

Facility Name: Middlesex Therapeutic Community Residence	
Policy and Procedure: Elopement	
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Policy

Middlesex Therapeutic Community Residence (MTCR) staff will use verbal interventions to discourage residents from leaving the residence and/or the company of staff without authorization.

Definitions

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

Elopement Status: MTCR leadership, the Department of Mental Health (DMH) Commissioner’s Office, and law enforcement officials have been notified that a resident has left the residence or the company of staff.

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

Procedure

Attempted Elopement from a Secure Area:

1. 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 will be advised that legal authorities will be contacted.

2. If staff is unable to locate a resident within 5 minutes, or if staff has information that leads them to reasonably believe that a resident has been able to actually elope the secure area, the nurse/shift leader or designee shall place the resident on elopement status and immediately call 911 and notify the Program Director. If after business hours, or you cannot reach the Program Director, the DMH Administrator On Call shall be notified. You must speak to a person. Leaving a voicemail/email/text message does not meet this requirement.

3. If the resident is found outside of the secure area of the residence, staff member(s) shall encourage the resident to return. If the resident fails to return to the facility, staff member(s) shall place the resident on elopement status and

immediately call 911 and notify the Program Director. If after business hours, or you cannot reach the Program Director, the DMH Administrator On Call shall be notified. You must speak to a person. Leaving a voicemail/email/text message does not meet this requirement.

4. A call to 911 shall include the following information (located on Resident Identification Form):
 - a. *Physically Identifying Information*: name, age, sex, height, weight, color of eyes and hair, what the resident was wearing when last seen.
 - b. *Other Pertinent Information*: whether the resident is dangerous to themselves or others.

Elopement from Individual or Group Outings or Staff Transport:

Follow resident from safe distance, if possible, and immediately call 911 via cell to provide at least the following information regarding elopement:

- The resident's name and description.
- When and where the resident was last seen.
- A description of the resident's behavior when last seen.
 - Be sure to report any threats to self or others that resident may have made prior to elopement.
- Whether the resident was on foot or entered a vehicle. If the resident entered a vehicle, provide a description of the vehicle, and state which direction the resident was traveling.
- Identifiable clothing.
- Follow the direction of the 911 operator for next steps. Inform the 911 operator that the Program Director/Designee or the DMH Administrator on call will be notified and be the point of contact moving forward and inform them that this person will contact them.

After providing 911 with the above information, the staff person shall immediately call the Program Director or designee. If you cannot reach the Program Director, the DMH Administrator On Call shall be notified. You must speak to a person. Leaving a voicemail/email/text message does not meet this requirement.

Elopement Status Notifications:

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

- DMH Commissioner
- MTCR treating psychiatrist
- DMH General Counsel
- The resident's guardian and Designated Agency, if applicable.
 - Consider notifying the resident's family, significant others, and advance directive agent, only if the resident has authorized the disclosure of protected health information to these individuals.

Note: any calls about residents on elopement status shall be directed to the Program Director or DMH Administrator On Call.

Documentation:

1. The involved staff and the Program Director or DMH Administrator On Call shall ensure that a Resident Event Report is completed as soon as possible and, per the reports instructions, sent to:
 - a. APS (AHS.DAILDLPIntake@vermont.gov)
 - b. DAIL Survey & Certification (AHS.DAILSCIntake@vermont.gov)
 - c. DMH Quality (AHS.DMHquality@vermont.gov).
2. The involved staff and the Program Director or DMH Administrator On Call shall ensure that a progress note, with a complete description of the event, is completed.
3. Program Director or DMH Administrator On Call will ensure that the Elopement Checklist is completed.
4. The Program Director or DMH Administrator On Call will ensure that the medical record is sequestered as soon as possible after notification.
5. The Program Director, Nurse Supervisor, DMH Director of Mental Health, and DMH Medical Director shall initiate a review of the elopement on the following business day.

Return from Elopement Status:

Upon return to MTCR, the resident shall be:

- assessed by a nurse, physician, or designee and the assessment documented in the resident's medical record.
- searched in accordance with Restricted Item and Search policy.

The Program Director or DMH Administrator On Call shall inform all the people who were notified of the elopement that the resident has been returned to MTCR.

Approved by	Signature	Date
Emily Hawes Commissioner Department of Mental Health		