

# TREATMENT TRANSITIONS

*sober living environments*  
*the next step*



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# TREATMENT TRANSITIONS TO SOBER LIVING

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# WHAT IS

## *transitional living*

Transitional living is the next step in your recovery journey after residential treatment or as a way to provide yourself with a structured environment to support abstinence.

Most insurance companies will only pay for 28 days of residential treatment. Once that time is up, you are released back into the same environment that got you to treatment in the first place.

Residential treatment is a sheltered environment. While you are there you are focused on recovery and following the schedule that is provided to you. You have few stressors and have ready access to help.

Even if you move to a different community after treatment, you will quickly come face-to-face with reality. The same stressors and temptations will push you to your limits.

A good program will have recommended sober living environments (SLE's) or branches of their own program for you to transition into. Often residential treatment centers will take you on a tour of a few homes in the local area so you can get a feel for them, and maybe pick up an application.

Transitional Living should be a part of your treatment program. It took longer than 28 days to end up in treatment, and it will take a lot longer than 28 days to recover from it. You have barely gotten clean and sober after 28 days. You are ill equipped to jump back into a busy, responsibility, self-managed life.

# TRANSITIONAL

## *and sober living environments*

Transitional housing, or sober living environments (SLE) bridge the gap between intensive residential treatment, court orders, early recovery, relocation and fully independent living.

An SLE is a house full of people in recovery. SLE's have a house manager who moderates meetings and is the go-to if there is a problem. The house manager is also there to mentor other members of the household.

An SLE offers a structured, supportive environment with others who are in recovery. You will always have someone around to talk to and practice relapse prevention.

Some SLE's offer single rooms, but most have at least 2 people per room. This has proven to be the most successful method for early recovery. Having a 'sober buddy' increases likelihood of sustained recovery.

You will have responsibility and accountability for yourself and your actions. Living in an SLE provides a stable environment to adjust back into a busy and fulfilling life.

An SLE is a safe place for you to live in and return to after visiting friends and family who may be triggers for you. An SLE is also a stable supportive place to return to after work or school.

You will essentially be renting a room in a house while transitioning back into independent living. This will give you time to clean up some of the problems you accumulated during your use, start to rebuild your employment, education, and relationships, and continue treatment and therapy based on a solid foundation.

That's not to say that drama doesn't occur, it does. But, this is the best place to learn conflict resolution and coping skills.

Some people find being part of an SLE is perfect for them long term.

# TRANSITIONAL

*and sober living environments cont.*

Transitional living reinforces positive behavior change that you began practicing in residential treatment. This is a safe place to establish new boundaries and strengthen your recovery. You will have people to bounce ideas off and receive immediate feedback.

You will be called out on your crap. Transitional living can be quite emotional. Arguments and disagreements happen. You have a group of people from different backgrounds together in different stages of recovery. Learning how to cope with wildly swinging emotions is part of healing.

# HOUSE RULES

## *some of the rules you can expect*

House requirements vary. Usually you will be required to be in outpatient, have a job, be in school, or be volunteering somewhere.

Common house rules are;

- There is a zero tolerance policy for drugs and alcohol.
- There will be rules about certain regulated prescription medications. If medically necessary there should not be a problem.
- There will be a code of conduct. Violence of any kind is reason for immediate termination.
- You will have a curfew.
- Some homes have a sign in/out binder.
- You will have mandatory weekly house meetings to discuss any issues that have come up and check-in.
- You will have a weekly rotating chore.
- There will be a tv schedule (time on, time off).
- You will be required to attend a set number of self-help meetings a week.
- You will be required to have a sponsor and be working a program of recovery .
- Some homes do not allow visitors; others will allow family and friend to visit during certain times of the day or week.
- Random drug and alcohol testing will occur.
- Because there are a number of people in the house, often you will be given a laundry day.
- You will have space in a cupboard, fridge shelf and freezer space for your food.
- There may be a 30 day settle in period where you are restricted to certain activities and more stringent rules and curfews. This is to allow you to remain focused on recovery and have a smoother transition from residential treatment to a self-managed schedule..
- There will be a time limit for finding employment or starting an education program or continued care.

# WHAT HAPPENS

## *if you relapse*

Most sober homes will have a policy for relapse. Usually you will have to leave for 72 hours. You can return once you have sobered up.

If you don't return to claim your belongings after 72 hours, they are bagged up and stored for a short amount of time.

Some SLE's will require you to go through a detox program before returning to the house. If the relapse was severe, you might need to have medical clearance to return.

When you return you will have more stringent constraints for a few weeks to help you get refocused.

You will have signed a code of conduct. This lists all the behaviors that will result in instant termination and eviction.

A slip or relapse can be turned around if you are serious about wanting recovery.

# HOW LONG

## *can you stay*

Most sober living homes don't put a time limit on your stay. If you are staying clean and sober, working a program, and following the house rules your spot is secure.

Since you don't sign a traditional long term lease, if you don't pay your rent on time you will be evicted. All of the terms and conditions will be presented to you when you fill in the initial paperwork.

If the SLE is part of a program there may be time limits to encourage you to work toward independent living, this is usually 60+ days

Like treatment, there are varying levels of SLE's. It is important to tour a few different homes to get a feel for management and the people living there.



# LOOKING FOR

## *a sober living home*

Be aware that SLE's do not have to be state registered or accredited. More and more SLE's are registering with the State, but it is up to you to check what that actually means.

Calling local treatment centers, addiction specialists or county resource centers is a good place to begin your search for SLE's.

Most inpatient programs will have a list of local SLE's for you to check out.

Sober homes are not required to provide therapy or groups; they are a residence that a group of people share while they work on their recovery.

Some SLE's are gender specific and others will be co-ed. In early recovery it is better to go into a gender specific house because you do not need the distraction of the opposite sex. This eliminates flirting, jealousy, tension and conflict within the house and with significant others who do not reside in the home.

Check if the SLE supports dual diagnosed clients, court ordered clients

or criminal justice clients. There are also SLE's that allow children to live with the parent.

A lot of SLE's advertise on Craigslist. Be careful with these homes. Some have a large turnover rate, and that can affect stability within the house and recovery goals. Ask what the turnover rate is and why they have spare beds.

Talk to some of the current residents and find out what they like and dislike about the home. You don't want to move into a house that has constant conflict.

There is nothing wrong with touring a few SLE's until you find the one that you feel most comfortable in.

Take into account where the local transportation is and where local stores and amenities are. If you have a vehicle, is there parking space?

Write out a checklist of preferred amenities. You will not be able to meet them all, but keep an open mind. You can compare notes after touring a few homes.

# LOOKING FOR

## *a sober living home cont.*

Sometimes you have little choice but to jump at the first open bed there is. This is ok. You will have an opportunity to talk to people at meetings or treatment to find better solutions. You will have to give notice before vacating, make sure you check this when you sign the contract.

Ask if the SLE is affiliated with any local services that offer vocational services, classes, or free transit tickets. Ask where local resources such as drop in centers, yoga or meditation classes, gyms, support groups, meetings, cafes, or what it is you need to continue your recovery.

The cost of an SLE is going to vary by location. The cost usually covers rent, cable, heat, internet, cleaning products, paper products and laundry soap.

You will cook your own food, although a lot of houses have community meals a few times a week.

Check with a potential SLE whether you can have visitors and what the restrictions are. Some SLE's will not allow any visitors. Others allow visitors up until a certain time of the day, or only on the weekends. Some you can have your children over for the weekend.

Restricted visitors are a safety precaution for all house mates. Some people in the house may require confidentiality for their own safety.

If the SLE has domestic violence victims, or other trauma victims, there is likely to have a no visitor policy, and no disclosing the address to anyone.

Once you have developed a new routine and proven that you are stable in your recovery you will be able to go out on overnight or weekend passes. Be prepared to be drug tested when you return.

# CHECKLIST

*compare the houses you look at*

<p>NAME OF HOUSE / PHONE #</p> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>NAME OF HOUSE / PHONE #</p> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>LOCATION</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>LOCATION</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>MONTHLY RENT</p> <hr/>	<p>MONTHLY RENT</p> <hr/>
<p>HOW MANY TO A ROOM?</p> <hr/>	<p>HOW MANY TO A ROOM?</p> <hr/>
<p>GENDER SPECIFIC / COED?</p> <hr/>	<p>GENDER SPECIFIC / COED?</p> <hr/>
<p>TRANSPORTATION CLOSE BY?</p> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>TRANSPORTATION CLOSE BY?</p> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>WEEKLY REQUIREMENTS - MEETINGS / HOUSE</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>WEEKLY REQUIREMENTS - MEETINGS / HOUSE</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>VISITORS ALLOWED?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>VISITORS ALLOWED?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>WHAT IS PROVIDED?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>WHAT IS PROVIDED?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

# RESOURCES

*for more information*

- The program you are in should have options available as part of your exit plan. Most rehabs will take you on tours of SLE's prior to exit.
- Your local government resource page or community center resource page.
- Local inpatient rehabs and outpatient clinics.
- Word of mouth at meetings.
- Craigslist.
- Non-profits in your local area may have resources or referrals for you.
- The internet.

# what's NEXT?



## BE PROUD OF YOURSELF FOR TAKING A LOOK AT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ALCOHOL. BUT THIS ISN'T THE END!

Join the FREE Facebook Group "The Recovery Realm Room" for daily support on your journey to improving your life. You will always have help and support throughout your recovery journey. Reach out at any time to ask questions, to vent (or rant), to run ideas by the ladies, or to just spend some time building relationships and connecting with others.

## ENROLL IN SOBER SUCCESS: THE FIRST 30 DAYS

For a fraction of the price of an inpatient rehab you can enroll in the self paced course that will walk you from day 1 of sobriety to day 30 and beyond. You will examine your what, why, how, when, where and who of your drinking. You will learn invaluable coping skills and develop strategies to remain clean and sober. You will also gain lifetime access to the Facebook support group. There is workbooks for each step of the way. I am always available to answer any questions or offer support.

## 1:1 COACHING - WORK WITH ME

Any time you feel you need additional support, are stuck, are in the middle of a possible relapse, or you want more structure and more accountability... just say the word.

As a coaching client you will get direct access to me through facetime/zoom calls, unlimited email, and of course the VIP group.

Together we can come up with solutions to obstacles that are getting in the way of your recovery progress. We can dig deep for your what, why, how, when, where... your particular brand of substance abuse.

Message me for more information.

## KEEP IN TOUCH - FOLLOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA

There are recovery resources on the blog at [therecoveryrealm.com](http://therecoveryrealm.com). If you have not already bookmarked the site jump on over and check it out.



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