

Portage Place Youth Home

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Orientation/Intake: Youth entering the home, their parents or guardians, and the placing agency will be required to attend an orientation/intake session which will be required to attend an orientation/intake session which will include: completion of a file; review of the house rules, policies, and procedures; an explanation of the behavioral system; introduction to the other residents; a walk through tour of the home that includes pointing out the location of fire extinguishers and emergency exit routes.

Upon completed of the orientation session, the youth, parents or guardians, and the placing agency will all sign the Youth Commitment Form acknowledging that they understand the terms and conditions of the placement.

Youth entering the home will do so on a thirty day trial placement. In order to become familiar with their new surroundings, youth will be unable to check out or make phone calls, other than to their caseworker or parents/guardians, during the first thirty days of placement. Any variation of this policy must be approved by the Program Manager and the Clinical Director.

Behavioral System/Programming Overview: The home employs a four tiered behavioral level system. The level determines the privileges individual youth receive. Advancement in the level system depends on the youth's ability to develop a trusting relationship, to obey the house rules and policies, meeting their individual treatment/case plan goals, and active participation in individual and group therapy sessions. Progress will be evaluated by group home staff weekly and the Program Manager and/or Clinical Director will meet with individual youth to discuss the level which they have been assigned. Youth may lose a level for inappropriate behavior at the discretion of staff for inappropriate behavior pending a review of the consequences by the Program Manager and /or Clinical Staff.

LEVELS:

Restricted "R": Youth are permitted only limited contact with parents, guardians, or other family members who have been approved by youth caseworker, but will be unable to watch TV, play video games, or participate in other home related recreational activities. i.e., watching TV and movies, spending allowance, etc.

Limited Restriction "LR": Youth will enter the home and remain on LR status for one month. This month long adjustment period is designed to provide youth a sufficient time to familiarize themselves with and adjust to a new environment, and allow for the development of an individual treatment/case plan. Unless youth have lost a specific privilege for inappropriate behavior, youth will receive the following privileges while on LR:

- (4) four hour checkout with parents, guardians, or other family members that have been approved by your casework, the Program Manager and/or the Clinical Director
- youth may attend group outings
- youth may participate in all household related activities and privileges.

- (1) ten minute phone call per day.

General Restriction “GR”: Unless you have lost a specific privilege for inappropriate behavior, you will receive the following privileges while on GR:

- (2) day or night outings within the policies/rules of the home. Youth will receive an additional (2) day checkouts during the summer months. Youth must be accompanied by a responsible adult approved by their caseworker, Program Manager, and/or the Clinical Director on all outings
- youth may attend group outings
- you may participate in all household related activities and privileges
- (2) ten minute phone calls per day
- youth can be unsupervised in the front or back yard of the group home
- youth can attend and participate in school functions such as dances, sporting events, clubs, etc.
- overnight visits with parents and/or adults with approval of your caseworker, the Program Manager, and/or the Clinical Director

Non Restriction “NR”: Unless you have lost a specific privilege for inappropriate behavior you will receive the following privileges while on NR:

- (4) day or night outings within the policies/rules of the home. Youth will receive an additional (2) day checkouts during the summer months.
- youth may attend group outings
- you may participate in all household related activities and privileges
- (3) ten minute phone calls per day
- youth can be unsupervised in the front or back yard of the group home
- youth can attend and participate in school functions such as dances, sporting events, clubs, etc.
- overnight visits with parents or adults approved by your caseworker, the Program Manager and/or the Clinical Director
- visitors at the home with the prior approval of the Program Manager and/or Clinical Director
- youth are permitted to stay up ½ hour later than other youth

Case Plans: A written treatment plan will be developed for each youth entering the home. Case plans comprise the youth’s goals while in placement, and are intended to address the behaviors and diagnoses requiring placement that enable the youth to be reintegrated into the community. i.e., return home, live independently, or transition to a less restrictive level of care. Case plans will be developed in consultation with the following parties: the group home staff, the placing agency, parents/guardians, and other significant parties who are involved with the adolescent.

The home subscribes to an integrated clinical model whereby the treatment plan relates to the resident’s daily living. Treatment plans will contain goals that are measurable and behavior specific. Other than house rules and policies which all youth must observe, goals will be tailored to the individual needs of each youth. Case plans and accompanying goal areas will be revised at monthly and quarterly intervals to reflect

changes to the case plan. The Program Manager and/or Clinical Director will meet with youth to discuss their progress and revisions to their case plan, and to recommend the restriction level appropriate for individual youth.

Therapy/Counseling related services: Youth will be required to attend individual, group, and family counseling (as applicable) to address the mental disorder(s) and emotion disturbances that have been diagnosed as requiring therapy. Progress in therapy will determine when the youth will be discharged from the home to a lesser restrictive environment. Lack of progress or commitment to therapy may result in premature exit from the home.

Individual Counseling: Youth will be required to attend and actively participate in a minimum of two individual counseling sessions per week with the Clinical Director. The Clinical Director retains the privilege to schedule additional individual sessions as necessary.

Group Counseling: Youth will be required to attend a minimum of three group counseling sessions per week with the Clinical Director. The Clinical Director may schedule additional group therapy sessions to address milieu disruption issues as necessary and required. Group home staff may attend group counseling sessions at the request of the Clinical Director.

Family Counseling: Family counseling will be provided as necessary and contained in the youth's case plan.

Specialized Counseling Services: Specialized counseling services beyond the scope of the program will be secured through the community as deemed appropriate by the Clinical Director in consultation with the placing worker and the entity responsible for authorizing mental health services.

Major House Rules: Violation of the below specified rules may result in the loss of all privileges, and/or the loss of one or more levels, and/or extending the length of time on the restricted level (for youth on the lowest level), and/or the arrest or citation by local law enforcement, and/or removal from the home.

1. Youth are not permitted to be under the influence of or have in their possession alcohol or drugs.
2. Threatening language, violent behavior or behavior intended to harm another resident or staff is prohibited
3. This is a co-ed home, sexual contact is forbidden.
4. Leaving the premises without permission is considered running away. Law enforcement, your caseworker, and your parent/guardian will be notified.
5. Damage to the home or any of the premises' property is strictly prohibited. You will be expected to pay for any damage you cause.

Daily Living/Conduct Rules: Violation of these rules will result in the loss of privileges, or a level depending on the severity and frequency of the misconduct. Repeated violations of these rules may result in removal from the home.

1. After retiring for bed, you must remain in your room until called unless there is an emergency. You may use the bathroom if necessary. Lights are to be out fifteen minutes after you are sent to your room.
2. The area around and begin the staff desk/office area is off limits.
3. Other than phone calls to your caseworker, parents or other parties directly involved in your case, personal phone call hours are between the hours of 7:00PM to 9:30PM during the weekdays, and between the hours of 1:00PM to 4:00PM and 7:00PM and 10:00PM on the weekend. Youth on restricted status will be allowed no personal phone calls, youth on limited restriction will receive one ten minute phone call per day, youth on general restriction will receive two ten minute phone calls, and youth on non-restricted status will receive three ten minute phone calls during these periods. You must always ask staff permission to use the phone.
4. Youth must ask permission for any and all daily household activities. This includes everything.
5. Youth are not permitted to possess tobacco products or paraphernalia. Repeated or continued violation of this policy may result in law enforcement being contacted and the youth receiving a citation.
6. Transportation is by foot, bicycle, bus, or whenever possible via the agency vehicle. Kairos will pay bus fare for valid appointments such as doctor's appointments, counseling session's etc. whenever residents are not transported by staff.
7. Youth are not permitted to store a vehicle on the property while in placement. Ownership or possession of a vehicle while at the home is prohibited. You may operate a motor vehicle only with prior approval of your parents, caseworker, and staff if you have a drivers license or learners permit, and liability insurance. Drivers' education classes will be approved on an individual basis. If you enter the home with a driver's license it must be given to staff to be kept in your personal bag.
8. Chores will be assigned daily.
9. This is a coed home and we do not allow physical contact of any kind. i.e., hugging, holding hands, etc.
10. Profanity, threatening language or teasing is prohibited.
11. Normal bedtime hours during the school year are at 10:00PM on Sunday through Thursday and at 11:00PM on the weekends. Youth on non-restricted "NR" status will be permitted to stay up one half hour later than the above prescribed hours. Youth will arise between the hours of 5:30 and 6:00AM during the weekdays, and between the hours of 9:00 and 9:30AM on the weekend. Bedtimes may be adjusted to accommodate work scheduled, to meet youth's developmental needs, and as a consequence for inappropriate behavior.
12. During the summer months, you will be awakend at 7:00AM during the weekdays and between the hours of 9:00 and 9:30AM during the weekends. Bedtime hours will be increased to 11:00PM on the weekdays and until 11:30PM on the weekends. Youth on NR will be permitted to stay up one half hour laterthan the prescribed hours. Bedtimes may be adjusted to

accommodate work schedules, to meet youth's developmental needs, and as a consequence for inappropriate behavior.

13. Parents, relatives, and friends will not be permitted to give youth money unless it is for a specific purpose. This detracts from the incentive to fulfill household related chores.
14. Youth may retain a maximum of \$3.00 for personal spending. Any money in excess of \$3.00 must be turned into staff. These funds can be checked out upon request for good reason. Staff will maintain a personal funds account documentation sheet that will be kept in a locked and secure area. All purchases must be approved by staff and documented by a receipt of purchase which the youth must return to staff.
15. No clothing or paraphernalia that depicts sex, violence, drugs or alcohol is permitted in the home.
16. Visitors, other than pre arranged visits with immediate family members are prohibited. Any exception to this rule requires the prior approval of the Program Manager and/or the Clinical Director.
17. You will be assigned a day and time to complete your laundry. This includes folding and putting your clothes away. You cannot checkout or participate in group outings until your laundry is completed.
18. Outing requests need to be planned in advance. No last minute requests will be accepted.
19. You are not allowed to answer the phone.
20. You are not allowed in other resident's rooms unless they are present and you were invited.
21. You are expected to eat a portion of each item that is prepared and served at meal times, unless we have medical documentation that you cannot eat a particular item. If you refuse to eat a designated meal, you will not be allowed snacks until you have eaten the next designated meal. If you are hungry later, you will eat leftovers from supper if available, or staff will prepare you an alternative nutritious meal. If you waste food staff will prepare your plate at future meals.
22. Staff must be informed of any new items you bring into the home. These items must be placed on your inventory sheet.
23. Your bed must be made and your room cleaned before you leave the home in the morning.
24. If you refuse to arise in the morning without good cause, you will remain in your room for the remainder of the day. You will only be permitted out of your room for meals prepared by staff.
25. Any money you receive is subject to 70% restitution withholding. This includes any and all court obligations, house fines or reimbursement for damage that you caused to the home. Your chore allowance is subject to 50% withholding for any of the above charges.
26. Physical contact is not permitted. i.e., flinching, wrestling, horseplay, etc.
27. Food is not to leave the kitchen/dining area without the permission of staff.
28. Checkout times for youth who have earned this privilege is as follows:

School Year: Residents aged 12 to 15 are permitted to checkout on weekday nights (Monday-Thursday) from 7:00PM to 9:00PM, from 7:00PM to 10:00PM on weekend nights (Friday and Saturday), and from 1:00PM to 5:00PM on Saturday afternoon.

Residents aged 16 and above checkout times will be extended to 9:30PM on weekdays, and until 10:30PM on weekend nights. Saturday afternoon checkout times remain from 1:00PM until 5:00PM.

Summer: The checkout times for residents as designated above will be increased by ½ hour during the summer months when school is not in session.

Youth must have a specific destination for all checkouts, including an address and phone number where you can be reached. You must inform staff if you change locations, and provide them with the address and phone number of your new destination. Any variation of the above checkout policies must be approved in advance by the Program Manager and/or Clinical Director.

Work/Employment Rules: Youth will be permitted to work if this is a goal contained in their individual treatment plan. Any and all employment is governed by the below-described conditions.

1. Money Management Practices: Money will be regulated in one of the following methods
 - a. External Checking/Savings Account: Youth with case plans containing independent living goals will be encouraged to open a savings and/or checking account. The passbook will be retained by group home staff. (This requirement may be waived with the approval of the Program Manager and Clinical Director). If this requirement is waived, then staff will be responsible for maintaining the resident's money in a safe and secured manner.
 - b. Internal Savings Account: As per the house rules and policies regarding the tracking, disbursement and documentation of personal funds. (See above criteria)
2. Youth must obtain permission from staff before cashing their paycheck, and staff must view the paycheck/stub or correspondence from the employer documenting the amount of money the youth received prior to cashing any check and/or depositing any money earned.
3. Youth owing restitution will be required to allocate 70% of each paycheck toward fulfilling this obligation. This includes court and house fines. A maximum of 50% of the remaining funds can be used for personal needs, and the balance will be deposited in an external or internal savings account. All funds, including money designated for personal needs, will be retained, distributed, and documented by staff as per the conditions delineated above.

4. Youth who do not owe restitution will be permitted to retain 30% of their pay for personal needs, and 70% will be deposited in an internal or external savings account. The disbursement and documentation requirements contained in #3 directly above area applicable in their entirety.
5. Any and all expenditures must be approved by the group home staff, and youth are required to document purchases by turning in receipts to staff.
6. Youth must furnish staff with a weekly work schedule.
7. Youth who fail to consistently abide by the rules of the home may be requested to terminate their job.
8. Youth must immediately return home when their workday is finished.
9. The group home will provide lunch supplies, however, youth are expected to prepare their own lunch.
10. Youth are expected to exhibit an appropriate work ethic while on the job. Examples include showing respect to your supervisor, co-workers, and the general public, following supervisor requests and directives without complaining, wearing appropriate attire, and the like.

Educational Rules: Specific educational goals will be addressed in the youth's case plan as their individual needs and circumstances warrant. The below-specified rules will generally apply to school attendance and performance. Any variation of the below guidelines requires the approval of the Program Manager and the Clinical Director.

1. All youth must attend school during their placement unless stated otherwise in their case plan.
2. If you are too ill to go to school on Friday, you will lose your weekend checkout and group outing privileges.
3. Youth are not permitted to leave the school campus without the approval of the group home staff.
4. Youth will be provided a school lunch ticket.
5. Youth who use the city transit to attend school will be furnished with a bus ticket. Youth will be responsible for bus passes that are lost or for unaccounted use.
6. Participation in extracurricular activities requires the prior approval of the Program Manager and Clinical Director. It is the youth's responsibility to provide adequate and sufficient notice to staff of any special needs for extracurricular activities or other school related projects.
7. Youth who are not transported by group home staff to school must return home immediately when school is dismissed.
8. All youth must participate in the daily tutor program unless exempted by the Program Manager and Clinical Director. Youth must provide the group home staff with a weekly progress report signed by each teacher, and those participating in tutor time must bring work home to complete.
9. Any youth who is expelled from school will lose use of the home's recreational activities such as: television, video games etc. during school hours for the length of the suspension. Additional consequences, at the discretion of group home staff, including loss of level (s) or checkouts may be

administered depending on the severity and repetitiveness of the behavior that resulted in expulsion.

10. Failure to inform staff of detentions, suspensions or other incidents of misbehavior may result in consequences at the discretion of staff. Specific consequences may include loss of checkouts, receiving additional chores or loss of a level if this behavior is repetitive in nature.