

River Valley Therapeutic Residence Policy and Procedure		
Elopement Late Return		
Effective: 4/26/2023	Revised:	Due to Review: 4/26/2025

POLICY

The River Valley Therapeutic Residence (RVTR) shall take measures to prevent residents from leaving the facility and/or the company of RVTR personnel without authorization and to ensure the safe and timely return of individuals who leave without authorization. The following procedure outlines measures that RVTR personnel shall take if elopement has or is suspected to have occurred.

DEFINITIONS

Elopement: means that a resident has left the residence or the company of staff without authorization.

Elopement Status: means that RVTR, DMH, and law enforcement officials have been notified that a resident has left the residence or the company of staff.

Late Return: means that a resident who has been authorized to leave the residence has failed to return to the residence within 15 minutes of the resident's scheduled time of return.

Search for the resident: means a search of the facility by staff to locate a missing resident.

Unscheduled Return: means a return following revocation of a resident's authorization to leave the residence.

PROCEDURE

Attempted Elopement from a Secure Area:

If a resident attempts to elope from a staff-monitored secure area (the yard or residence) treatment staff shall use verbal intervention to discourage the elopement. Resident shall be advised that the authorities will be contacted.

Elopement from RVTR On Site Walk/Activity:

When a resident cannot be found or the resident is late for a scheduled return, the nurse/shift leader shall initiate a search for the resident. The nurse/shift leader shall assign staff to look for the missing resident within the facility and the facility grounds.

If staff is unable to locate a resident within 5 minutes, the nurse/shift leader or designee shall place the resident on elopement status by calling 911 and notify the Program Director or designee. If after business hours, the Program Director should be notified. If the Program Director is not available, DMH available Administrator will be notified.

Staff shall immediately place a resident on elopement status when they have information that leads them to reasonably believe that the resident has, in fact, eloped.

If a decision to place the resident on elopement status is made, RVTR will call 911 and give the following information (located in the Kardex-Elopement Reporting Form):

- Physically Identifying Information: name, age, sex, height, weight, color of eyes and hair, what the resident was wearing when last seen.
- Other Pertinent Information: whether the resident is dangerous to themselves or others.

If the resident is found outside of the secure area of the residence, the staff member(s) shall encourage the resident to return. If the resident fails to return to the facility, the staff member(s) shall call 911, and then call the Program Director or DMH available Administrator (if Program Director is not available) to inform them of the resident's last known location.

Elopement from Individual or Group Outings or Staff Transport:

Should someone elope, staff must call 911 via cell phone immediately and provide the 911 operator with the following information:

- the resident's name and description.
- when and where the resident was last seen.
- a description of the resident's behavior when last seen.
- whether the resident was on foot or entered a vehicle.
- identifiable clothing.
- if the resident entered a vehicle, provide a description of the vehicle, and state which direction the resident was traveling.
- Inform the 911 operator that the RVTR program director or designee will be the contact point and provide the phone number.

After providing the 911 operator with the above information, the staff person shall immediately call the RVTR Program Director or designee and provide an update.

Elopement Status Notifications:

When a resident elopes, **the Program Director or DMH available Administrator** shall notify the following people in the order listed below:

- the Program Director or designee
- the RVTR physician
- the resident's guardian; if applicable
- the family, significant others, and advance directive agent, if the resident has authorized the disclosure of protected health information to these individuals, if applicable
- the Duty to Warn, if applicable, after consultation with DMH legal
- Adult Protective Services (AHS.DAILDLPIntake@vermont.gov)
- DMH Quality (AHS.DMHquality@vermont.gov)
- DAIL Survey & Certification (AHS.DAILSCIntake@vermont.gov) by emailing a completed Resident Incident Report.

Any calls about residents on elopement status shall be directed to the Program Director or designee. The Program Director or designee shall ensure all relevant information has been documented in the progress notes section of the resident's medical record.

Documentation:

The Program Director or designee shall ensure that a Resident Incident Report is completed as soon as possible and emailed to APS (AHS.DAILDLPIntake@vermont.gov), DAIL Survey & Certification (AHS.DAILSCIntake@vermont.gov), and DMH Quality (AHS.DMHquality@vermont.gov). The Program Director or designee will also ensure that a progress note, with a complete description of the event, is completed.

Program Director or designee will ensure that the On-Elopement Documentation Form (NCF-05) is filled out. [See Kardex-Elopement Reporting Form].

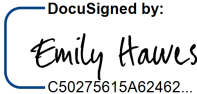
The Program Director or designee will ensure that the medical record is sequestered as soon as possible after notification.

The Program Director, the Director of Mental Health, Medical Director, and the Nurse Manager or designee shall initiate a review of the elopement on the following business day.

Return from Elopement Status:

When resident returns from elopement status:

- Upon returning to RVTR, the returning resident will be assessed by a nurse, physician, or designee and the assessment will be documented in the resident's medical record.
- The resident will be searched in accordance with policy.
- The Program Director or designee will inform all the people who were notified of the elopement that the resident has been returned to RVTR. (NCF-05).

Approved by	Signature	Date
Emily Hawes Commissioner Vermont Department of Mental Health	 DocuSigned by: Emily Hawes C50275615A62462...	4/27/2023