



# *Nevada Youth Empowerment Project*

## *Residential Program Expectations Handbook*

### *A Community Living Program*

*Please take some time to read this packet. This information will guide and assist you during your stay. NYEP provides individualized supportive services and community style living to young women whose ultimate goal is to achieve empowerment through independence.*

This handbook is designed to help you with your transition from your prior residence to your new residence at NYEP. Nevada Youth Empowerment Project is a 501(c) 3 non-profit business providing specialized residential housing to older, female youth, ages 17-21, using a treatment component within a mixed social/family style environment that includes behavioral therapy as well as basic skills training to promote independence.

NYEP provides a community-based living program; hence, you will be expected to behave like a responsible young adult. You will be held accountable for all of your actions. In short, this is not a treatment program, but an independent living program with a therapeutic component. You will be surrounded by people who do not shield you from the world, but help you to find your place in the world. Please be aware that you will be expected to learn self reliance while you are here. That being said, please know that **it is your responsibility to know what is in this handbook.**

Entering the program is voluntary; however once you are in the program, participation is mandatory.

The NYEP home is a 5 bedroom 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  bathroom house, located in a residential area. The nearest bus line is less than 2 blocks away from the house, easily within walking distance. We are capable of housing up to 6 residents.

When you first arrive at NYEP, you will be given a tour of your new home. You'll be guided to your room which you may share with up to 2 other people like you. You will be shown the areas where you'll store your belongings, the bathroom, and the supplies available to you. You will also be shown the food pantry and kitchen area.

You may be asked to fill out many applications during your stay at NYEP. Some are for services that you may be eligible for once you are 18, while others may be consent forms if you are under 18.

### ***Getting Into the Building***

You will receive a front door code so that you may enter the building at your own leisure. Be sure to lock the doors if you are the last to leave the house. Having anytime access to the building is a privilege. Privileges are given when earned and taken away when abused.

### ***Expectations***

Since we have faith in you, we also have many expectations of you. As mentioned above, there are natural consequences for every action you take, so it is important to take the program expectations seriously. When you break an expectation, you will appear to be non-compliant and a consequence will follow. There will be many instances where you may not know which course of action to take. Do not ask other program members for the answer, ask a staff member. We are here for you.

### ***Expectations of Your Friends and Family***

Although building interpersonal skills with your friends and family is very important, it can also be *very* distracting. Relationships of any kind need time, attention, and nurturing. A minimum of 30 days in the program is necessary before any pass requests and or visits can be granted.

The first 30 days gives us a chance to build our relationship with *you* and give *you* the time, attention and nurturing *you* need to get situated in your new environment.

It is important to recognize relationships that could potentially threaten your life goals or even your placement. Should this occur, staff members will discuss it with you in an effort to reach a resolution. If the relationship continues to create barriers for you in meeting your goals, we will then be forced to implement boundaries for your friends and family regarding your program to ensure your success.

If you and/or your family/friends continue to compromise your placement, you may be asked to leave. Living *here* is an opportunity and a privilege, not an obligation. If you believe your friends or family members are having difficulty in supporting your program, please discuss it with a staff member. We can assist you (or speak to them) in explaining the expectations of the program and what a privilege it is for you to have the opportunity to transition into Community Living instead of another treatment center, jail or the streets.

Obviously, the residents in our program are here due to extreme difficulties in their relationships with their families. For whatever reason they have been separated, it is important for the residents to know their biological ties. If, at some point, it is legally and ethically possible - and if the resident and their representative are open to it - we will promote the resident's reunification with their family members. Indeed, this is a highly emotionally charged subject for our

residents. There may be some instances in which reunification may never be possible; nonetheless, if the proper circumstances permit the meeting, then we will assist our resident and their representative in this process.

Your commitment should be to *your* program, which, if it applies to you, includes your probation expectations. We know this may put you in a difficult position; having a staff person tell you one thing and your friends and family tell you another. However upset they may be with you for not granting their requests (whatever they may be), you must treat your placement goals with great care. It could cost you your freedom if you neglect them. This is an opportunity to prove to your friends, your family, and yourself that you can commit to a program you had a hand in creating.

Remember that we have a limited amount of time with you to get a lot of things accomplished. Be assured, we do care about you; however, when it's time to get down to business, if you're not stepping up, someone has to provide guidance.

### ***Visitors***

Any friends, including boyfriends and/or girlfriends, you bring home must first be approved through NYEP staff. **This means that prior to your friend(s) even hanging out at the house, you must first bring them to a staff person for a "meet and greet" with all available staff and residents. Your visitor will then be required to complete an info sheet which asks their name, address and phone number.**

When bringing friends over for the first time, please respect staff's schedule by setting an appointment to perform the visitor process. If your visitor is approved, this privilege may be reevaluated periodically to ensure the peaceful environment of the program. Once you have received authorization for your friend to be at the house, then it's up to you to ensure that you both act appropriate and adult-like. If you or your guest is behaving inappropriately, he/she will be asked to leave and you'll be coached on how to act appropriately. The authorization for that specific visitor may be revoked.

### **No visitors after 11pm.**

Your behavior in public should not be any different than your behavior at NYEP. Be who you are. It's our job to assist you in becoming independent and self-sufficient.

If it's determined that you have behavior problems, we want to help you with them. A lot of times people don't make it in the "real world", not because of their lack of skills, but because of their poor attitude.

NYEP staff is here to help you become independent. Disrespect towards staff will not be tolerated. If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all.

### ***Curfew***

NYEP's curfew is 6pm for the first 30 days for everyone. Then it changes and is different for each person. If you are choosing to not come home or are coming home in the middle of the night, then a different housing situation will be discussed with you.

Here is NYEP's Curfew Policy:

**First 30 days in program: 6pm**

Residents over 18, after 30 days in program: Sunday - Thursday 11pm\*, Friday - Saturday 1am\*

\* If all responsibilities are taken care of.

Residents under 18, after 30 days in program: Sunday - Thursday 10pm\*, Friday - Saturday 12pm\*

\* If all responsibilities are taken care of.

Any time you will be late or sleep out without permission, you must call the Executive Director immediately. A "no call, no show" will be an indication of your desire to no longer live at NYEP. Your things may be packed and you will be discharged. It is irresponsible and rude not to follow house rules that you have agreed to. It is also insensitive to those that are worrying about you.

If you are under 18 and out past 10pm, you must call or text where you will be and who you will be with. Because you are a minor, we have an extra sense of responsibility to you. It's important that we know you are spending your time in a positive way.

All curfews are subject to change for ALL residents, depending on your productivity within your program (i.e. school, work, GED, chores, typing, PSG, MMA, cooking, shopping, banking, PSR, volunteering, extra work/help, etc.) So, if you are

lazy in your program and acting like an irresponsible child, don't act surprised when you have an earlier curfew and are denied your sleepover request. Please give us reasons to say "yes" by acting grown and taking care of business.

ALL residents must come home each day.

### ***Staying Out Overnight and Traveling***

NYEP requires that you provide information about where you are going and with whom when you ask to travel or sleep away from the home. Based on your program progress, it will be decided if you are approved or not.

If you are on probation and are leaving the county, there is an additional process required. You may contact your parole/probation officer for further information.

If you are under 18, you may be required to get your parent's or PO's approval for sleepovers before NYEP will agree to it. If you leave without the request being approved, we will notify your social worker and/or Probation officer within 24 hours in addition to filing a runaway report with the police. Depending on what is going on with your placement, it may be determined that you are not taking NYEP seriously and you will be discharged.

If you make this choice, be sure to have a plan ready if you are going to blow the program off. For example, "Where will you sleep? How will you pay for food?" Etc.

### ***Education First***

Our philosophy at NYEP is "education first". If you do not have a high school diploma, we encourage you to continue your education until you have completed high school. If you have proven that you are capable of working while attending school, then you may continue to do so; however, if you begin to lose your footing while performing both duties, employment may not be the best choice for you at this time.

School is **always** the priority. Nevada currently ranks 48<sup>th</sup> in the nation in education. We are doing the youth of this state a disservice by allowing them to "get by" with GED's, and allowing them to "drop out" and work at dead-end jobs for menial pay. Our philosophy is education first, employment second. Our ultimate goal is to assist you in creating an individualized plan and that can only happen if you have a solid foundation in place.

### ***Employment Second***

If you have obtained a high school diploma, then you are encouraged to pursue your career goals while obtaining employment. You may work a part-time job while going to a trade school, community college, or other avenues to further your career goals. While being employed full time is acceptable and allowed, we will continue to encourage the residents to pursue their life goals and help them in facilitating this process.

Accountability in the work place is quite obviously a concern. When residents obtain employment, we want to be certain they are, in fact, working when and where they say they are. Upon intake, the resident may be asked to sign an agreement that lets any prospective employer contact us to let us know if the resident has been compliant with rules at the workplace. The employer will also contact us to let us know if the resident has been missing days at work, if they have been late, etc....This particular measure is to help the resident develop retention skills. So often, you do not hear that someone is not doing well until after everything has fallen through. Our objective is to catch things as soon as they start to go awry.

### ***Skills Training***

All residents will receive skills training. Skills classes may be taught in a structured manner, complete with pre and post testing to determine the level of growth and learning, or in a less formal manner with a narrative to determine growth. Occasionally, certain Skills classes will be taught in more befitting settings, such as a nutrition class within the kitchen area or yoga at a Spiritual Center.

Another part of skills training is learning appropriate social interaction. Our social/family style environment, in addition to the presence of positive adults, will offer daily opportunities to residents to work on appropriate social relationships. "Getting along with others" is essential to the residents' success when they exit the program.

### ***Mentoring***

There is power in mentoring. A successful adult that comes from a dysfunctional background will very often describe how one person, be it a relative, stranger, or even a strange relative, came into their life and changed everything. For this

reason, we encourage our population to create a relationship with a positive and powerful influence. Thus far, NYEP has a staff of 5 employees and 8 volunteers.

Within the first 30 days, you will quickly realize you are surrounded by potential mentors. You are to choose a staff member, a volunteer, or a mentor from an approved program who will provide you with direct support and guidance. It is important to realize what type of relationship this is. Mentors are there to answer questions, offer suggestions, and show you how to cultivate your life and your future in a positive manner. A mentor is someone you respect and who shows you respect in return. Mentors are generally people who have a lot of life experience and they are there to lend it to you to help guide you into adulthood.

### ***We Are Here to Help You Develop Yourself***

Because we are in the business of assisting you in becoming self-sufficient, we need to know your strengths and weaknesses. You will be asked to help us create your social history in addition to completing an online Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment. This will assist us in developing your Individualized Plan.

You will also practice typing skills, create a resume and collect letters of reference.

### ***The 40 Hour Productivity Week***

If you did not know this before, you will know it now. Most jobs require you to work 40 hours a week. You may only be employed on a part-time basis. However, the hours that you are not at work, you will be doing other activities. If you have not completed high school, that should be your priority. If you have completed high school and you do have a part time job, your extra hours will be spent doing various forms of volunteer work throughout the community or continuing your education (college or vocational). If you have no job, then you will spend your day looking for employment, turning in at least 5 applications per day until you are employed. If you cannot find and keep a job, we will have serious doubts about your commitment to the program. **Prolonged unemployment jeopardizes your placement.**

If it is determined that you may qualify for benefits due to a disability that prevents you from working full time, staff will assist you in the process of applying for Supplemental Security Income and MAABD.

Your curfew and sleepover privileges are tied directly to your program productivity after your first 30 days.

### ***Time Management***

The residents living in our facility will have a lot of responsibilities. The pressure of school, work, skills training and therapy will be a lot for you to manage. For that reason, we will prepare a weekly activities calendar with scheduled events giving the resident information about what time is "free time". We want to let you know that life is also about enjoying time relaxing with your friends too, not just work and school.

To that end, it is ultimately your responsibility to keep your appointments. We will assist you by training you in calendar use and giving you reminders of appointments, community service, job interviews, trainings, medication refills and other obligations that you may have, but ultimately it is your responsibility to attend your appointments. If you miss certain appointments, it may affect the benefits/services you are receiving.

There are Sign-In/Sign-Out logs at door. You must complete each field when you leave for the day and complete the log when you return. You will not write "wherever", "places", "to a friend's", or anything else vague when signing out. You will write where you are going so that if someone calls and needs to know how to find you, we can look at the log and know where you are.

You may be asked about where you spent your time during the day, if you cannot tell us, you are not being accountable. This means you are not being independent.

### ***Civic Engagement***

NYEP believes in and promotes community involvement through volunteerism. We expect each of our residents to contribute to society through a volunteer experience every week. We will help each resident identify a volunteer opportunity that aligns with their interests and help them cultivate that experience. NYEP also does group volunteering at places like the Food Bank and River School.

### ***Inventory List***

You will complete an Inventory List when you arrive to log the personal property you brought in with you. It is your responsibility to complete your inventory logs and to keep them current. If a room search is done and property is found that is

not on your inventory list, it may be considered stolen. All illegal activity will be referred to the police.

If you acquire new property, notify a staff member so that it can be added to your inventory list.

### ***You Will Have Roommates***

There are other people living with you, these are your peers. All of you are here to learn how to become independent, self-sufficient adults. You can assist each other in doing this. You will be sharing many areas referred to as "common areas." Common areas are considered to be kitchens, entryways, stairways, laundry rooms, the Common Room, any room shared by multiple people at one time. We insist that you are considerate of your peers at all times. Should you find yourself at odds with a peer, try to work it out. You are an adult now.

Furthermore, not everyone enjoys living in a stinky mess. We have very strong feelings about keeping the property in a clean, healthy state. You will be assigned daily and weekly chores. You are expected to complete your chores as assigned. Failure to keep up on your chores will result in interventions and/or consequences.

### ***Listening To Music***

If you have the ability to play your own music, remember that you have neighbors. Either wear headphones or check with your neighbors to be sure it's okay with everyone before playing your music loud. If you cannot comply with this expectation, then your music maker will be confiscated.

### ***Your Bedroom***

You will be sharing your bedroom with up to 2 other people. Cleaning the bedroom is an every day event. All clothes are to be picked up off of the floor and placed in your hamper, dresser drawers or on hangers in the closet. You are to make your bed every day and organize the items on your dresser. There should be nothing under your bed. It should look nice.

### ***Personal Hygiene***

We expect you to shower each day and take care of your appearance. If you do not think you can do these things or do not have the supplies to do them please ask a staff member for assistance. We want to help you look better, feel better and do better!

### ***The Bathroom***

You will share a bathroom with other residents. Be considerate of this fact. Pick up after yourself after each bathing and don't use other's products without asking. There are general supplies in the bathroom that everyone can use (tampons, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, body wash). Please ask staff for razors.

No personal items are to be left on the floor or counters. Your personal hygiene supplies should be kept in your room.

If you notice any repairs that need to be made to the bathroom, please notify staff.

### ***Your Closet***

You will share a closet with up to 2 other people. Be fair about the space that you divide. Be sure that it is organized and pleasing to the eye. There is to be no food stored in the closet or room. Food is to be kept in the refrigerator, kitchen cupboard, food pantry, freezer and garage. Inappropriately stored food will be confiscated and placed in the food pantry. There is no need to hoard or hide food. There is more than enough for everybody here.

### ***Your Laundry***

There is a washer and dryer at the house. It is your responsibility to keep your laundry clean. If you should need supplies to do your laundry, please notify staff. Waiting until Monday to do your laundry is your bad choice. Laundry should be done and ready to wear before the work/school week starts. If you choose to not do your laundry and plan on using the excuse to not look for employment or miss school, we will "find" you an outfit for the day and you will continue with your program goals.

Do not over-stuff the washer. The goal is to get your clothes clean. The amount of clothes you put in to the washer will affect the washer's ability to get your clothes clean. The amount of laundry detergent also affects the cleanliness of your laundry. Follow the laundry detergent instructions when washing. Also, use fabric softener, following the softener's instructions.

If you have any questions regarding laundry, please notify staff. Traditionally, clothing is washed in the following way:

- Your bedding, including sheets and blankets in addition to your towels, can be washed together. This is done on a weekly basis.
- Whites are washed separately of all other clothing in hot water.
- Darks/colors are washed together in cold water to prevent color "bleeding".

Once you are finished washing and drying your laundry, fold/hang clothes and put them in your drawers or in your closet. Replace your bedding, and put towels in their appropriate place.

Please do not leave the house while your clothing is in the washer or dryer. Your laundry is your responsibility. Should a staff member notice that you are not regularly caring for your clothes, bedding and towels, the staff member will be forced to provide an intervention which means they will work one on one with you to address this skill.

### ***Being in Other Resident's Room***

You must have staff permission and the resident's permission to be in another's room. If there is more than 1 tenant to the room, then permission must be obtained by all room tenants before you go into the room. This process is to help deter stealing. If you are found to be in another residents' room without permission, the staff will determine an appropriate consequence for this action. Entering another residents' room without their consent is technically breaking and entering. Since each of you signs a lease to live here, you are technically the legal tenant of a room, therefore finding another person in your room without your permission may warrant a felony breaking and entering charge.

### ***Room/Personal Searches***

You are subject to room and personal searches when there is cause for concern. Be assured you are in a safe place. If you are on probation, your conditions also support this.

### ***Borrowing and Lending***

It is advised that you do not borrow or lend property, as property that is lent out often ends up missing or broken. You can avoid this drama by setting boundaries about your property - no lending. If you should happen to lend or borrow, you cannot involve staff. It was your choice to ignore the expectation.

You may have a music player or charger, DVD player, computer or game that others want to use. It is up to you whether you want to share and just because you've shared once does not give rights to others to use your property whenever they choose. Be firm about your boundaries concerning your property. If you have difficulty doing this, notify staff.

### ***Your Kitchen***

You will share a kitchen with other people. When using the kitchen, it is suggested that you clean as you go. Once you are finished using something, return it to its rightful place. If there are leftovers, store them properly. Be sure to wipe off the counters and table.

The kitchen is to be cleaned daily. This includes washing dishes, wiping down counters and table, putting all garbage in the trash, and sweeping/mopping the floor. If it is not done satisfactorily, you will be shown how to do it properly and asked to re clean as many times as it takes.

If you happen to be someone that leaves early or comes home late and likes to cook meals, it is crucial that you clean up after yourself. If morning or evening staff should be made aware that you are cooking and leaving because you "have to go to work and don't have time to clean", then you will clean the entire kitchen when you return.

It is your responsibility to incorporate your program expectations into your daily life, meaning that if you need to get up an hour earlier to get chores done, then that's what you need to do. It is your responsibility to do this.

### ***Cooking Your Meals***

Part of your skills training will be learning to prepare group and individual meals. You will learn to prepare breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Instructions will be given on how to use the stove/oven and microwave, as well as direction on how to measure food/liquids and how to follow a recipe.

Dishes, counters and table must be cleaned after each meal. If you know who should clean it, then say something, otherwise you may be instructed to clean it the next morning when the individuals who dirtied it leave.

### ***Basic Etiquette***

Be aware of simple etiquette while you are dining with others. Don't shove food in your mouth and chew and swallow food before putting more food in your mouth. Don't talk with food in your mouth. It's not pleasant to watch, and no one likes food from someone else's mouth to land on him or her. If you are eating with others, ask if someone else would like a certain item, if it seems to be everyone's favorite, before taking the last one. A big part of your experience here is learning to use your manners. Please be mindful of that.

### ***Shopping for Food***

Keep our budget in mind. Bargain shop and look for the best deal. Buy in bulk (large amounts that can be separated and stored). Many people in the Reno/Sparks area will shop at WinCo or Super Wal-Mart for great deals.

Grocery shopping will be another exercise in developing your skills. NYEP shops on Sundays.

### ***Budgeting and Living Within Your Means***

In other words, when we say budget, we mean money. You will need money to live. Your housing and utilities, such as electricity, water, cable, internet, phone, transportation and garbage-service, as well as your food and personal hygiene products all cost money, and we haven't even begun to talk about clothes and entertainment expenses.

In the past, someone else has taken care of this for you, whether it was a social worker, foster family, detention facility, a treatment program, or your parents. The point is, now it's your responsibility. You will receive classes on how to create and use a budget. You will also learn how to open and use a bank account, as well as read a monthly statement and use an ATM card in a responsible manner. You will learn the value of money.

**When you receive a check, you must deposit the check into your personal account, NO EXCEPTIONS!** A copy of the check will be made and placed in your file. You will be taken to the bank to deposit the check and you will take an allowance of 20% of the funds to spend as you wish. Part of completing your program goals is saving the bulk of your money so you have a "safety net" when you leave. You may even choose to purchase something major when you leave- either way, the money is yours. It is to your benefit to save as much as you can.

Remember that you already have amenities such as toilet paper, shampoo, conditioner, lotion, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, laundry detergent, and dishwasher detergent - basically anything that is available to you at the facility. Think about this as you spend your money. Any super special items will need to be purchased by you. **This does not apply to your monthly check from the county/state. Your social worker will discuss this with you upon program intake.**

**If you do not deposit your paychecks, your immediate termination from the program may be discussed.** Saving the bulk of your money is a major component of this program. Basically, all of your needs are being taken care of while you are here. When you waste your money, you waste our time. If you cannot learn to save and budget, then you cannot master independence.

#### ***What If I Take Medication?***

If you are taking medication when you arrive at NYEP, we expect that you will continue to take it. We can assist you with management. You may be provided a Medication Log for each medication you are taking to help you keep track of your daily pill taking. NYEP staff will check with you biweekly to restock medication, check logs and discuss your medication adherence.

If you expect that you will need certain supplies to administer your medication or dispose of your supplies safely, please notify staff. **You are responsible for taking your medication.** Staff will check your logs biweekly to verify you are doing this. If you are unable to do this, please notify staff so that we may work on a solution.

If you notice your medication is missing, or has been tampered with, please notify staff.

#### ***What If I'm on Probation?***

It is your responsibility to follow your probation expectations, including checking in on your assigned day. Your probation expectations apply *in addition* to NYEP's expectations. **For your information - it is against the law for a person on parole/probation to hang out with other people on parole/probation.**

As mentioned before, if you were told by your Probation officer that you need to attend additional classes, then it is your responsibility to set them up. You may not

hear a word about this until 2 months later when your officer is asking for an update. If you have not followed up, it may appear to your officer that you can't be trusted to do things on your own. Don't let this happen. Do what you say and say what you mean.

### ***What If I Use?***

If it is suspected that you are using illegal substances, you may be asked to submit to a screening. This may take place at NYEP, at social services, or at the Probation Office. If you have a substance problem, we want to help, but you may not be able to get the help you need at NYEP. We may need to put you in a different placement, but be assured our interest is in helping you. If a determination is made that you may stay at NYEP while addressing this issue, you are expected to **fully participate** in an outpatient treatment program and/or attend a 12-step recovery program. Any resident not addressing this issue will be immediately discharged from NYEP. This is a drug and alcohol free environment and you are expected to contribute to this by complying fully with this requirement.

Alcohol or drugs of any type, with the exception of lawfully prescribed medications, are prohibited at all times at NYEP. Possession of unlawful drugs, or alcohol, is grounds for immediate termination from the program.

**If you refuse to provide urine you will be discharged immediately.**

### ***Appointments***

As mentioned before, you are responsible for remembering and attending your appointments. We will assist you in making them and we will also remind you of the ones we know about. It is your responsibility to let NYEP staff know of upcoming appointments. How are we to remind you if we don't know about it? All appointments must be recorded on your calendar.

Also, if your tooth hurts or you need glasses, now is the time to address it. You may not have health insurance for much longer, so get it done now! Do not leave health issues to the last minute. If you have a health complaint and feel you need to see a doctor, make yourself appointment during normal business hours. Ask staff for help if you need it. Do not let a small issue become a huge problem in the middle of the night because you failed to take care of it in a timely manner.

If you are ordered to attend additional appointments such as SA or therapy, it is your responsibility to ask NYEP staff for assistance in finding the resource or scheduling the additional appointment.

If we are unaware of all the obligations that you have, we can't help you with them. Tell us about everything that is going on, so we can help. If you don't follow through with something, you most likely won't get into trouble, you will suffer by not receiving a service or privilege.

### ***What If I Break Something?***

If you happen to break something, or if you find something broken, please notify staff. If you were the person that broke the item, then you will be charged fairly for the repair or the replacement. Accidents happen, but own up and claim responsibility. It shows us that you are growing up.

If you happen to have a guest over and they break something, you are responsible. Anyone you bring in the building, you are vouching for - meaning you are responsible for what they do. If the broken item can be repaired, and a knowledgeable staff or volunteer is available, you will be taught how to repair that item. This will help you advance in your skills.

### ***What About Mail?***

Your new mailing address is 2030 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street Reno, Nevada, 89503. NYEP uses a locked mailbox and mail is distributed daily by staff.

NYEP staff may also open your mail before giving it to you. This is to assure that your program is supported and that you are receiving appropriate mail. If you are on Probation, your conditions also support this.

If it is determined that you are receiving mail that is hindering your success in the program, then we may stop delivering that particular mail to you. We will keep the mail in your file and provide it to you upon discharge.

### ***What If I Need To Use A Computer?***

The three computers in the NYEP lab, which have internet access, can be used by residents. Also, you can own your own computer. The home has wireless internet.

### ***Getting Yourself Around Reno/Sparks***

Most people use their own car, if they have one, or they will ride the bus (CitiFare), walk, or ride a bike. Bus passes can be purchased at CitiCenter and SaveMart. Costs change frequently. If you need assistance with transportation, please notify staff.

If you are over 18, you are responsible for getting yourself to appointments on time. Be sure that you are taking the bus that will get you to your destination on schedule. Staff will not bail you out because you planned poorly. Staff and other experienced residents can help you become familiar with the bus schedule.

### ***Owning Your Own Car***

Having your own vehicle is a privilege, not to mention an expense (payment, insurance, registration). You must be able to prove that you can take care of your primary responsibilities (housing, food, and clothing) before purchasing a car. You may also need your social worker or probation officer's permission. Check with staff before purchasing a car. Current registration, a driver's license and valid insurance are requirements for the privilege of having a car at NYEP and also required by the law.

Do not be impulsive about this purchase. Buying a car is a major, long-term expense. If you happen to have your own vehicle, it can be parked in off street parking at the home, at your own risk. Be sure to give NYEP staff your vehicle information so that it isn't confused with a vehicle that needs to be towed.

If you are responsible for any tow costs that are charged to NYEP, they will be billed to your account. Also, if your car breaks down, it is not staff's responsibility to get your car running or even to assist you with it. If a staff person happens to help you out, that is considered a "favor". Do not expect this assistance.

### ***Smoking***

We wish you'd quit! But, if you are a smoker, the smoking area at NYEP is in the back yard. Please be sure to place your cigarette butts in the butt container and not on the ground, in the fire pit, or on patio furniture. Do not put cigarettes out on the house or on patio furniture. Keep doors leading inside closed while you are smoking. Smoke should not be coming into the house. If smoking guidelines are not followed, smoking privileges at the house may be revoked for everyone. If you see someone breaking these rules, tell them to stop!

### ***Gossiping/Talking Smack***

Talking in a negative way about other residents or staff is unacceptable. You should never say something behind someone's back that you wouldn't say to his/her face. If you are feeling negative about someone, including staff, please come talk to staff. You are allowed to not like certain people. There is a reason why you are feeling the way that you are. Gossiping is no way to handle your feelings about another person. If you don't tell them what is bothering you, how will they know? Besides, you don't want people talking about you behind your back. Lead by example. Be part of the solution, not the problem. If you hear others gossiping, ask if they have talked to the person they are talking about. If they haven't, advise them to do so. If the gossiping continues, please speak with staff. We can do a Timer Talk or a Heart Talk. It is unfair that others have to listen to negative talk.

### ***How You Should Interact With Others***

When at home, respect others around you and their space, which includes the space around them and their personal property. Don't make fun of people or leave them out. Treat people how you hope they would treat you. Certainly, there has been a time in your life when someone made you feel crummy by doing these things. Lead by example. Be part of the solution, not the problem. Introduce people if you can. NYEP has a family style environment, but uses more of a social model in its interaction with residents.

### ***Stealing***

Do not steal. Ask for it. You may be surprised at the kindness of NYEP residents. If you are caught stealing, you will deal with natural consequences, including criminal charges.

### ***Respecting Yourself***

You have been given an opportunity for an awesome future by being at NYEP. Practice self-discipline and self control during difficult times. If you are having trouble coping with any part of your new life here, please talk to a staff person.

### ***Clothing Closet***

There is an onsite clothing closet that you will be able to access immediately. The neatness and order of the clothing closet is everyone's responsibility. If you take an item off its hanger and then choose not to keep it, please hang it back up. General maintenance of the clothing closet is assigned to one resident weekly.

### ***Entertainment***

Be mindfully aware of what type of media you bring back to NYEP. Media that is determined inappropriate will be confiscated. Any noise coming from your room must be kept at a respectable volume, meaning what you would consider a respectable volume coming from another's room.

### ***Using the Phone***

There is a phone at NYEP, (775) 376-1548. The phone at NYEP is not your personal line, therefore, NYEP encourages that all residents have a cellular phone, for which the resident is financially responsible. Your cellular phone number must be supplied to staff and calls from staff should be answered or returned within a reasonable time period.

### ***How We Handle Illegal Activity***

No illegal activity is permitted at NYEP. You are an adult now. All illegal activity will be referred to the Reno Police Department by staff and residents. Even though pranks can be funny, they can also be costly and/or dangerous. If you should play a prank at NYEP and it causes harm to either residents or property, the police may be notified and you will be immediately discharged from your program. Also, sometimes pranks that are meant to be funny may not seem funny to the person you are pranking and their feelings may get hurt. Pranking is not recommended at NYEP.

Although "rough-housing" is not illegal, it almost always results in property damage. If you are found to have caused damage during "rough-housing", then you may be required to work off the cost of the damage by doing maintenance around NYEP. Furthermore, if the damage is extensive, you could be forced to pay.

### ***What If I Am Discharged From NYEP?***

If you are discharged, you will either be moving out on your own, going to a higher level of care or are deemed a runaway. If you leave NYEP and leave your personal belongings behind, they will be packed and stored for 30 days. If arrangements by you are not made within those 30 days to retrieve your property, it will then belong to NYEP. We may donate it to other residents, give it to the Thrift Shop or throw it away.

You may be eligible for outpatient services or other assistance from NYEP if you discharge successfully.

### ***Emergency Exit Plan(s)***

Emergency exit plans are located in the bedroom hallway and main hallway. These are used to direct you safely from the building in the event of a fire or other emergency.

### ***Emergency Phone Numbers***

- For Police, Fire or Ambulance, dial 9-1-1.
- Poison Control can be reached at 800-222-1222,
- Suicide Prevention can be reached at 800-784-2433. If someone is threatening suicide, please notify staff and call the police immediately.

Emergency numbers are listed on the posted Emergency Exit Plans.

### ***Fire Safety***

There is a fire extinguisher located in the laundry room and the kitchen. Hardwired smoke detectors are located throughout the facility and a monthly safety drill is practiced.

### ***The Garage***

The garage is used to store items at NYEP. You may receive a code from staff to enter the garage at your leisure. Keep your items organized and properly labeled. You will be shown your area for storage in the garage when you move in.

### ***The Garden***

NYEP has a garden that it tends to for the benefit of the residents. You may be asked to water, pull weeds or pick vegetables from the garden.

### ***Your Chores At NYEP***

NYEP is now your home. The household maintenance structure is designed to keep the property clean and healthy and to prepare you for keeping your own home clean once you leave. Chores are performed daily and rotated weekly. The more proactive you are about the cleaning, the less interaction you will have with staff about this specific skill. Failure to comply with cleaning schedules may result in privileges being taken away from you, i.e. earlier curfew, no sleepover, no weekend activities, and possibly more cleaning duties.

If it looks like it needs to be cleaned, clean it. You will feel better about yourself for keeping your surroundings clean. In other words, keeping your area clean is a reward in and of itself. Just do what is asked of you.

### ***Xtra Work***

You may be asked to do additional chores to the ones listed. You should take pride in the way your home looks. If it is determined that we need to do outside work, you may be asked to help out. Be assured that we would never ask you to do something that we would not be willing to do ourselves.

### ***Cleaning Supplies***

NYEP provides cleaning supplies. They are stored in the laundry room. If you need supplies and cannot access them, please notify staff. If you need the vacuum, broom, dustpan, mop or cleaning rags and cannot locate it, notify staff.

If you use the last of something or realize that we need certain items, please notify staff.

### ***Our Ultimate Goal***

These are our expectations of you. If you can't handle something, ask us for help. This is all part of being independent; asking for something when you need it. If you are unable to follow our expectations, and fail to ask for help, then it will appear to us that you are choosing to not follow expectations. If this occurs, then we will be discussing whether or not you are a good fit for NYEP. It is possible that NYEP may not be the place for you.

We believe that the path to true independence takes a great amount of time, effort and self-reliance. Experienced members of the social service community know the reality of the situation we are faced with. True change takes time and the propensity to recede into old patterns and behaviors is evident in everyday life.

## **STANDARD INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM**

(Each NYEP resident will demonstrate an ability to learn, practice and teach all of these skill areas)

### **Maintaining a clean home**

1. Kitchen and cooking appliances
2. Bedrooms
3. Bathrooms
4. Living/dining rooms
5. Common areas
6. Front and back yard
7. Garage
8. Basic gardening
9. Basic maintenance: changing light bulbs, cleaning fans, replacing filters and fixing problem toilets.

### **Maintaining personal clothing**

1. Basic knowledge of styles, colors, fabrics
2. Basic knowledge of appropriate styles for:
  - a. School
  - b. Work
  - c. Home
  - d. Dinner out
  - e. Formal
  - f. Clubbing/partying
3. Shopping
4. Washing, stain removal, bleaching whites
5. Ironing
6. Storage at home, neatness: using closets, chests of drawers, etc.

### **Food & Nutrition**

1. Basic knowledge of nutrition
2. Meal planning
3. Grocery shopping & bulk purchases
4. Meal preparation and cooking (including outdoor BBQs)
5. Serving meals to seated guests
6. Clearing food and dirty dishes from seated guests
7. Good manners while eating, table etiquette

### **Personal planning skills**

1. Ability to use a calendar to plan your week
2. Ability to make, keep, break and responsibly reschedule appointments
3. Ability to be responsible for missed/late appointments

### **Social harmony/Conflict resolution with roommates**

1. Group membership and group leadership
2. Problem-solving
3. Conflict resolution
4. Obtaining feedback and maintaining good relations with peers and staff
5. Conversational etiquette and good manners

### **Work/career/volunteer skills:**

1. Writing a resume and soliciting letters of reference
2. Obtaining employment
3. Meeting expectations of employers/supervisors
4. Learning and performing job well
5. Assuming responsibility for obtaining regular performance feedback
6. Assuming responsibility for soliciting feedback needed to maintain good relations with employers, supervisors, co-workers and customers

### **Student skills**

1. Enrolling in the appropriate school
2. Meeting all requirements for hours, dress, deportment and grades
3. Taking responsibility for maintaining good relations with teachers and other students

### **Finance skills**

1. Opening and maintaining a savings and checking account
2. Managing credit cards
3. Living within means & using a budget
4. Saving regularly

### **Preparing for independent living**

1. Participating in discharge planning
2. Ability to locate and obtain affordable housing

### **Health and wellness skills**

1. Maintaining appropriate medical and personal records
2. Ability to request professional medical, psychological or psychiatric care.
3. Ability to follow medication regimes and handle problems with medications
4. Possess basic safety information regarding avoiding STDs and pregnancies.

### **Computer skills**

1. Basic computer literacy
2. Ability to search the internet
3. Ability to self-protect from cyber-predators
4. Type at 35wpm

### **Emotional self-regulation/Coping with stress**

#### **Good citizen skills**

1. Helping neighbors maintain an attractive neighborhood
2. Volunteering with community agencies

### **OVERALL WEEKLY COMMITMENT**

**We expect that each resident will spend at least 40 hours weekly in planned, goal-directed activities. These might include paid employment, volunteer work, attending classes or job searching.**