

~~X~~ MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR GROUP HOMES
OPERATED, FINANCED OR AFFILIATED WITH
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS - DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES

54631

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INTRODUCTION

The Minimum Standards for Group Homes have been established under the authority of Sections 16.1-199 and 16.1-200, Code of Virginia, and are in accordance with the limitations set by Section 16.1-202.5 of the Code. As the definition implies, these standards are to be used as "a rule for the measuring of quality or value".

Many people have participated in the development of the standards. The task force assigned to the project was comprised of professionals from Youth Services and General Welfare as well as members of the private professional community. Without the diligent efforts and cooperation of all members of the group, the task could not have been completed. In addition, the standards have been reviewed by a professional review committee. To ensure the utility of the standards, they were further scrutinized by numerous practicing social workers. The Attorney General's Office assisted in ironing out legal questions. Finally, Central Office personnel, including the Director of Youth Services, have assisted in this process.

The purpose for these standards is to guarantee a minimum quality of treatment for all juveniles in the State receiving residential services. These guidelines are not intended to curtail the development of innovative and diverse programs, but rather to foster them. Their usefulness can only be measured by their continuing relevance.

DEFINITION OF GROUP HOME

A GROUP HOME, FOR PURPOSES OF THESE STANDARDS, IS A COMMUNITY-BASED SINGLE DWELLING OWNED OR RENTED BY A PUBLIC AGENCY, INSTITUTION OR OTHER ORGANIZATION AFFILIATED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS, DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES. THE FACILITY IS NOT ADJACENT TO OR PART OF AN INSTITUTIONAL CAMPUS, OR OF A NUMBER OF GROUP HOMES IN A SINGLE NEIGHBORHOOD; IT IS RATHER AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD. IT PROVIDES RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR FOUR TO FIFTEEN (PREFERABLY NO MORE THAN TWELVE) CHILDREN BETWEEN THE AGES OF EIGHT AND TWENTY-ONE. CHILD CARE AND TREATMENT STAFF ARE EMPLOYED AS COUNSELORS OR PROFESSIONAL HOUSEPARENTS RATHER THAN AS FOSTER PARENTS.

THE GOAL OF A GROUP HOME IS TO PROVIDE INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT TO MEET THE NEEDS OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS AND THEIR FAMILIES AND TO ENHANCE THEIR ABILITIES TO FUNCTION IN AN OPEN SOCIETY WITH MAXIMUM HARMONY WITH THEMSELVES AND OTHERS.

ADAPTED FROM MARTIN GULA, "GROUP HOMES - NEW AND DIFFERENTIATED TOOLS IN CHILD WELFARE, DELINQUENCY, AND MENTAL HEALTH". GROUP HOMES IN PERSPECTIVE (NEW YORK: CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA, INC.), 3RD PRINTING, 1972

DEFINITIONS

"BOARD"--Board signifies the Board of the Virginia Department of Corrections.

"DEPARTMENT"--Department signifies the Virginia Department of Corrections.

"DISCIPLINARY ISOLATION"--Disciplinary isolation is defined as the separation of a child from his peer group and the curtailment of his activities for purposes of discipline or to gain control of the child; this is a staff decision in which the child has no primary choice.

"DISCIPLINE"--Discipline is defined as a teaching and learning process designed to modify in a positive manner antisocial/unacceptable behavior. It says to the child: "You are O.K.; but, your behavior is not O.K." Discipline has redeeming social value.

"DIVISION"--Division signifies the Division of Youth Services, one of the four divisions in the Department of Corrections.

"PUNISHMENT"--Punishment is defined as any action taken primarily to alleviate the perpetrator's personal frustration with only incidental regard for its effect upon the child. It says to the child: "You are not O.K.; you are bad." Punishment, in this context, has no redeeming social value.

"SCREENING"--Screening is defined as the process that determines eligibility or ineligibility for placement in a program in keeping with the screening criteria established for residents in the program.

"THERAPEUTIC PROGRAM"--For purpose of these standards, a therapeutic program is defined as one which enables the resident to make positive and purposeful movement toward personal and social growth and self-direction.

"TIME OUT"--A time-out is defined as the separation of a resident from his peer group with the consensus of both the resident and the staff wherever possible. The purpose of a time-out is to provide an opportunity for the resident to gain self-control and/or reflect on his behavior or feelings.

"TREATMENT"--Treatment is defined as a process undertaken within a planned systemic framework to enable a client and his family group to restore, strengthen, or improve certain aspects of adaptation and social functioning.

GROUP HOME PROGRAM APPROVAL

Group homes developed and financed, wholly or in part, under Section 16.1-201, Code of Virginia, require approval or certification by the Department of Corrections, Division of Youth Services, at various stages of their development and operation. These approvals, or certification processes, are as follows:

1. Approval by the Board of Corrections of a statement of intent by a locality to develop a home. This statement of intent is usually in the form of a letter or resolution from the local governing body to the Director of the Department of Corrections. The letter, or resolution, should identify the type of program to be developed, the projected population, and a statement regarding the acquisition, renovation, or construction of the physical facility.

Formal approval by the Board signifies that the Department will participate in funding if the program is developed and operates within approved standards.

2. Prior to opening, the group home must receive written certification from the Department.

3. An annual review and written certification by the Department is required for continuing operation and financial assistance.

CERTIFICATION

A. Certification Requirement

Written certification of each group home and its program by the Department of Corrections is mandatory. Certification indicates that the given home and program has been evaluated and conforms with standards established by the Board of Corrections. The evaluation for the purpose of certification is the responsibility of the Division of Youth Services. It centers in two main areas: (1) evaluation of treatment program and (2) evaluation of the physical and environmental care given residents. The standards do not specify treatment techniques. There is, however, an expectation that each home will have an identifiable program which can be assessed. The Department shall provide reasonable assistance to each group home to enable it to comply with minimum standards and to obtain and maintain certification.

B. Certification

1. Types of Certificates

- a. An annual certificate is one which is granted to a group home whose programs, facilities, and operations meet substantially the minimum standards established herein.
- b. A provisional certificate is one which may be issued if the applicant is temporarily unable to comply substantially with the requirements and under the condition that the requirements will be met within a specific length of time. A letter accompanies a provisional certificate and states the reason(s) for its being provisional. A provisional certificate may be issued for any period not to exceed six (6) months.

2. Original Certificate

- a. Application: A sponsoring organization planning to develop a group home shall file an application with the Department of Corrections for a certificate at least two (2) months in advance of the planned opening date. The application shall be signed by a representative of the administrative body responsible for operation of the group home. The application form is provided by and may be obtained from the Department of Corrections, Division of Youth Services.

- b. Material to be filed with original application:
- (1) A statement regarding the sponsorship and organization of the group home together with other information showing information by name of the person or persons responsible for policymaking, administration, and operation.
 - (2) If staff have been engaged, a record of satisfactory medical examination of each staff member who will come into contact with the residents and those who will be engaged in the handling and preparation of food.
 - (3) The application shall incorporate an outline of the group home's projected program.
 - (4) There shall be an inspection and report as to the sanitary conditions from the local health department. There shall also be an inspection and report from the Office of the State Fire Marshal where any building comes under the definition of a public building under the Virginia Fire Safety Regulations to determine compliance with their regulations.
- c. Study of the application:
Following receipt of the application and materials requested above, a representative of the Department will make a study of the proposed services and facilities of the applicant.
- d. Notice to the applicant of Department's action:
After the application for certificate is approved by the Department, the applicant will receive by mail a certificate which will set forth the conditions under which he may operate. The certificate shall be kept on the premises and shall be available for inspection upon request. The terms of the certificate include the operating name of the group home, the maximum number and age range of the children to be served, and the period of time for which the certificate is effective, and may include other limitations which the Department may prescribe. An accompanying letter may contain in addition to the limitations on the certificate, any recommendation regarding activities, services, and facilities to be employed.

3. Duration of the Certificate

Certificates, except for the provisional ones, expire one (1) year from the date of issuance unless revoked sooner. The certificate expires automatically if there is a change in location or sponsorship. In such cases, an application for an original certificate must again be filed as certificates are not transferable. To avoid delay, the Department of Corrections shall be

advised at once of any contemplated change so that it may determine if the proposed change may be approved.

4. Renewal of Annual Certificate

There shall be provision for the continued operation of the group home and for the annual renewal of the certificate.

a. Application:

An application for renewal of certificate must be submitted by the applicant on a form furnished by the Department approximately two (2) months prior to the expiration date. The completed application shall be returned to allow time for processing before expiration of the current certificate.

b. Material to be filed with renewal application of annual certificate:

- (1) A current list of board members and committee members if any;
- (2) A record of satisfactory medical examination for each staff member (a staff information sheet will be provided by the Department);
- (3) A report of major changes in the program or facilities during the year or contemplated for the coming year;
- (4) Building plans for any contemplated construction giving room dimensions, specifications and use.

5. Revocation or Suspension

Any group home certified as aforesaid shall receive a certificate to operate a group home; provided, however, that the group home certificate may be revoked or suspended by the Board for failure to maintain standards prescribed for the aforementioned group home.

6. Right of Appeal

- a. The group home shall have the right to appeal an initial decision not to certify; the group home shall also have the right to appeal any certificate revocation or suspension.
- b. The group home shall initiate any appeal within thirty (30) days of notification of the decision of the certification team.
- c. The group home shall initiate any appeal with a letter from the administrative body and the director of the home to the Director of the Division of Youth Services

- (1) The appeal letter shall enumerate:
 - (a) The written reason(s) for revocation or suspension.
 - (b) The reason(s) of the group home for appealing.
 - (c) The nature of group home operations since receiving the preceding certificate, where applicable.
 - (d) The actions planned by the group home to remedy the condition(s) preventing certification or renewal of certification.
- (2) The Director of the Division shall appoint appropriate persons to act as hearing officers; the hearing officers shall make a recommendation, within thirty (30) days, to the Director of the Division, who shall make a decision within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the recommendation.
- (3) The final appeal body, if desired, shall be the Board of Corrections. The group home shall inform the Board and the Director of the appeal and shall supply all other pertinent data which may be required within fifteen (15) days of the final decision of the Director of the Division of Youth Services.
 - (a) The Director of the Division of Youth Services shall supply the board through the Director of the Department with all pertinent data regarding the denial of certification.

ADMINISTRATION

A. Definition

Administration is defined as the art and science of developing and operating a group home program. Administrative responsibilities shall be identification, development, implementation and evaluation of a therapeutic program which meets the needs of individual residents. Administrative responsibilities shall include staff development and training, accounting and budgeting policies and procedures, personnel policies and procedures, and the general day-to-day operations of the program.

B. Administrative Body

1. Each group home shall be administrated by a board/commission/agency, or other body or bodies, hereafter referred to as the administrative body, as approved by the Board of Corrections.
2. If the administrative body is a board/commission/agency, it shall meet not less than quarterly.
3. The administrative body shall establish written policies for each group home under which the group home is to operate.
4. The administrative body shall assure that the group home operates with written policies in conformity with the Code of Virginia and other applicable regulations and policies of the following:
 - a. Department of Corrections;
 - b. Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act;
 - c. State and/or local health and fire regulations; and
 - d. All other appropriate local, state and federal laws and regulations.
5. The administrative body shall delegate administrative responsibility within established policies to suitable administrative structures and/or to the director of the group home for the administration of the program.
6. The administrative body shall endeavor to integrate the group home and its residents into the community and to develop community interest in the home.

C. Budget and Finance

1. The administrative body and the home shall manage the home's financial affairs in accordance with sound accounting practices, local ordinances, the Code of Virginia and the guidelines and regulations of the local jurisdiction and/or of the Board of Corrections.
2. Additional requirements and expectations of the administrative body and home shall be:
 - a. Fiscal policies of the home shall be written and shall provide for a standard and acceptable system of internal fiscal controls.
 - b. The home's annual budget shall reflect and anticipate its need as well as the resources for meeting its needs pertaining to its goals; it shall be approved by the administrative body and the appropriate authority in the Department of Corrections prior to the beginning of the funding period. This shall include budgetary provisions for medical examinations of employees if provision is not otherwise provided. (Refer to K. 1. Health Requirements - page 21.)
 - c. Financial records shall identify each category of group home expense (by State Sub-object Code), and balance of funds available for expenditures.
 - d. Financial reports shall be prepared and submitted to the administrative body and the appropriate authority in the Department of Corrections at intervals consistent with established policies and procedures, but no less than semi-annually.
 - e. Financial records shall be maintained for a minimum of seven years for legal and fiscal analysis.
 - f. An audit shall be conducted annually, or as required by appropriate local and state authorities, by a certified public accountant.
 - g. Provisions shall be made to bond staff and administrative body members who have any responsibility for funds of the home.
 - h. The home shall maintain attendance records on all employees.
 - i. The home shall have a written policy for cash disbursements.
 - j. The home shall have a written policy for purchasing and receiving consistent with sound accounting practice.
 - k. The home shall have a written policy for inventory control and methods for conducting an annual inventory.
 - l. Sound and ethical business practices shall be observed in the payment of obligations.

- m. The administrative body shall be responsible for the formation of the Admissions/Release Committee. (Refer to "Criteria for Admissions" - A. 3. - p. 32.)

D. Personnel

1. Each group home shall have a written statement of personnel policies approved by the administrative body of the home.
2. Each group home shall develop or adopt a Personnel Policy Manual in compliance with appropriate local, state or federal policies and guidelines; it shall contain the following:
 - a. Organizational chart.
 - b. Job qualifications and descriptions.
 - c. Person or persons responsible for employment, promotion, resignation, suspension, and termination.
 - d. Method of employment and promotion.
 - e. Method of resignation, suspension, and termination.
 - f. Employee evaluation.
 - g. Grievance procedure.
 - h. Hours of work.
 - i. Salaries.
 - j. Benefits.
 - k. Holidays, leave with and without pay.
 - l. Personnel records.
 - m. Attendance at workshops, conferences, etc., related to work.
 - n. Attendance at academic courses related to work.
 - o. Confidentiality.
 - p. Other policies practiced by the agency.
3. A copy of the Personnel Policy Manual shall be given to each employee.

E. Staff Training and Development

1. The administrative body shall be responsible for providing an on-going program of staff training and development.
2. All new employees shall be given orientation/training sessions, prior to assumption of their duties, regarding program, personnel policies, procedures, and their respective duties.
3. Training program used by the group home shall have well-defined objectives in order that specific needs of staff may be met so that maximum service may be rendered to residents.

4. All resident care staff shall be provided a minimum of forty (40) hours of in-service training per year. Attendance at staff meetings, or those meetings identified in E. 5. below, shall not fulfill this requirement wholly or in part.
5. In addition to the above required training, attendance at conferences, seminars, institutes, workshops, and academic courses related to work shall be encouraged to further the continued professional development of staff.
6. Volunteers shall be provided training as deemed appropriate by the director; such training procedures shall be written and shall be subject to review.
7. Relief workers shall be provided training as deemed appropriate by the director; such training procedures shall be written and shall be subject to review.

FACILITIES

(Buildings, Grounds, and Equipment)

A. Location

Group homes shall be located so that they are accessible to schools, public transportation, hospitals, clinics, psychiatric resources, churches, libraries, and recreational-cultural facilities.

B. Buildings

1. Facilities shall be such as to protect the residents to be served in the facility and consideration should be given to the following:
 - a. program intent;
 - b. attractive physical appearance and setting;
 - c. number, sex, and age span of the residents;
 - d. location and housing of staff relative to the residents;
 - e. accessibility to other service facilities or components; and
 - f. mental and physical condition of the residents to be served.
2. All group homes shall comply with all health and safety laws and regulations that are applicable in each locality.
3. Building plans and specifications for new construction, conversion of existing buildings, and any structural modifications or additions to existing licensed buildings shall be suitably aligned with the purpose of the home, and plans shall be submitted to and approved by the following authorities prior to implementation:
 - a. Virginia Department of Corrections;
 - b. Office of the State Fire Marshal;
 - c. Local zoning and/or building departments;
 - d. Local fire departments;
 - e. Local health departments; and
 - f. All other state and local agencies as required.
4. Director shall operate the group home in accordance with housing sanitation regulations of the Department of Corrections.

C. Safety Regulations

1. A written fire plan shall be worked out for each home and posted in a conspicuous location. Wherever possible, this plan should be drawn up with the advice of the nearest local fire department or the local fire prevention bureau. All occupants of the home shall be fully informed, as a part of orientation, of the fire plan for the home including their duties, location and operation of fire extinguishers, fire alarm boxes, and telephone procedures in calling the fire department.
2. Drills for evacuation in case of fire shall be held at least quarterly.
3. Pillows and mattresses shall be covered with a material certified as fire retardant.

D. Health Regulations

1. Buildings shall be subject to quarterly inspections and ratings by such health authorities who are required to inspect and enforce health and sanitary regulations.
2. The director of the group home shall submit a copy of the written report to the Department with regard to:
 - a. general cleanliness and freedom from rubbish and vermin;
 - b. facilities for preparation, refrigeration, and preservation of food;
 - c. facilities for sewage disposal;
 - d. facilities for garbage disposal;
 - e. equipment for sterilizing and washing dishes and cooking utensils;
 - f. laundry equipment;
 - g. water supply, drinking fountains, etc.;
 - h. milk supply and handling; and
 - i. health of pets.

E. General Regulations

1. Safety glass shall be provided for storm doors, shower doors or other areas of activity as specified by the Department.
2. All doors and windows shall be screened or storm doored.

3. All electrical equipment shall be grounded when possible.

F. Facilities for Sleeping

1. Provisions shall be made for an individual bed for each resident.
2. There shall be no more than four (4) residents per room without prior approval of the Department.
3. There shall be enough space in the room for beds to be at least three (3) feet apart at the head, foot, and sides and four (4) feet apart for double-decker beds.

G. Bath and Toilet Facilities

1. Existing facilities shall have at least one (1) shower or tub and one (1) toilet and washbowl for every six (6) residents. An adequate supply of hot and cold water, with adequate water pressure, shall be available for bathing. In homes serving children under 12 years of age, showers and tubs shall be equipped with a mixing spigot.
2. Clean bath towels, hand towels, and face cloths shall be provided to each resident at least twice a week.
3. Facilities constructed or renovated after the effective date of these standards shall have one (1) toilet for every six (6) residents with regard for the privacy of each resident.

H. Facilities for Indoor Recreation

A recreation room distinct from other living areas shall be provided in each home. Its furnishings shall be in keeping with its function as the center of indoor recreation. Equipment shall be suited to the age and interest levels of the residents.

I. Facilities for Laundry and Sewing

If laundry and sewing are done on location, such space shall be provided and conveniently located and have adequate equipment. Equipment shall be in good repair and shall have protective safety devices. All electrical equipment shall meet the requirements of the National

Electric Code and shall be approved by Underwriters Laboratory.

J. Facilities for Heating

Heating systems shall meet local building codes. There shall be an annual inspection of all heating systems by a qualified inspector.

K. Facilities for Lighting

Adequate lighting shall be provided throughout the home. Lighting facilities shall comply with the local fire and electrical wiring regulations. Emergency lighting facilities shall be provided and available at all times. Outside lighting shall be provided for protection against injuries and intruders.

L. Provision for a quiet study area for all residents in school shall be provided.

M. There shall be a private room available for counseling purposes.

N. Office space shall be available which shall include a provision for locked and fireproof storage of confidential materials. Medical records, correspondence and other pertinent materials of each candidate and/or resident shall be filed individually and shall be kept in a locked cabinet.

O. There shall be space provided for storage of food and other household supplies.

P. Staff Quarters

If full-time staff reside in the home, they shall be provided with private bedroom and a private bath where possible.

Q. Equipment

1. All furnishings shall be attractive, safe, easy to clean, and suited to the ages and number of the residents.

2. There shall be at least one (1) private telephone line into each group home and a separate telephone shall be available for use by the residents.
3. All playground and recreational equipment shall be safe, clean, and durable. It shall be selected for suitability to the age and stage of development of the residents.
4. Swimming pools shall be enclosed with safety fences and shall be in accordance with local health and safety regulations. A qualified Red Cross lifeguard shall supervise any pool whenever it is in use.
5. The group home shall provide vehicles with proper insurance for the transportation of residents and staff in their work with the residents. Such vehicles shall include all safety devices required by law.

R. Grounds and Outdoor Recreational Space

The grounds shall be spacious enough to accommodate a variety of play areas that take into consideration age and interest levels of the residents. Grounds shall be maintained to meet neighborhood standards.

PERSONNEL*

A. General Requirements

1. Group home staffing patterns shall be dictated by the program established to meet the needs of the residents in individual homes.
2. The group homes shall employ competent and qualified staff to provide the services essential to achievement of program goals and the needs of the residents.
3. All staff shall possess a willingness and ability to collaborate with the others involved in the resident's care, growth and development.

B. Ratio of Resident Care Staff to Residents

1. The ratio of total house staff carrying responsibility for the supervision of residents shall be at least one (1) full-time staff member for every three (3) residents.
2. The staff-resident ratio shall vary according to the ages of the residents and the kinds of problems they present.

C. Composition and Qualifications of Staff

1. Each resident shall be provided individualized treatment designed to enable him/her to make positive and purposeful movement toward personal and social growth and self-direction.
2. Composition of staff of each group home shall include a director, who may perform the duties of a social worker and a counselor. If the director does not perform the duties of a social worker, staff of each group home shall include a social worker.
3. Each group home shall have a director responsible for the administration of the home's policies and program; the office of the director shall be located in the group home.
4. The group home director shall be directly responsible to the administrative body or the designated representative thereof and shall meet the following quali-

*Standards pertaining to personnel are mandatory except as provided in Section 16.1-202.5 of the Code of Virginia.

fications:

- a. A master's degree from an accredited college or university in a profession related to human development and shall have had one (1) year of work experience in a profession related to human development, or
 - b. He shall have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college and shall have had two (2) years of work experience in a group home or three (3) years of work experience with children in a profession related to human development.
5. Each director shall designate a staff member who shall be capable of assuming complete administrative responsibilities in the absence of the director.
6. Where a separate position exists, an assistant director shall meet the following qualifications if employed after the effective date of these standards:
 - a. A master's degree from an accredited college or university in a profession related to human development; or
 - b. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college and shall have had two (2) years of work experience with children in a profession related to human development; or
 - c. Two (2) years of college training and three (3) years of experience in a profession related to human development, part of which shall have been in a group home.
7. If employment begins after the effective date of these standards, the social worker shall be:
 - a. A graduate of an accredited college or university with a master's degree in social work, psychology, or other profession related to human development, or
 - b. He shall be a graduate of an accredited college or university with a degree in a profession related to human development plus one (1) year of experience in a profession related to human development.
8. If employment begins after the effective date of these standards, the counselor shall have:
 - a. Two (2) years of college; or
 - b. A high school education plus one (1) year of experience in a profession related to human development.

9. If employment begins after the effective date of these standards, the counselor trainee shall have:

- a. High school education or the equivalent; and
- b. Previous life and work experience which reflects the ability to provide parental guidance and maintain a stable home environment.

D. Services required to meet individual resident's needs which cannot be supplied by the regular staff shall be purchased from other consultants or agencies. Consultants may provide such services as staff training, program evaluation, medical, dental, psychiatric, psychological, legal and other services necessary to adequately meet the needs of residents.

E. Medical Staff

1. A group home shall make available services of a medical doctor on a regular basis for treatment of residents.
2. If nurses are employed by the group home they shall be currently licensed as a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse by the Commonwealth of Virginia.
3. Group homes shall have one staff member on duty at all times who has a working knowledge of standard first aid procedures. All full time staff shall have a Red Cross Standard First Aid Certificate.

F. Clerical Staff

1. Clerical staff shall be sufficient to keep necessary correspondence, required records, bookkeeping records, and files current and in order.
2. In addition to these specific requirements for the position, the clerical staff shall have a good understanding of and practice confidentiality, a working knowledge of the program of the group home and meet the general requirements of health.

G. Recreation Staff

1. If a person is employed as a recreation worker by the group home, he shall have had experience in working with and providing responsible supervision to groups of children whose recreational needs and interests vary.

2. The recreation worker shall possess a variety of skills in group activities, a knowledge of community recreation resources, and shall be capable of motivating children to participate in constructive activities.

H. Food Service Personnel

1. Food handlers shall meet all requirements for food handlers as prescribed by the state and/or local Health Department.
2. While the program and treatment procedures of an individual home might involve the residents in the operation and maintenance of the home, it shall not be dependent upon the residents or the staff to provide such services when such duties interfere with treatment procedures and responsibilities.

I. Maintenance Personnel

The administrative body shall provide maintenance staff needed to keep the group home in good repair.

J. Relief Staff

1. Sufficient relief staff shall be employed to allow regular time off and vacations for all employees.
2. Relief staff shall meet the same job standards and qualifications as the regular staff which they are relieving.
3. Relief staff shall meet the general health requirements required of the regular staff which they are relieving.

K. Health Requirements

1. At the time of employment each employee, including relief staff shall have a physical examination. The administrative body shall pay for all required physical examinations.
2. The report of the medical examination, which shall be dated and signed by the examining physician, shall indicate:
 - a. At the time of employment, an employee shall have

- had a satisfactory chest X-ray and shall have had a tuberculin test.
- b. Annually thereafter an employee whose previous tuberculin test was negative shall be required to have a tuberculin test only, but an employee whose previous tuberculin test was positive shall be required to have a chest X-ray annually.
 - c. The physical examination shall include a complete serology.
3. An employee, who upon examination, or as a result of tests, shows indications of physical or other disabilities which could be hazardous to a resident or other staff, or which would prevent or retard the performance of duties, shall not be assigned or returned to his position until the condition improves to the satisfaction of the examining physician and the director of the group home.

L. Volunteers

- 1. The donation of services by lay or professionally trained persons shall be encouraged, and shall be undertaken with proper staff training and supervision.
- 2. Volunteers shall have qualifications appropriate to the services they render.
- 3. They shall be selected on the basis of their ability to make a positive contribution to the program and shall understand and practice confidentiality.
- 4. The group home shall establish requirements for the selection of volunteers and the group home and the individual volunteer shall agree on the latter's assignment. The volunteer's responsibility shall be clearly differentiated from that of other staff members.
- 5. A staff member shall be in charge of the volunteer program, and shall provide a planned orientation to the program, philosophy, goals, and objectives of the group home.
- 6. A volunteer program in a group home shall be organized and not managed haphazardly in order that specific goals may be achieved.
- 7. Volunteers who have direct contact with the residents shall present a written statement certifying that they meet the general health requirements required of employees.

M. Student In-Service Training Staff

1. If students are utilized in the program, they shall present a statement from a physician certifying that they are in good health.
2. Any student utilized in the program shall be assigned to a staff member for planned supervision which shall include a planned orientation.

PROGRAM AND SERVICES

A. Therapeutic Services

1. Development

- a. The group home shall develop a written program responsive to the needs of its residents. It shall be specific, well-defined and therapeutically oriented.
- b. The program shall be formally evaluated by the Division of Youth Services at least annually.
- c. Program design, development and evaluation shall be an on-going process according to the needs of the residents of the group home.

2. Content

- a. Program shall include but shall not be limited to the following:
 - (1) Provision for individual counseling services;
 - (2) Provision for group counseling;
 - (3) Provision for family counseling;
 - (4) Provision for utilization of community resources;
 - (5) Provision for consultative services;
 - (6) Provision for education and/or vocational services;
 - (7) Provision for recreational services;
 - (8) Provision for the follow-up of post group home adjustment; and
 - (9) Provision for other staff services.
- b. The above services shall be delivered to both residents and their families.
- c. There shall be a design for the integration and coordination of the above services.
- d. The group home in conjunction with the Regional Offices of the Division of Youth Services shall develop a method for the on-going evaluation of the program in terms of its stated purposes and goals.
- e. The program shall be so structured as to facilitate the ease with which the resident can adjust to a living situation which is independent of the group home.

B. Health

1. Responsibility for Health Program

- a. It is the responsibility of the group home to maintain and promote the health of children for whom it assumes responsibility. The health program shall be under the continuing technical direction of a physician where indicated.
- b. Provision shall be made for the medical isolation of the resident when necessary; such isolation shall be recommended by a licensed physician or nurse.
- c. The nutrition of the residents is a vital aspect of the total health program. Planning, preparation, and serving of food shall be in accordance with the Department's Food Service Manual for Group Homes. Menus shall be available upon request. Provision shall be made for special diets for those residents who need them.
- d. A positive attitude toward good health and oral and dental hygiene shall be promoted. Standards of hygiene in relation to bathing, appropriate hand-washing, and toothbrushing shall be maintained.
- e. A physical examination shall be performed before admission and annually thereafter. Physician's recommendations for follow-up medical observations, immunizations, and treatment shall be carried out and appropriately recorded.
- f. There shall be a semi-annual dental examination with recommendations for follow-up dental care as indicated.

C. Education

1. The group home shall arrange for or follow through with the educational or vocational training of each resident. The education shall be in compliance with State and/or local laws pertaining to compulsory school attendance.
2. Community-based resources shall be utilized wherever possible.
3. Where academic educational facilities are operated by the group home the following requirements shall be met:
 - a. If teachers are employed by the group home, they shall hold a Virginia Teacher's Certificate and shall be eligible for employment in the public

school system and shall be permitted to teach only those areas and subjects for which they are certified.

- b. Teachers shall be chosen on the basis of their qualifications and their ability to work with children, and shall have the ability to work co-operatively with other group home staff in meeting the total needs of children served.
4. The group home, when appropriate, shall arrange for vocational training according to the resident's ability and interest.
 - a. If vocational teachers are employed by the group home, they shall hold a Virginia Industrial and Education Certificate and shall be eligible for employment in the public school system and shall teach only those subjects for which they are certified.
 - b. Teachers shall be chosen on the basis of their qualifications and their ability to work with children and shall have the ability to work co-operatively with other group home staff in meeting the total needs of residents served.
5. The group home shall provide assistance and guidance in locating resources and opportunities for higher education according to the resident's ability and interest.

D. Recreation

1. The recreational program of the group home shall include maximum use of available community recreational resources and facilities.
2. Staff and volunteer direction and supervision of the recreational program shall be provided both indoors and outdoors. Individual initiative and creativity shall be encouraged.
3. The group home shall provide suitable space and appropriate equipment for both indoor and outdoor recreation. There shall be at least one area within the group home for recreation.

E. Community Relationships

1. It is the responsibility of the group home to develop and implement a program in the surrounding community in order to build community interest, support, and resources.

- a. The resident, under staff supervision, shall be given opportunities and encouragement to take part in community life when he has gained sufficient security in the group living situation.
- b. Residents shall be encouraged to become acquainted with and to develop appreciation for the cultural and educational resources of the community, such as places of historical interest, museums, art galleries, etc.
- c. Community participation shall also be furthered by allowing older residents who can do so to accept employment in the community, either in paid or volunteer jobs, not only to earn spending money, but also to experience the benefits and responsibilities of community employment.
- d. Community interest in residents and efforts in their behalf (public parties, social skills, entertainment, invitations to visit families) shall be evaluated in advance by the staff and residents to ascertain that these are in the best interests of the residents.

2. Volunteer Services

- a. Written standards for volunteer recruitment, selection and participation shall be devised and followed by the group home.
- b. A written record of volunteer activities shall be maintained in the file of each volunteer.

F. Clothing

1. It shall be the responsibility of the group home when possible to work with the residents' parents or guardians to see that each resident is provided with adequate, comfortable, and well-fitting clothes, appropriate in style to those generally worn by their peers in the community.
2. Each resident shall have clothing exclusively for his own use.
3. Residents shall be permitted to participate in the selection and purchase of their own clothing whenever possible and appropriate.
4. Group homes shall consider the use of planned clothing budget plans for each resident, particularly for adolescents.
5. Clothing shall be individually inventoried and currently reviewed by the staff and residents to determine

the need for repairs and/or replacement. The results of such inventories shall be reported promptly to the proper administrative staff person.

6. When the resident leaves the group home, he shall be allowed to take his clothing with him.

G. Allowances

1. The group home shall provide opportunities for residents to learn the value and use of money through earning, spending, giving, and saving.
2. An allowance appropriate to age and needs shall be provided each resident when congruent with the program of the group home. The allowance shall be regular and in an amount known to the resident.

H. Discipline

1. A written standard delineating discipline procedures shall be developed by each group home and shall be available for review.
2. A clear differentiation shall be made between rights, privileges and responsibilities of residents.
3. Control and discipline of residents shall be staff responsibility.
4. Discipline shall be related to the specific misbehavior; Degrading or vindictive action is prohibited.
5. Corporal punishment is prohibited.
6. Group homes shall not punish residents by manipulation of their rights to meals, mail, and/or family visits.
7. Disciplinary isolation (see definition on page 3) of a child shall require approval of the group home director or his designee. In all instances, the group home director or his designee shall be notified within one hour of the initiation of isolation by the counselor on duty. A letter notifying the director of any resident's isolation shall be delivered by the counselor on duty to the director's office within four (4) hours of the initiation of isolation.
 - a. No resident shall be isolated for more than four (4) hours at any one time nor more than eight (8) hours within any forty-eight (48) hour period;

- b. Any resident in isolation is to be visually observed at least every fifteen (15) minutes or more frequently if his behavior merits it or if there is danger that he might harm himself.
 - c. Any resident confined in isolation shall have means of communicating with staff at all times.
 - d. All isolation areas shall be approved by the appropriate authority in the Department of Corrections prior to their designation as "isolation areas".
8. "Time out areas" shall be approved by the appropriate authority in the Department of Corrections prior to their designation as "time out areas".

I. Visitation

- 1. Written visitation procedures shall be developed by each group home and shall be made available to parents, residents, staff, and other interested persons.
- 2. Parents and other individuals important to the resident shall have the right to visiting privileges according to formulated plans.
- 3. Opportunities for family involvement shall be frequent and flexible in order to meet the needs of residents and their families, but shall not conflict with the on-going functioning of the group home.

CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO GROUP HOMES

- A. Each group home shall have written admission procedures outlining in detail the home's criteria for admission. Those procedures shall include, but not be limited to the following:

1. The Screening Process

- a. The screening process shall include a complete social history which shall be submitted by the referring agency.
- b. Screening shall establish that the candidates referred for admission to the group homes are children who are between the ages of eight (8) and twenty-one (21) and whose families cannot or will not meet their needs in a satisfactory manner even with maximum use of available resources.
- c. Acceptance for care in the group home shall be based upon a social history, which shall include identification data, psychosocial information, medical information, all records of previous medical and/or psychological treatment, institutional placement records, school records, court records, vocational training records, and job history. The history shall also include any other pertinent records and test results. A medical examination shall have been completed within the six (6) months prior to referral. Psychological and/or psychiatric examinations shall be completed as required by the Admissions/Release Committee on a case-by-case basis where the candidate's past record indicates violent, aggressive, or bizarre behavior.
- d. On the basis of this study, a group home shall admit only:
 - (1) A child whose needs it can meet. In determining whether the child's needs may be met, the following factors shall be considered:
 - (a) Candidate's degree of internal control and ability to function in a community-based setting;
 - (b) The availability of trained professional staff necessary to provide the candidate with maintenance, care, or treatment required by his physical, mental, or emotional condition.
 - (c) The age range, group composition, and sex of residents presently in the group home relative to the age and sex of the candidate;
 - (d) The mental, physical, and emotional

- condition of the candidate relative to that of the residents in the group home.
- (e) Availability of educational facilities suitable to the child's needs.

2. Admission Process

- a. All referrals for admission to the group home shall be made to the director of the home or to his designee. The referral process shall be initiated by the submission of the required materials by the referring worker. In addition to an assessment of this material to determine if the referral meets the above criteria, the pre-admission process shall include:
 - (1) Interview with candidate, candidate's family or significant others to discuss the hopes, expectations and goals of each.
 - (2) Where appropriate an interview with the referring worker shall be held. If an interview is not possible, verbal communication with the referring worker shall be mandatory.
 - (3) Discussion with the above of all ramifications of placement in the group home:
 - (a) legal custody;
 - (b) continuing role and responsibility;
 - (c) continued parental involvement and responsibility;
 - (d) if feasible, financial contribution;
 - (e) confidentiality;
 - (f) visitation;
 - (g) effect placement may have on individuals; and
 - (h) short and long term goals of placement.
- b. No candidate shall be denied admission to the group home on the basis of the parent's or guardian's inability or unwillingness to cooperate with the group home.
- c. There shall be a pre-placement visit of three to five days by the candidate to the group home except where distance or circumstances are prohibitive, as determined by the Youth Services Regional Coordinator.
- d. There shall be a brief visit by the parent(s) to the home which shall include an interview with the director, or his designee, and the family counselor. Where distance or circumstance prohibit a parental visit, the family counselor shall visit the family.
- e. Exceptions to these admission criteria shall be made only with the approval of the Director of the Division of Youth Services.

3. Admissions/Release Committee

This committee shall consist of not less than three (3) members; not more than 1/3 of the Admissions/Release Committee shall be group home staff members. At least 2/3 of the Admissions/Release Committee shall be composed of professional and/or community representatives. All decisions regarding admission to the group home shall be made by this committee.

4. Placement Process

- a. Each candidate and his family shall be given a written statement of the home's rules and regulations by the director of the group home.
- b. When the above procedures are satisfactorily completed, arrangements for transfer of the case to the group home shall be completed as soon as possible.

RELEASE CRITERIA

- A. Upon the release of the resident from the group home, he shall be referred for supervision and/or discharge to aftercare, to other local agencies, or to a non-residential service unit.
- B. Where any other community service agency will be involved in supervising the resident following release from the group home, the group home staff shall be actively involved with such agencies on an on-going basis wherever possible.
- C. The group home shall develop trial period and release procedures and practices; they shall be in writing and shall be known by residents, staff, related agencies and persons.
- D. The group home shall provide for a continuity of services during the early stages of post-group home adjustment, giving consideration to:
 - 1. Treatment activities
 - 2. Vocational activities
 - 3. Educational activities
- E. Wherever possible, the group home shall arrange a trial period prior to release during which:
 - 1. the resident shall be allowed to reside outside the group home; but
 - 2. the resident shall be eligible to receive all services of the group home; and
 - 3. the group home staff and/or other agencies supplying services shall be responsible for determining the boundaries and limits of the trial period.
- F. The group home shall make counseling services available to residents who have been released and their families. These services shall be in cooperation with and in support of other community agencies providing services to the resident.

- G. Prior to release, the resident's primary counselor shall prepare a written report outlining the essential elements in the resident's group home adjustment and the plan for continuity of service during the post-group home adjustment period. This plan shall be approved by the director of the group home and by the Admissions/Release Committee.
- H. The group home shall maintain a file showing current address and phone number of the released resident. This file shall be maintained for at least one year following release.

END