF CORRECTIONS  
Adopted: April 14, 1993  
Effective: September 17, 2000

CHAPTER 70 STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

**PART I  
INTRODUCTION.**

**6 VAC 15-70-10. Definitions.**

The following words and terms when used in these standards shall have the following meaning unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Agency" means the public or private organization that has direct responsibility for the operation of a community residential program including the implementation of policy established by the governing authority.

"Agency Staff" means any agency administrator, facility director, counselor, case manager, clerical worker or supervisor or others who are employed by, contracts with, or volunteers services to the program.

"Community Residential Program" means any group home halfway house or other physically unrestricting facility used for the housing, treatment or care of adult offenders established or operated with funds appropriated to the Department of Corrections from the state treasury and maintained or operated by any political subdivision, combination of political subdivisions or privately operated agency within the Commonwealth.

"Contraband" means items prohibited on facility premises by statute, regulation, or policy.

"Facility" means the physical plant.

"Foot Candle" means a unit for measuring the intensity of illumination defined as the amount of light thrown on a surface one foot away from the light source.

"Furlough" means a written approval that allows a resident to leave the facility for a period of time, including overnight.

"Governing Authority" means those persons responsible for facilitating communication with program administrators, establishing policy, exploring problems, ensuring conformity to legal and fiscal requirements, and implementing community residential programs.

"Pass" means a written approval that allows a resident to leave the facility for a period of time, other than overnight.

"Program" means the plan or system of residential services of a public or private agency.

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"Resident" means an individual participating in a community residential program under the purview of a contractual agreement.

**6 VAC 15-70-20. Legal standard.**

Sections 53.1-5 and 53.1-178 of the Code of Virginia are the legal base for these standards since they direct the State Board of Corrections to prescribe standards for the development, operation and evaluation of programs and services.

**6 VAC 15-70-30. Responsibility; enforcement.**

A. The public or private contracted agency shall be responsible for the application of these standards.

B. This chapter shall be enforced through the Board of Corrections' regulations governing certification and inspection 6 VAC 15-20-10 et seq.

**PART II  
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT.**

**6 VAC 15-70-40. Organization and administration.**

A. The agency shall appoint a governing authority that serves as a link between the residential program and community.

B. The governing authority of the public or private community residential program shall hold meetings at least quarterly with the community residential program administrator in order to facilitate communication, establish policy, explore problems, ensure conformity to legal and fiscal requirements, and implement community residential programs.

C. A single administrative officer who reports directly to the governing authority shall manage the agency and its programs.

D. The agency shall have an operations manual which summarizes approved methods of implementing agency policies and procedures and provides details for daily operations of the program that is available to all employees.

E. The governing authority or agency administrator shall review the operations manual at least every 2 years and update when necessary.

F. The administrator or designated agency staff shall monitor implementation of policies and procedures set forth in the operations manual through review that occurs at least every 12 months.

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G. There shall be a written policy that persons connected with the agency shall not use their official position to secure privileges or advantages for themselves.

H. Any community residential program operated exclusively by the Department of Corrections shall have a written policy that ensures that it conforms to governmental statutes and regulations relating to campaigning, lobbying and political practices.

I. The agency shall have a current organizational chart that accurately reflects the structure of authority and accountability within the agency.

J. Agency staff shall identify and document the agency's tax status with the Internal Revenue Service.

K. The agency shall have by-laws, approved by the governing authority, which are filed with the appropriate local, state or federal body.

L. The agency by-laws for the governing authority shall include:

1. Membership;
2. size of the governing authority;
3. method of selection;
4. terms of office;
5. duties and responsibilities of officers;
6. times authority will meet;
7. committees;
8. quorums;
9. parliamentary procedures
10. recording of minutes;
11. method of amending by-laws;
12. conflict of interest provisions;
13. specification of the relationship of the agency administrator to the governing authority.

M. A permanent record shall be kept of all meetings of the governing authority.

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**6 VAC 15-70-50. Fiscal management.**

A. The agency administrator shall prepare an annual written budget of anticipated revenues and expenditures which is approved by the governing authority.

B. The agency administrator shall participate in budget reviews conducted by the governing authority.

C. Written procedures shall govern revisions in the budget.

D. Written fiscal procedures shall provide for accounting for all income and expenditures.

E. Written procedure shall govern the handling and use of residents' money. This procedure shall be in compliance with current Department of Corrections operating procedures.

F. An annual independent financial audit of the agency shall be performed by a certified public accounting firm or a governmental auditing agency.

G. Agency staff shall prepare and distribute the following documents to its governing authority and the Department of Corrections upon request:

1. Annual budget;
2. income and expenditure statements;
3. funding source financial reports;
4. independent audit report.

H. Written fiscal policies and procedures, which are adopted by the governing authority shall include at a minimum:

1. Internal controls;
2. petty cash;
3. bonding;
4. signature control on checks;
5. resident funds;
6. employee expense reimbursement.

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- I. The agency shall have insurance coverage, which includes coverage for:
  - 1. Physical plant;
  - 2. equipment;
  - 3. personal and property injury to employees, residents and third parties;
  - 4. comprehensive general liability.

J. Written procedure shall govern vendor selection and purchasing and requisitioning of supplies and equipment.

K. There shall be written procedure for documenting and authorizing compensation to consultants.

**6 VAC 15-70-60. Personnel.**

- A. Written personnel policies and procedures, which are approved by the governing authority, shall include at a minimum:
  - 1. Recruitment;
  - 2. employment practices and procedures including in-service training and staff development;
  - 3. promotion;
  - 4. grievance and appeal;
  - 5. personnel records and contents;
  - 6. benefits;
  - 7. holidays;
  - 8. leave;
  - 9. hours of work;
  - 10. salaries;
  - 11. disciplinary action procedures;
  - 12. termination and resignation.

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B. Agency staff shall make available to all employees a copy of all personnel policies and procedures. Each employee shall confirm in writing the availability and review of current policies and procedures.

C. The agency administrator shall maintain written job descriptions and job qualifications for all positions in the agency.

D. Confidentiality of personnel records shall be governed by written procedure.

E. Written procedure shall allow an employee to challenge information in their personnel file and have it corrected or removed if proven inaccurate.

F. All employees shall have a performance evaluation every 12 months. This evaluation shall be in writing and shall be based upon defined criteria. Each performance evaluation shall be reviewed and discussed with the employee.

G. Agency staff shall provide all new employees orientation, to include a review of all policies and procedures, beginning the first day of employment and concluding within 30 days. The employee shall sign and date a statement that orientation has been completed.

H. An employee shall not assume sole responsibility for any working shift prior to the completion of orientation.

I. The agency shall not discriminate or exclude from employment women working in men's programs or men working in women's programs.

J. The agency shall comply with all governmental regulatory requirements related to employment and personnel practices.

K. Written policy shall govern experience and education equivalents necessary for employment.

L. Criminal records checks shall be performed on all employees prior to hiring. The Department of Corrections Regional Administrator must provide written authorization prior to hiring of any ex-offender who has been convicted of an offense for which a sentence of 12 months or more could have been imposed.

**PART III  
FACILITY.**

**6 VAC 15-70-70. Facility operation.**

A. The agency administrator shall ensure the facility conforms to all applicable zoning ordinances or, through legal means, attempts to comply with or change such laws, codes, or zoning ordinances.

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B. The agency administrator shall ensure the facility complies with applicable state and local building codes.

C. The agency administrator shall ensure the facility complies with sanitation and health codes of the state or local jurisdiction. Any sanitation and health deficiencies shall have a documented plan of corrective action that has been approved by the appropriate state or local inspector.

D. The agency administrator shall ensure the facility complies with the regulations of the state or local fire safety authority that has jurisdiction over the facility. Any fire safety deficiencies shall have a documented plan of corrective action that has been approved by the appropriate state or local inspector.

E. Smoke detectors shall be installed, operational and inspected as recommended by the fire marshal or fire department representative.

F. Automatic, permanent emergency lights shall be installed, operational, and inspected as recommended by the fire marshal or fire department representative.

G. Agency staff shall have a housekeeping and maintenance plan. The facility shall be clean and in good repair.

H. The facility shall be located within ten city blocks of public transportation or other means of transportation are available.

I. Sleeping quarters and bathroom areas shall have a minimum of 20 foot candles of light.

J. Sleeping quarters shall be properly ventilated.

K. Sleeping quarters shall have a minimum of 60 square feet of floor space per resident.

L. Male and female residents shall not occupy the same sleeping quarters.

M. Each resident shall be provided at a minimum, the following:

1. Bed;
2. mattress and pillow;
3. supply of bed linens;
4. chair;
5. closet or locker space.

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- N. Residents shall be afforded space in the facility for:
  - 1. Private counseling
  - 2. group meetings;
  - 3. visitation.
- O. The facility shall have a minimum of one toilet for every 10 residents.
- P. The facility shall have a minimum of one wash basin for every six residents.
- Q. The facility shall have a minimum of one shower or bathing facility for every 10 residents.
- R. The facility shall have one washer and one dryer for every 16 residents, or equivalent laundry service is available in the immediate vicinity of the facility.
- S. Rules and regulations pertaining to residents shall be conspicuously posted in the facility.
- T. Written procedures shall govern transportation of residents that ensure at a minimum:
  - 1. Those staff providing transportation shall have valid operator's license;
  - 2. reporting of accidents;
  - 3. the vehicle's operation is in accordance with all state and local laws or ordinances.
- U. Reasonable accommodations shall be available for the disabled.

**6 VAC 15-70-80. Staffing.**

- A. The staffing pattern of the facility shall concentrate agency staff when the majority of residents are available to use facility resources.
- B. There shall be at least one agency staff person on facility premises who is awake, available and responsive to residents' needs twenty-four hours a day.

**6 VAC 15-70-90. Resident movement.**

- A. Resident movement in and out of the facility shall be governed by written procedure. The procedure shall include, at a minimum, a sign in and out system that includes:

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1. Destination and phone number;
2. reason for signing out;
3. time and date out;
4. expected time of return;
5. resident's signature at time of departure;
6. staff signature or initials at time of departure;
7. date of return;
8. time of return;
9. resident's signature at time of return;
10. staff signature or initials at time of return.

B. Passes and furloughs shall be issued in conformance with Department of Corrections operating procedures.

C. Movement within the facility shall be governed by procedures that provide for:

1. An account of the residents' whereabouts in the facility at all times;
2. a population count, by resident name, conducted by staff every two hours;
3. visual contact with each resident in the facility during the count;
4. count results documented and initialed by staff.

D. Verification of resident's whereabouts when not in the facility shall be governed by written procedures. The forms of verification may include but not be limited to:

1. Random telephone contacts to the authorized destination;
2. documentation from authorized destination that includes:
  - a. signature of individual visited;
  - b. date and time of visit;
3. random on-site visits to authorized destination.

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**6 VAC 15-70-100. Special procedures.**

- A. There shall be written emergency procedures that shall include the following:
  - 1. Fire;
  - 2. evacuation;
  - 3. bomb or bomb threat;
  - 4. hostage;
  - 5. disturbances, which at a minimum include riots, assaults, and fights;
  - 6. deaths;
  - 7. power failure;
  - 8. loss of heat;
  - 9. loss of water;
  - 10. escape or absconding;
  - 11. employee work stoppage.
- B. Fire emergency procedures shall be posted conspicuously in the facility.
- C. Agency staff shall conduct and document monthly emergency fire drills, to include evacuation of residents.
- D. No resident or group of residents shall be in a position of control or authority over other residents.
- E. Written procedure shall restrict the use of physical force to instances of justifiable self protection, protection of others, and to the minimum degree necessary to control the situation.
- F. Agency staff shall maintain and make available written procedures for conducting searches of residents, agency staff and visitors as well as the facility, in order to control contraband.
- G. Written procedure shall govern the disposal of contraband.
- H. Written procedures for reporting absconders shall comply with Department of Corrections operating procedures.

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I. Written policy shall prohibit the carrying and use of weapons in the facility by both agency staff and residents.

J. Agency staff shall maintain a log of occurrences and daily events that shall:

1. Be kept in a bound book for permanent residence;
2. be written legibly in ink;
3. at each entry, contain full names, at least once, of the residents involved in the events;
4. document a briefing (of occurrences and important events) between outgoing and incoming staff;
5. contain a signature or initials of staff at the conclusion of their shift;
6. become a legal document of the facility and shall be maintained as such.

**PART IV  
PROGRAM SERVICES.**

**6 VAC 15-70-110. Intake.**

A. Criteria for acceptance into the program and intake shall be governed by written procedure.

B. Agency staff shall complete an initial intake information form on each resident admitted, which, unless prohibited by statute, includes, at a minimum:

1. Name;
2. address;
3. date of birth;
4. Social Security Number;
5. current photograph;
6. sex;
7. race or ethnic origin;
8. reason for referral;

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9. whom to notify in case of emergency;
10. date information gathered;
11. signature of both interviewee and employee gathering information;
12. name of referring agency or committing authority;
13. special medical problems or needs;
14. personal physician, if applicable;
15. legal status, including jurisdiction, length and conditions of sentence.

C. Agency staff shall distribute a copy of the criteria for acceptance into the program and intake procedures to referral agencies and interested parties.

D. Agency staff shall provide in writing to the referral agency and perspective resident, reasons for non-acceptance into the program.

E. At the time of intake, agency staff shall review goals, services available, program rules, and disciplinary actions with the resident. This shall be documented by employee and resident signatures.

F. Written procedure shall govern the assignment of case management of each resident to a staff member.

G. Where a language or literacy problem exists which can lead to resident misunderstanding of agency rules and regulations, assistance is provided to the resident either by staff or by another qualified individual under the supervision of a staff member.

**6 VAC 15-70-120. Programs.**

A. Agency staff shall design a personalized program with and for each resident that includes:

1. measurable criteria of expected behavior and accomplishments;
2. time schedule for achievement;
3. staff and resident signatures.

B. Agency staff shall review changes in the personalized program with the resident, and document this procedure with staff and resident signatures.

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C. Agency staff shall review resident progress with the resident every two weeks. The outcome of each review shall be documented in the resident's case file.

D. Written procedures shall provide resident's increasing involvement with family and in community activities prior to final release.

E. Resident's attendance and participation in religious services and activities shall be voluntary. Residents shall be permitted to attend religious services of their choice in the community and to receive visits from representatives of their respective faiths.

F. Written procedures shall ensure that residents receive approved visitors during established visiting hours, except where there is substantial evidence that a visitor poses a threat to the safety of the resident or the security of the facility.

G. Agency staff shall provide for recreational and leisure time activities.

H. Agency staff shall make referrals when needed, for the following services:

1. Supervision in the community;
2. shelter;
3. food service (where applicable);
4. financial assistance;
5. individual counseling;
6. assistance with transportation;
7. medical health services;
8. mental health services;
9. vocational evaluation, counseling and training;
10. employment counseling and placement;
11. education or training counseling and placement;
12. group counseling.

I. Agency staff shall use community resources, either through referrals for service or by contractual agreement, to provide residents with the services to become self-sufficient.

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J. Agency staff shall ensure that residents' mail, both incoming and outgoing, is not read or withheld and that inspection of residents' mail for money or contraband shall occur in the presence of the resident.

K. Resident grievances shall be governed by written procedures that shall include an appeals process.

**6 VAC 15-70-130. Case records.**

A. Agency staff shall maintain a case record for each resident in which all significant decisions and events are recorded. The records shall include at a minimum, but are not limited to the following information:

1. Initial intake information form;
2. case information form referral source;
3. case and social history;
4. emergency contact information;
5. medical record, when available;
6. individual plan or program, group and family counseling shall be documented;
7. signed release of information forms;
8. evaluation and progress reports;
9. current employment data;
10. program rules and disciplinary policy, signed by resident and agency staff;
11. grievance and disciplinary record;
12. subsequent referrals to other agencies by the program;
13. termination summary.

B. Agency staff shall make entries into the case records and date and initial each entry.

C. Case records shall be marked "confidential" and maintained in locked file cabinets or rooms to minimize the possibility of theft, loss, destruction or unauthorized use.

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D. Supervisory staff or a designee shall review case records monthly to ensure that the case is current and accurate.

E. The confidentiality of case records is maintained in accordance with federal and state laws. Written procedures shall govern access to case records and designate personnel responsible for release of resident information.

F. Written procedure shall govern the retention and destruction of case records in accordance with state law.

G. Agency staff provide a "Release of Information Consent Form" which at a minimum complies with applicable federal and state laws, and includes:

1. Person, agency or organization requesting information;
2. person, agency or organization releasing information;
3. specific information to be disclosed;
4. purpose or need for the information;
5. expiration date;
6. date consent form is signed;
7. signature of the resident;
8. signature of individual witnessing resident's signature.

**6 VAC 15-70-140. Citizen and volunteer involvement.**

A. Written procedure shall govern citizen involvement in the programs and shall include recruitment, selection, training, orientation, responsibilities, evaluation, supervision and termination of volunteers.

B. Agency staff shall document that volunteers complete an orientation and training program before they participate in their assignments.

**PART V  
SUPPORT SERVICES.**

**6 VAC 15-70-150. Food services.**

A. Agency staff shall provide or contract for food service, and ensure that the service meets or exceeds nationally recommended dietary allowances.

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B. The food service program shall have an annual health and sanitation inspection by state or local authorities. Any health and sanitation deficiencies shall have a documented plan of corrective action that has been approved by the appropriate state or local inspector.

C. Written procedure and practice shall require that accurate records are maintained of all meals served and that meals are planned at least one week in advance.

D. The dining area shall be ventilated and properly furnished.

E. Food service personnel, including residents, shall receive a pre-assignment medical examination by medical personnel and an examination at least every 12 months thereafter to ensure freedom from diarrhea, skin infections, and other illnesses transmissible by food or utensils. Residents and other persons working in food service shall be monitored continuously for health and cleanliness by the food service manager or designee.

F. When agency staff provide a food service program, all foods shall be properly stored at the completion of each meal.

G. Special diets shall be provided to meet the documented medical and religious needs of residents.

H. Written procedure and practice shall require weekly inspections of all food service areas, including dining and food preparation areas and equipment, by the person supervising food service operations or his designee.

**6 VAC 15-70-160. Medical care and health service.**

A. Agency staff shall maintain first aid equipment approved by a recognized health authority for medical emergencies.

B. Written procedure shall ensure perpetual availability of first aid equipment and supplies.

C. Agency staff shall maintain a current inventory control list of first aid equipment and supplies.

D. One agency staff on each shift of the community residential program shall be trained in emergency first aid procedures, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

E. Routine medical services and twenty-four hour emergency medical services shall be available to residents.

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F. At the time of the offender's referral, a medical assessment is completed to determine if the resident has any special medical needs. Agency staff shall be made aware of offenders' special medical problems.

G. Written procedures shall provide for medical examination of any agency staff or resident suspected of having a communicable disease.

H. Written procedures shall address the management of serious and infectious diseases for residents and agency staff.

I. When a urine surveillance program is in effect, written procedures shall govern collection of samples and interpretation of results.

J. Written procedures shall govern the possession and control of prescribed medications and over-the-counter drugs.

These standards are full, true, correctly dated, adopted by the Board of Corrections on April 14, 1993 and effective on September 17, 2000.

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Fred L. Finkbeiner  
Chairman  
Board of Corrections