

## **RULES, REGULATIONS AND SERVICES**

**ACTION PLAN:** The action plan is a weekly plan for working on a specific goal you wish to achieve (i.e., handling anger or depression, building self esteem, addressing sobriety, learning assertiveness, or resolving family conflict). Plans will be reviewed and discussed with your treatment coordinator during weekly progress survey (sit down rounds) meetings on Fridays.

**ALCOHOL/DRUGS:** No alcohol or drugs are permitted on the premises. Therapy is a part of every moment you are here. In order to participate and benefit fully from this program, you must be substance-free. The use of any non-prescribed drug or consumption of any alcoholic beverage, either on or off station, while you are in the program will be grounds for discharge. The possession, provision of, or sale of alcohol or drugs is prohibited and will be referred to the proper authorities and will also constitute grounds for discharge.

Substance screening will be conducted upon admission and randomly during program participation, especially upon returning from pass and when the community or staff has concern about a Veteran's possible use. An observed specimen will be submitted within two hours of request. Refusal to comply with this rule is treated as an admission of use and is a dischargeable offense.

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS:** Residents with unresolved alcohol/drug abuse problems are required to attend at least three (3) of the AA meetings held on station, on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m., in Building 90, Room 1B-118.

**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:** Psychological testing, meetings, classes, group therapy sessions, memorial services, recreation, and exercise activities are important. All are scheduled into your Treatment Plan for their usefulness in overcoming PTSD symptoms. Full treatment means both attending, and participating conscientiously, in all program activities.

**AUTOMOBILES AND OTHER PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES:** Residents will leave the keys to their vehicle with a PRRP staff member upon admission. Keys may be returned to the Resident after the master treatment plan is completed, and at the determination of the Treatment Team. All vehicles will be parked in the designated area.

**CANTEEN:** Canteen hours are 7:45 am to 3:30 pm (Monday-Friday). The Canteen is closed weekends and Federal holidays.

**CELLULAR PHONES / BEEPERS / PAGERS:** **Do not bring these items to group.** They are to be turned off during the hours of 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, and 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm.

**CHURCH SERVICES:** Religious services are conducted in the chapel on station. Hours are posted on the bulletin board on the ward.

**COFFEE:** Coffee overuse adds to anxiety, tension, and sleep disturbance. Use of decaffeinated coffee is strongly encouraged. Provision of coffee and maintenance of a clean area will be a shared responsibility of all Residents. If you have any questions concerning the effects of caffeine, please see the physician.

**COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT:** Member Government meetings and Community Groups are designed to give you a measure of control over your environment. The goal is to help become fully self-sufficient as quickly as possible. For this reason, both attendance and participation in these meetings is of the greatest importance.

**COMPUTER USAGE:** Computer use rules are posted in the computer area.

Schedule:	Mon – Fri	6 – 8 am 4 – 6 pm 7:15 – 10:30 pm
	Sat – Sun	6 am – 10:30 pm (except during unit outings)

Computer access may be terminated at the discretion of the Treatment Team.

**CONSENTS:** Written consent is necessary prior to the release of confidential personal information, for the use of photographs, for surgical procedures, etc.

**CURFEW / LIGHTS OUT:** All Residents must be on the unit by 10:30 pm. Development of improved sleep patterns is an important part of treatment. In order to improve nighttime sleep, **NAPS are NOT to be taken during the day.** Residents are to be in pajamas prior to retiring and in bed with television off and room lights out by 11:30 pm, Sunday through Thursday. Friday and Saturday hours may be more liberal.

**DENTAL WORK:** To be eligible for dental work, you must be either 100% SC, a POW for more than 6 months, or have been discharged from the service within the last 90 days. Acute dental emergencies will be treated.

**DEHUMANIZATION:** One treatment goal is to re-enter the broader community. This requires practicing mutual respect and developing the concept of equality. Remember, your rights end where another person's rights begin. Certain behaviors inhibit this growth process and will not be allowed. Such behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Name-calling
- Intimidating speech or gestures
- Racial or sexual slurs
- Persistent profanity
- Hostile or degrading statements
- Threats or violence directed against persons or property

**DESTRUCTIVE / IMPULSIVE BEHAVIOR:** Maintaining an environment where both Residents and staff are safe from physical harm is a top priority. Each Resident is responsible for his own conduct on the unit. **Acts of violence and threats cannot be allowed and will result in discharge.** An act of "violence" or "assaultive behavior" refers to behavior where a Resident either attempts to do or does physical harm to persons or properties. Such behavior will result

in discharge and, depending on the circumstances, referral to the proper authorities. Although we expect to deal with feelings of deep desperation and anger, our unit is not equipped philosophically nor environmentally to manage suicide/homicide risks.

**DRESS CODE:** Physical appearance is a clue to psychological well being; therefore it is expected that you will be presentable at all times. Do not wear any kind of military attire in any form or fashion; this includes sweatbands, hats, sweatshirts, etc. All alarms on watches are to be turned off during groups. No shades or hats are to be worn in groups. If you wear shorts, they must be mid-thigh length, no shorter.

**ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES:** Any appliances approved for use must be cleared through Engineering Service prior to use.

**EYEGLASSES:** Veterans eligible for eyeglasses or prescription for eyeglasses must be 50% Service Connected, 10% or more for eye problems, or a former POW.

**FAMILY INVOLVEMENT:** Our treatment approach involves family participation as part of your recovery. Your loved ones have been greatly affected by your behavior as they coped with your anger, fears, depression, and isolation. PRRP staff will contact family members to determine ways in which family members may have a role in your recovery. Problems have arisen with communication, relationships, responsibilities, and roles. Counseling is available to your family and significant others. Visitation that does not interfere with scheduled programming is strongly supported. Refer to section titled **Visitation**.

**Your acceptance of program philosophy, as indicated by your participation, means you consent to the involvement of yourself, your family, and your significant others.**

**GAMBLING:** Gambling is not permitted.

**GROUP ABSENCE AND TARDINESS:** In emergency situations when absence or tardiness cannot be avoided, it is the Resident's responsibility to inform the group leader of the reason for the absence or tardiness. The group leader will decide whether the incident will be treated as an excused or as an unexcused absence. If a Resident is asked to leave a group because of disruptive behavior, it will be treated as an unexcused absence. The Treatment Team will deal with unexcused absences and tardiness to groups and activities. Roll is taken in each group.

**GROUP THERAPY:** Group therapy is the core treatment method. It combines a healthy amount of group support while allowing confrontation of issues as needed. Trust is an essential element, but it grows slowly as we get to know each other. Groups are used to achieve many different treatment objectives, including those of recreational therapy. It is the Resident's responsibility to be on time for all groups.

**HOUSEKEEPING:** You are expected to have your bed made and your area neat and clean by 6:40 am every morning except on weekends, when you may wait until 10:00 am. Please keep the entire unit neat and clean. No items will be placed on the tops of the lockers. Personal clothing and items are to be kept locked in your lockers. You may display personal items and add touches to the decoration of your room as long as they are not offensive to others and are consistent with the philosophy of the program.

**LAUNDRY:** A washer and dryer are available for your use. Laundry soap is available for Residents who do not have money to purchase their own. You are expected to keep the area clean.

**LOCKERS AND KEYS:** You are responsible for keeping all your personal items, medications, and any valuables you chose to keep on the unit locked in your assigned locker. A key will be issued to you upon admission.

**LOCKED DOORS:** Our doors are locked after 10:30 pm on weekdays and at 12:00 midnight on Fridays and Saturdays.

**MAIL:** Mail is delivered to the unit by 11:00 am. You may check at the nurses station for mail.

**MEALS:** Meals are served in the dining room at the following times:

Breakfast ----- 7:30 am  
Lunch ----- 12:00 noon  
Dinner ----- 4:30 pm

A dietician is available for nutritional counseling. It is the Resident's responsibility to be on time for meals.

**MEDICAL / PHYSICAL PROBLEMS:** The PRRP program is geared toward the improvement and resolution of psychiatric problems. The concentrated, compressed schedule is a demanding and rigorous one, requiring that you be able to get around on your own, and be fully able to participate. While minor medical concerns can be handled, major problems will have to be addressed either before or after the program.

**MEDICATION:** The only prescription medications allowed are those prescribed by the unit physician. Our philosophy is to use the absolute minimum medication necessary to insure that you are alert and able to deal with the program and personal issues. Exceptions will be determined by the treatment team. Work done here will often result in tension, anxiety, and discomfort. We are committed, however, to trying alternative ways to approach this challenge. In this case, the best meds are less meds.

Certain over-the-counter medicines, such as aspirin or Tylenol, may be kept in the Resident's locker and used as needed. Please inform the staff if you plan to keep such medication in your possession.

**MEDICATION MONITORING:** All Residents will administer their own medications and will comply with the Medication Monitoring Program procedure.

**MEMORIAL SERVICES:** The PRRP Memorial Service is held every nine weeks in the Station Chapel. The service begins about 8:45 am and usually lasts one hour. Following the service, both staff and Residents return to the unit to participate in a debriefing group. The entire day is dedicated to the service and debriefings. This is a therapeutic group activity developed to assist

in the initiation of the grief process and in the promotion of recovery by exploring feelings. **All Residents will participate in the Memorial Service.**

**PASS POLICY:** Residents are not allowed to leave the station unescorted prior to formulation of the treatment plan. Passes are earned privileges which are granted for therapeutic reasons. Eligibility for the pass begins after your fourteenth (14<sup>th</sup>) day of treatment on the PRRP. The two kinds of passes are “day” and “weekend” passes. While day passes can be granted for periods up to 9:00 pm, they generally are not granted during scheduled programming. Complications in treatment or noncompliance with treatment may result in the denial of pass requests. Emergency passes will be dealt with on an individual basis by the Treatment Team.

Pass procedure entails that you personally: (1) sign the request for pass list by Wednesday at 1:00 pm each week, (2) sign in and out at the nurses station, and (3) notify staff upon departure and return.

Weekend passes begin at 2:30 pm on Friday and terminate at 9:00 pm Sunday night. Special Holiday passes may be granted in accordance with hospital policy and at the discretion of the Treatment Team.

**All passes terminate upon your return to the station.** Failure to return from pass on time can result in discharge. If you cannot possibly return on time, you must notify staff to request extension.

**PATIENTS’ LIBRARY:** The Patients’ Library is located in the basement of Building 6 and is open daily from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.

**PERSONAL HYGIENE:** All Residents are to respect their fellow group members and staff by maintaining a high quality of body cleanliness. If you are in need of hygiene supplies, the staff will provide it for you (i.e., soap, deodorant, toothpaste, comb, etc.).

**PERSONAL JOURNAL:** Each Resident is given a journal upon entering the program. This journal is to be used for your autobiography, group assignments, and a daily account of your thoughts, feelings, and experiences, creative writing, and generally as a repository for your past and a treasure chest for your future.

**PETTY OFFENSES:** Station policy for petty offenses, other than some parking violations, requires the issuance of a U.S. Court Violations Notice by Police and Security Service. Violations notices usually result in a fine. Disposition of a violation notice can be accomplished through contacting Police and Security Service.

**PROGRAM SCHEDULE:** The activities in this program are geared toward your recovery. Therefore, your participation is absolutely necessary. All activities not clearly presented as “optional” are required. Please refer to the section labeled “Attendance and Participation”. The unit schedule is located in the program folder issued to you upon admission. It is also posted on the unit bulletin board.

**RAZORS:** Cartridge type razors such as Techmatic, Trac II, etc, are allowed. Electric shavers must be approved by Engineering Service. For information on procedure, inquire at the nurses station. All straight edge, double edge, and injector razors are prohibited.

**SAFETY:** Safety is a major concern to all of us. On admission to the unit, you will be shown the location of all exits from the unit, including fire escapes. You will also be shown the locations of fire extinguishers. Cooperation in maintaining a safe environment is a responsibility we all share.

**SICK CALL:** Each morning, Monday through Friday, at 8:45 am, the unit physician will be available to meet with Residents for any special requests or needs. **The Treatment Team will determine any changes in the Resident's medications or treatment plan.**

**SICK CONTRACTS: Sick contracts are unacceptable.** Sick contracts involve collusion between Residents to keep secrets and to prevent consequences for behavior that is inconsistent with treatment goals. Honesty, openness, and acceptance of responsibility for behavior are keys to improvement and recovery. When you and a fellow Resident(s) enter a contract to keep secrets, you engage in behavior designed to delay your progress and to continue maladaptive behavior pattern that may be severely emotionally damaging. To insure a healthy community, sick contracts are not acceptable.

**SIGN OUT:** Any time you leave the station, you must sign out at the nurses station. You must also sign in upon returning.

**SLEEP PATTERNS:** Throughout the years, many veterans have developed erratic sleep habits which incorporate daytime sleep and nighttime wakefulness. Inadequate rest contributes to anxiety, fatigue, irritability, and inattentiveness. To gain maximum benefit from this program and to function well in the usually daily work environment, staff will assist you with the adjustment to this pattern through relaxation therapy and requiring that you refrain from day and evening napping. **NAPS ARE NOT TO BE TAKEN DURING THE DAY AND EARLY EVENINGS.** In keeping with medication policy, sleep medication is not utilized on this unit; however, an anti-anxiety agent is given as needed for the first three days and then discontinued. No one is to be in bed before 8:00 pm.

**SMOKING:** Smoking is not permitted in any building at this VA facility. Smoking in any building may result in a fine and **subsequent discharge** from the program.

**TELEPHONE:** The Residents' telephone is located in the corridor. In keeping with our community respect for one another, calls are not to exceed five (5) minutes. Generally, program activities will not be interrupted for telephone calls. Messages will be taken whenever possible. The telephone number is (254) 753-9370.

**TELEVISION:** Since all Residents must share the television, respect and consideration for your fellow veterans must be used. Use of the television is not allowed during therapeutic group time. The televisions will be turned off at 10:30 each night except Friday and Saturday. Weekend hours are more flexible, but consideration for fellow Residents is most important.

**TREATMENT COORDINATORS:** Each Resident has treatment coordinators who present treatment plans, coordinate care, and review with the Veteran the week's treatment.

**TREATMENT TEAM:** The basic unit staff working with you in the resolution of PTSD related problems are your treatment team. Program priorities and policy are determined by the treatment team, which generally consists of a psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, readjustment counseling therapist, nursing staff, and other hospital staff as required. This unit shares responsibility with you for your treatment.

**UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCE:** Unauthorized absence (UA) results in discharge. To avoid UA status, you must have a pass, sign out at the nurses station, and sign back in, on time, upon returning from your pass. Failure to return or to notify nursing staff of any delay will result in unauthorized absence and discharge.

**VISITATION:** A major emphasis of treatment is to facilitate reconnection with and maintenance of a relationship network with family, friends, and significant others. Visitors who have been using substances such as drugs or alcohol and whose behavior is disruptive will not be welcome. Visitors may not visit in your room, the corridor leading to the sleeping quarters, or the dayroom. Family visitation is strongly encouraged during weekends. Visiting hours are from 1:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Staff will assist in providing privacy to meet with your visitors. Telephonic visitations are limited to five (5) minutes. Program activities will not be interrupted for visitation.

**WEAPONS:** All weapons, firearms, knives, including pocketknives, are strictly prohibited in accordance with Federal Regulations. Possession will result in discharge, referral to proper authorities and denial of readmission to the unit.

**WARM LINE:** Senior Residents and outpatients operate the warm line for Veterans and family members seeking support and information about PTSD. Warm line contacts are to be no longer than 20 minutes per call, and are **NOT** to be used for personal business. If a call should turn **HOT**, staff must be contacted immediately. Each call is logged into the record book.