

<b>River Valley Therapeutic Residence Policy and Procedure</b>		
<b>Transportation and Community Visits</b>		
Effective: 5/23/2023	Revised: 6/19/2023	Due to Review: 6/19/2025

## **POLICY**

The River Valley Therapeutic Residence (RVTR) has a duty to protect the rights and safety of persons who are admitted to RVTR. These rights include, but are not limited to, access to the least restrictive modes of transportation to community providers or community visits and events that support skill building and resident goals, to the extent that health or safety considerations do not make it necessary to place limitations on the aforementioned.

## **PROCEDURE**

### General:

- Each resident shall be assessed by their RVTR treatment team, with ultimate decision making by the treating psychiatrist, to determine their Tier Level (see section below) based on their level of stability and ability to maintain safety while in the community.
  - If the transport or community visit is time sensitive and the provider is unable to write an order immediately, verbal/email permission is acceptable, with a written order to follow when able to provide this documentation.
- If the ordering provider determines transport determination by law enforcement personnel is needed, the rationale for such determination shall be documented in the medical record.

### Transport:

The Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health delegates authority to authorize modes of transportation and escort to RVTR providers.

RVTR has established the following two standard modes of transportation to help guide clinical decision making in this regard:

1. A State of Vermont vehicle with a minimum of two trained RVTR personnel for individual outings (as the least restrictive mode of transportation).

- a. On rare occasions, there may be an exception to this rule. Exceptions must be approved by the RVTR Psychiatrist.
2. Law Enforcement/Emergency Medical transport (this is the most restrictive mode of transportation).
  - a. When law enforcement/emergency medical transport personnel provide transportation, custody of the hospitalized person is transferred from RVTR personnel to law enforcement personnel for the duration of the transport.

Note: A written provider's order may further specify transportation requirements.

### Community Outings:

Outings into the community are an integral part of recovery and community reintegration. RVTR will encourage residents to participate in individualized programming designed to build necessary skills for community living. The utilization of staff supervision allows residents at RVTR to go into the community as clinically appropriate. Levels of staff supervision shall be based on legal and clinical readiness, and in accordance with the goals of treatment. Any changes in Community Supervision Levels will be considered by the treatment team and shall require a doctor's order. RVTR personnel will attempt to support community visits whenever possible.

### Community Supervision Tier Levels

All residents will be assigned Tier I level upon admission. Increases in Tier levels are dependent upon the resident's level of observation being reduced to 60-minute checks (*see Level of Autonomy and Supervision*), team consultation and a physician's order.

The following Tier levels will determine the Staff to Resident ratio for each resident while on community outings:

- Tier I
  - Resident is not approved for community outings.
- Tier II
  - Resident requires 2:1 ratio (staff: resident ratio) and can only go on individual outings.
- Tier III:
  - Resident requires 2:1 ratio when going on individual outings and 1:1 ratio during group outings.

- Tier IV:
  - Resident requires 2:1 ratio when going on individual outings (rare exceptions can be made with approval from Psychiatrist for 1:1) and resident is able to engage in group community outings with a 2:5 staff: resident ratio.
  - If only 2 residents attend an outing, 2 staff are required to facilitate the outing.

Preparation for Community Outing

1. Prior to leaving the facility, the driver or participating staff will complete the Community Outing Check List and the Resident Sign Out Sheet.
2. A copy of the Resident Identification Form for each resident must be taken on the outing.
3. The driver and participating staff are responsible for obtaining the RVTR cell phones.

Unsafe or Inappropriate Behavior

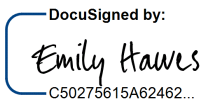
Unsafe or inappropriate behavior may end the outing immediately.

Unsafe or inappropriate behavior shall be discussed with the team upon return to the facility.

Delayed Return

If for some reason the outing is delayed causing a return to RVTR later than the expected return time (*i.e.*, doctor’s appointment runs late, traffic congestion, *etc.*), RVTR staff shall inform the residence of the delayed return and update as needed.

Elopement from Individual or Group Outings or Staff Transport:  
(*See the Elopement Policy*)

<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
Emily Hawes Commissioner Vermont Department of Mental Health	 C50275615A62462...	6/20/2023