

<b>River Valley Therapeutic Residence Policy and Procedure</b>		
<b>Staff Use of Personal Communication Devices</b>		
Effective: July 2024	Revised:	Due to Review: July 2026

**NOTE:** This policy replaces the 4/25/2023 policy: “Staff Use of Personal Cell Phones”

## **POLICY**

The River Valley Therapeutic Residence (RVTR) recognizes the impacts, both actual and potential, of communication technology on the residents and staff of our facility. To address staff requests while balancing the need to protect resident privacy and preventing potential HIPAA violations and/or otherwise causing traumatization to the residents of the facility, RVTR will allow, but strictly regulate, the use of personal communication devices within the facility.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

Personal communication device: any electronic device, including cell phones, or any devices connected to such (*i.e.*: a digital wrist device), tablets, iPads, Kindles, etc., used for the communication of electronic data including text messaging, photographs/videos, video conferencing, voice calls, or the recording of any of the above.

Common Resident Care Areas: any part of the RVTR facility where residents have access other than bedrooms.

## **PROCEDURE**

The use of personal communication devices in the presence of residents of RVTR is strictly forbidden.

Use of personal communication devices in the RVTR facility or the RVTR grounds may **only** occur under the following circumstances:

- Completing the State of Vermont (SOV) electronic multi factor authentication process.
- In non-resident care areas during a work break period.
- In the resident care areas of the facility, between the hours of 12 o'clock midnight and 5:00a.m., only if the on-duty Charge Nurse or designee has assessed it appropriate, given explicit permission to individual staff members to use personal communication devices, and there are no residents in any of the common resident care areas.


The use of personal communication devices under the following circumstances is prohibited at any time:

- For any person-to-person communication, such as phone calls, video calling, etc.;
- With headphones, ear buds, or any similar remote listening device; and
- At the Help Desk.

The Charge nurse or designee have the discretion to require the termination of the use of any personal communication device at any time.

Use of any personal communication device shall terminate immediately if any resident enters any resident common area.

Use of personal communication devices outside the above prescribed conditions while on duty at the RVTR facility may result in progressive disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
Emily Hawes, Commissioner, Vermont Department of Mental Health	 DocuSigned by: <i>Emily Hawes</i> C50275615A62462...	7/3/2024