



FAMILY HANDBOOK

Your family member has made the ‘next step’ in his recovery by moving into one of our homes. This is a fantastic move in the right direction, and we applaud this decision. Our family handbook is designed to educate you, the family, about what you can expect from Next Step Recovery during your family member’s time with us.

While we wish there was a ‘magic bullet’ that would cure all addictions, unfortunately there is not. Next Step Recovery is not an in-patient treatment center but rather a 12-Step structured sober living environment. It is a step toward independence after in-patient treatment is complete. We do however offer an Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) that is an outpatient treatment program that runs for 12 weeks.

Living sober is a new experience for most of our clients and therefore it is not unusual for them to experience frustrations as they work toward independent living. At NSR, there is always someone available for the client and for you, the family. We encourage you to ask questions, to contact us with worries, and most of all, to BREATHE. We will work with you as family members to understand that feelings of guilt, shame, anxiety and depression are predictable at this early stage of recovery. We believe that working with you is a sacred trust and we will never take the responsibility lightly.

Confidentiality

Your loved one is Next Step Recovery’s client. As an adult, he can choose to whom to release his personal information. When it comes to confidentiality, you may have heard people refer to a federal law commonly referred to as HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996). This law provides blanket rules and regulations regarding how information can be disclosed, and to whom. An even more thorough piece of federal legislation, which is specific to those receiving substance abuse related services, is called 42 CFR Part 2. These sets of rules have a much deeper impact in terms of confidentiality and the use of Protected Healthcare Information in providing these services. We are governed by both rules and will always meet or exceed these standards per our professional duties. Please understand that if we are unable to share information with you, it is due to the scope of these rules as we otherwise committed to having healthy lines of communication with families.

Eating Disorder Diagnosis Policy

Next Step Recovery does not admit clients with active eating disorders. If an eating disorder is diagnosed while the resident is in our program, NSR will follow the recommendations of a medical professional regarding continued participation. If treatment for the eating disorder is deemed appropriate within the structure of our program, the cost is the responsibility of the client/family. Next Step reserves the right to refer out those clients diagnosed with eating disorders when the client is in medical peril and/or requires more supervision than we can offer.

A Family Disease

Addiction is a disease that never affects only one member of a family. Our clients attend 12-step meetings on a regular basis (required 4x a week). Because the years of use have taken a toll on everyone involved, we encourage family members to attend Al-Anon, Nar-Anon and/or some type of 12-step support group. As one member of the family changes, even for the better, all members of the family are impacted. The more you know about the disease of addiction and the process of recovery, the better and more quickly the family will be healed. Next Step can also recommend outside family therapists if the need arises. These professionals work with you as supportive team members, while we at NSR work primarily with the identified client. We also recommend all of our families to read *Co-Dependent No More* by Melody Bettie or any books by Pia Melody.

Family Communication and Staying In Touch

It is helpful for people in recovery to learn to plan, anticipate their needs, delay gratification, and establish boundaries. Many of our clients have become too dependent on family members, which hampers their recovery process. We recommend that you schedule a weekly phone appointment with your loved one to catch up, discuss business items, and to connect.

A communication plan cuts down on random phone calls that can add to your loved one's anxiety. We understand for some families that more frequent communication is more suitable; however, we have found that planned communication once or twice a week helps people in recovery begin to reclaim their independence and also helps the family release some control over their loved one's life choices.

As regards mail and packages for residents, please send everything to our main office: **900 Hendersonville Rd, Suite 203, Asheville, NC 28803**. We will disseminate all mail daily. We also require that residents open packages in the presence of a staff member.

Home Visits

For the first 30 days, residents are not allowed to return home for a visit. Families can come and visit at any time, but we do not encourage parents to spend their time in our recovery homes while visiting. Our residents share their space with many others who have schedules and lives of their own, and we ask residents and their families to be mindful of this fact.

A request for a home visit pass may be denied if a resident is not in compliance with our house policies that include, but are not limited to, attendance of mandatory meetings and daily chores. Please take a moment to read our **House Policies** located on our website.

Girlfriends and other intimate relations are not allowed to visit any of our men's recovery homes. It is our belief that sexual relationships interfere with early recovery progress and we do not encourage dating until the resident has been in the program for at least 90 days or longer.

Refund Policy

Our entrance fee and monthly program fees are **nonrefundable**. If a resident is asked to leave NSR for any reason, the entrance fee and the current week's rent will not be returned. The same is true for IOP services if there is an out of pocket charge for Intensive Outpatient.

Relapse Policy

Next Step Recovery has a zero-tolerance policy for any drug or alcohol use. If a relapse occurs while living at NSR, residents will no longer be allowed to stay in any of our houses and must leave as soon as a possible. If a relapse occurs in the middle of the night, we will have him stay with one of our staff members before calling in the AM (only with his permission). Upon admission to Next Step Recovery, every resident must develop a relapse prevention plan. This plan specifies whom we call in the case of a client relapse and the procedure to be followed to ensure the client's safety and the well being of our other community members.

We do ask that you complete our 'Crisis Plan' form in case of relapse. This will inform everyone involved of the next appropriate step ahead of time, so you don't have to figure it out in a time of stress. Please share with us your thoughts on this matter and your plan as soon as possible.

If we suspect a client to be intoxicated, we reserve the right to restrict driving privileges by whatever means necessary. If the resident is threatening to harm himself or others, NSR will make a professional decision to involve the emergency department, law enforcement, or area mobile crisis unit.

Urine Screens

NSR performs daily drug and alcohol tests at random throughout the entire population. With the rising rate of designer drugs, Opiate abuse and the use of fake urine and other tools of deception, Next Step Recovery will be working with an outside lab (Radeas) to collect and send urine samples once a week for further screening.

The use of a urine screen to be sent to a lab will ensure the integrity of the sober living home for all residents, staff and the apartment community at large. Through these tests,

Next Step Recovery will be able to see levels of substances go down and to rule out any false positives due to prescription medication.

Contracts

We utilize several types of ‘contracts’ at Next Step as motivational tools during challenging periods of your loved one’s recovery. These include (but are not limited to) Zero Tolerance Contracts, Behavioral Contracts, Motivational Contracts, and Vehicle Use Contracts. All of our contracts are time-limited, require the resident to meet measurable and achievable goals, and assist the resident in refocusing his efforts on what he came here for- recovery.

Zero Tolerance Contracts are used very sparingly and in exceptional circumstances; these typically address behaviors associated with relapse risk and are used to strictly reinforce community standards and escalate program participation to maximize benefits. Behavioral Contracts are written to help resolve problems arising in how a resident is conducting himself within any aspect of the program. If we choose to use this type of contract, trust that several warnings have been issued, or that the actions were severe enough to warrant an immediate plan of correction. We implement Vehicle Use Contracts when a resident is misusing their vehicle, or if it is a past or present impediment to their recovery. These are perhaps the most common form of contract, as residents will often ask for something to help hold them accountable in exchange for the ongoing privilege of driving.

Medication

If a client is on prescription medication upon entering Next Step Recovery, he will be required to continue that medication, as it is prescribed by dose and frequency, until such time as a doctor or psychiatrist conducts an assessment.

It is our policy to require a psychiatrist or doctor follow up with all residents who are taking prescribed medications. Scheduling appointments, follow-ups and cost for these services will be the responsibility of the resident and/or family, although we will help locate appropriate medical professionals as necessary.

Communication with Staff

Staff members are available during business hours but if not able to take your calls, we will typically return non-urgent messages within 24 hours. Emergency calls will be handled after hours by our on-call staff, however, we encourage you not to contact staff after hours with non-emergency matters. For updates on progress, with a resident’s consent, you may find it helpful to schedule regular phone meetings with Susan Stader or a senior staff member by calling **828.350.9960**.

Intensive Outpatient Services (IOP)

If insurance policies are used, they can only be used for IOP services and not sober living fees. IOP is conducted 3x's a week (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday) for 3 hours at a time. All IOP clients will be seen weekly by one of the three therapists on staff (Susan, Terry, or Alex). If you are paying for IOP services out-of-pocket on a monthly basis, that fee is non-refundable.

BC/BS will always send reimbursement checks to the policy holder. Those reimbursement checks will come in the mail (at your home) addressed to whoever the policy holder is. Sometimes it is a large amount made out to your son and not the facility. There are times when these checks are cashed and deposited into either their or your account unknowingly and we want to avoid that (see attached) right up front. As soon as checks do come in (and they might come in months after IOP is over), they need to be forwarded to Next Step Recovery directly with a copy of the Explanation of Benefits (EOB). We appreciate your prompt attention to making sure our facility is reimbursed for services received.

Cash Accounts

We highly recommend putting client funds into our Cashbox system online or to advise how much should be taken from the credit card kept on file for food and incidentals. Next Step staff can track where money is being spent on a weekly basis by collecting receipts. Money is dispersed once a week on Wednesday's in preparation of grocery shopping that evening (and Friday nights as well).

Usual amounts left for someone is \$100 a week/\$400 a month. There really is no reason to leave more than that. Learning how to budget funds is a new concept for most and we are here to help, but please do not exceed more than \$500 a month in client funds. Once a job has been secured, the amount each week should be reduced. Having a lot of cash in your wallet early in recovery is not a good idea.

Men's House Contract

Please take some time to read the [Men's House Contract](#) so we can all be on the same page while your son is here. Any questions or concerns, please contact the office or Susan directly at 828-350-9960 or susan@nextsteprecovery.com.

Please sign and send back to us as soon as possible.

Acknowledgement of Receipt of the Family Handbook

We, the undersigned, acknowledge that we have received a copy of Next Step Recovery's Family Handbook and are familiar with the policies contained within. We agree to abide by the policies stated in the Family Handbook.

Signature of Family Member *Date*

Signature of Family Member *Date*

*If you have any questions regarding this handbook, please contact Susan Stader, Executive Director at **828.350.9960**.*

ASSIGNMENT OF BENEFITS

I hereby acknowledge that all direct payments of medical payment disbursements , including medical payment disbursements to which are mailed personally to Insured Subscriber and/or Patient shall be IMMEDIATELY transferred via Postal Service to Next Step Recovery LLC. This is a DIRECT ASSIGNMENT OF MY ANY MEDICAL PAYMENT BENEFITS. This transfer of Insurance Payments will remain in effect until ALL Insurance disbursement checks have been collected from the Insured and/or Patient.

A copy of this authorization is as valid as the original document.

Failure to forward any payments made directly to the Insured and/or Patient within three days of receipt will result in immediate collections activity.

I authorize the release of any medical information necessary to in order to obtain payment and I understand that I am financially responsible for all charges, late fees, interest, attorney fees and collection charges considered patient responsibility by my insurance company. I understand that if I am not insured I am responsible for the charges of all services provided to me. I authorize Next Step Recovery to deposit checks received on my account when made out in my name.

I have read and I understand the above financial policies and I accept responsibility of timely mailing Any and All Insurance disbursements to :

P.O. Box 2290 Skyland N.C. 28776

Patient Signature Date

Insured Signature Date