



# **Alamance House**

## **Client Handbook**

# Group Home CLIENT HANDBOOK

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**1. Introduction to Alberta Professional Services**

- a. Official Agency Title: Alberta Professional Services, Inc.
- b. Main Office Address and contact information:

Mailing address:  
Alberta Professional Services  
P.O. Box 14884  
Greensboro, NC 27415

Physical address:  
Alberta Professional Services  
1155 Revolution Mill Dr  
Studio 5  
Greensboro NC 27405

336-273-2640

[www.albertakids.com](http://www.albertakids.com)

- c. *Alamance House Address and contact information*

*1473 Alamance Church Rd.  
Greensboro, NC 27406  
336-375-4186 office  
336-273-6522 fax  
336-988-0818 cell*

- d. Agency Mission Statement: "Alberta Professional Services, Inc. will provide superior services to our consumers by emphasizing that all served are safe and healthy, in the least restrictive setting, and with maximum community integration."

**2. Welcome and Introduction to the Program**

- a. Type of Service: **Alamance House** is a high-management group home for four youth which provides a highly structured and supervised setting. Our clients typically require a high level of supervision and treatment to assist them with severe social, emotional, and behavioral problems.
- b. Hours of Operation: Twenty-four hours/ seven days a week.
- c. Number of Residents: 4
- d. Level of Supervision: Two Habilitation Counselors are on duty for when clients are present in residence and one staff person is awake

over night. Also weekly treatment and consultation is provided by a licensed mental health professional. Additional emergency crisis support is available from the Program Director or other mental health professional when needed.

- e. Program Goals: Our goals include working with each client's treatment team including available family members to accurately identify significant problems our clients are experiencing, assess their strengths and weaknesses in overcoming these problems, and develop individualized plans designed to assist them in overcoming these issues and ultimately to allow them to progress towards living in a less restrictive setting such as with their own family or a therapeutic a foster family.

- f. Program Model & Philosophy:

- 1. Meaning, Purpose, and Hopefulness

- We encourage those in care to experience hopefulness, a sense of purpose for their lives, validation and respect for themselves, their culture, history, and traditions.

We will encourage this experience through self-determination and choices for the resident and family whenever possible, with age and developmentally appropriate spiritual development, with service activities to benefit others, through moral and character development activities, and through artistic or creative activities. The resident's religious traditions will be respected. The use of ritual and symbols will serve as reminders of the resident's search for meaning in life.

- 2. Skills and Knowledge

- We encourage residents to develop, practice and use skills for daily living, adaptive behaviors, and independent living. In addition, we believe that learning is an important process for all, but especially for youth who should experience the joy of learning in an academic setting.

We will encourage the development of skills and knowledge through building on strengths whenever possible. We will celebrate successes by highlighting accomplishments and "catching residents doing right." Mistakes will be viewed as "teachable moments".

- 3. Security, Industry, and Personal Enjoyment

- We encourage residents to feel safe and secure, and we understand that without this security residents will not be able to develop other life skills. We believe that all people need to feel industrious – that their time is used wisely, and that all need to develop skills for managing their time and finding personal enjoyment and joy!

We will encourage security through maintenance of a safe environment as free as possible from harm, and with a predictable schedule that is appropriate to the developmental level and needs of residents. We understand that recreational events are important in their own right, and that we will need to help residents learn skills to plan and enjoy unstructured time.

We encourage the development and maintenance of caring relationships with family, adults and peers. Mutually satisfying relationships are required for happiness and successful maintenance of inter-dependent relationships. We encourage residents to develop respect for their own feelings and the feelings of others in the context of relationships.

Staff will encourage the development of appropriate caring relationships with residents through role modeling of appropriate skills and behaviors. Staff will serve as a "bridge" to assist the resident in development and maintenance of family relationships and surrogate family relationships. Skills necessary to develop and maintain relationships will be taught and feedback about relationship behaviors will be provided. It is through interactions that staff and others will model respect for feelings, and that residents will learn about the impact of their behavior on others. In the context of relationships we help residents identify feelings and understand the effect of feelings on behavior.

#### 4. Community-Centered Living

We encourage residents to learn skills for living in the community of their residence, in order to remain in the most "normal," family-like setting possible.

Community-centered living is encouraged through activities in the community, encouraging "normal" interactions with individuals in the community of residence, and developing resident skills necessary for success in the community. Often the special needs of residents prohibit them from remaining in their community of origin. Even then, residents can learn adaptive skills to be a successful member of their community of residence.

### 3. Services Provided

- a. Room and Board

- b. Transportation: Staff provide needed transportation to professional appointments such as with doctors and therapists and to community events and outings that are appropriate and of interest to each client such as movies, sporting events, school dances, etc.
- c. Individual and Group Treatment: Staff and agency mental health professionals assist our clients towards progress through such interventions as encouragement, praise, redirection, instruction, and positive role-modeling and active listening. More intensive counseling or therapy however is typically provided by an individual therapist not directly associated with the group home.
- d. Recreation: Our staff work with clients to plan activities both in the group home and the community based on clients' interests, abilities, and developmental levels. Such activities may include movies, bowling, YMCA, visiting local parks, etc. Of course there is more time for such activities on weekends and when school is not in session. Special group programming may be provided in the summer.

#### **4. Program Policy and Procedure**

- a. Equipment and Property: As part of their room and board, residents use all group home furniture, equipment, and public space to engage in activities of daily living, recreation, relaxation, study, etc. Any property damage beyond normal wear and tear may require "restitution" from the responsible client. The primary purpose of such a natural consequence is intended to be therapeutic and encourage the client to avoid damaging property in the future.
- b. Family Visits: The program encourages family visits but encourages families to plan ahead to assure that their child will be at the group home and that the therapeutic routine of other clients such as study time or bed time will not be unduly interrupted. Therapeutic leave with family members is encouraged especially as the client begins to show progress on his/her issues which may have contributed to family problems in the past.
- c. Jobs: When appropriate for their age, developmental level, and general social adjustment clients with the approval of their treatment team are encouraged and assisted in finding work in the community.
- d. Medications: All prescribed and over-the-counter medications are kept locked in the staff office or other secure location in the group home. Staff is trained to properly observe, record, and report on clients' administration of their medications.
- e. Money: Residents are allowed to earn an allowance that is appropriate for their age and developmental level. If therapeutically indicated they may be expected to earn this allowance through showing progress on certain behavioral goals

and they may be required to use some of their allowance to compensate the group home for intentional property damage. . The amount of money that a client may have on them at any time may be restricted for their own good (i.e., to prevent them from illegally buying tobacco products) or as part of a goal to teach them good money management. Older clients who work may be encouraged to open a checking account and provided assistance with managing their money.

- f. Household Chores: We want our residents to feel comfortable and to treat our home with respect like they would with their own homes. We want to be sure that current and future residents have a safe, comfortable and clean place to live.
  - All household chores are assigned on a rotating basis during group and house meetings or by staff.
  - Bedrooms: residents are expected to maintain their own sleeping areas. Rooms must be kept neat and clean at all times. All beds should be made upon getting up in the morning.
- g. Clothes: Residents are required to wear clean neat clothes. Clothes that are offensive or suggest obscenities, racism, violence, or gang membership are not allowed. Hats or other headgear are not worn indoors.
- h. Personal Possessions: Group home staff will help residents to protect their property, but we are not responsible for the loss or damage of any personal possessions. Personal possessions should be listed on an inventory sheet when a resident enters the program.

**5. Daily Schedule:**

Schedules of daily activities vary from weekdays to weekend and from school days to holidays and summer vacation. Through participating in group meetings or otherwise expressing their preferences clients are encouraged to have input in to these schedules whether it has to do with routine daily activities or special recreational events. Schedules will be posted in the group home in an area where clients can readily see them.

**6. Client Grievance Procedure and DRNC: See attached Procedure.**

- a. Besides the attached Grievance Procedure, the phone number for Disability Rights North Carolina for Persons with Disabilities is posted on the resident bulletin board outside of the staff room. Any consumer may call (1-877-235-4210) the DRNC if you believe your rights have been violated.

**7. Search and Seizure Policy and Procedure: See attachments.**

## **Alamance House Rules**

- 1. Follow staff directions.\***
- 2. Be honest.**
- 3. Resolve problems without fighting or other aggression.\***
- 4. Resolve problems without threatening, bullying or intimidating.\***
- 5. Respect yourself (no self-harm, drugs, alcohol, or smoking).\***
- 6. Avoid problems (no joining in or instigating trouble).**
- 7. No contraband items.\***
- 8. No glorifying violence, drugs, alcohol, or other misbehaviors.**
- 9. Respect property (do not damage it).\***
- 10. Stay in treatment (no running away).**
- 11. Respect others.**
- 12. Be polite (no cursing, slurs, or other obscene gestures).**
- 13. No sexual misconduct.\***
- 14. No physical horseplay.**
- 15. No borrowing, lending, buying or selling.**
- 16. No personal items in school.**

**\*These could be major trust breakers.**



## Alamance House WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

<b>6:00 AM-6:30 AM</b>	<b>Wake Up</b> (Clean room and take care of personal hygiene, e.g. morning shower)
<b>7:00 AM</b>	<b>Breakfast</b> (Medications administered)
<b>7:30 AM</b>	<b>Morning Chores</b>
<b>8:00 AM</b>	<b>School</b>
<b>3:30 PM-4:00 PM</b>	<b>Snack &amp; TV Time</b>
<b>4:00 PM-5:30 PM</b>	<b>Study Time/Quiet Time</b>
<b>5:30 PM-5:45 PM</b>	<b>Group Meeting</b>
<b>5:45 PM-6:00 PM</b>	<b>Free Time/Quiet Time/Journal Writing</b>
<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>News/ Staff discretion</b>
<b>6:30 PM</b>	<b>Dinner</b> (Evening chores and medications administered)
<b>7:00 PM-8:00 PM</b>	<b>Evening Activity</b> (Check Activity Schedule and Chart)
<b>8:00 PM-8:15 PM</b>	<b>Free Time/Shower*</b>
<b>8:30 PM</b>	<b>To Your Room*</b>
<b>9:00 PM</b>	<b>Bedtime</b> (Lights out, radio played through headphones only staff discretion.)

**\*Staff discretion for those who are not public school attendants.**

## Alamance House Saturday Schedule

<b>8:00AM</b>	<b>Medications administered</b>
<b>9:30 AM</b>	<b>Wake Up</b> (Clean room and take care of personal hygiene)
<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>
<b>10:30 AM</b>	<b>Morning Chores</b>
<b>11:00 AM</b>	<b>Group Meeting</b>
<b>12:30 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>12:45 PM</b>	<b>Afternoon Chores</b>
<b>1:00 PM</b>	<b>Staff discretion</b>
<b>2:00 PM</b>	<b>Afternoon Activity or in House Activity</b> (See schedule)
<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>Dinner</b>
<b>6:30 PM</b>	<b>Evening chores</b> (Do not leave house before chores are completed)
<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Evening Activity</b> (Check schedule)
<b>9:45 PM</b>	<b>Free Time/Journal Writing/Bedtime Snack</b>
<b>10:00 PM</b>	<b>To Your Room/ Preparation for Bed</b>
<b>10:30PM</b>	<b>Bedtime</b> (Lights out, radio played through headphones only staff discretion.)

## **Alamance House Sunday SCHEDULE**

<b>8:00AM</b>	<b>Medications administered</b>
<b>9:30 AM</b>	<b>Wake Up</b> (Clean room and take care of personal hygiene)
<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>
<b>10:30 AM</b>	<b>Morning Chores</b>
<b>11:00 AM</b>	<b>Group Meeting</b>
<b>12:30 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>12:45 PM</b>	<b>Afternoon Chores</b>
<b>1:00 PM</b>	<b>Staff discretion</b>
<b>2:00 PM</b>	<b>Afternoon Activity or in House Activity</b> (See chart)
<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>Dinner</b>
<b>7:00 PM-8:00 PM</b>	<b>Evening Activity</b> (Check Activity Schedule and Chart)
<b>8:00 PM-8:15 PM</b>	<b>Free Time/Shower*</b>
<b>8:30 PM</b>	<b>To Your Room*</b>
<b>9:00 PM</b>	<b>Bedtime</b> (Lights out, radio played through headphones only staff discretion.)

**\*Staff discretion for those who are not public school attendants.**

**AGREEMENT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received a copy of the Alamance House Handbook and agree to follow the House Rules and understand my rights as they have been explained to me.

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CLIENT SIGNATURE

DATE

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PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

DATE

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PROGRAM DIRECTOR SIGNATURE

DATE

August 2008 (S&S)

**Search and Seizure:** Each client shall be free from unwarranted invasion of privacy. Clients and/or clients' private living areas in the home (when applicable) may be searched and items or property seized under the following conditions:

1. when reasonable suspicion exists that a client may have an item or substance in his/her possession which may cause the individual to be imminently dangerous to self or others (client's relevant history may create such reasonable suspicion); or
2. when reasonable suspicion exists that a client may have an item or substance in his/her possession which is prohibited by program policy or legal statute (e.g., alcohol, illegal drugs, weapons, stolen property, etc) (client's relevant history may create such reasonable suspicion); and
3. when attempts to persuade a client to relinquish suspect item(s) or substance(s) to program staff have failed.
4. When safe and feasible staff shall request authorization of an agency supervisor, Qualified or Licensed Professional, or informed program director prior to the search. If not safe or feasible staff shall notify their supervisor of the search within a reasonable period of time (i.e., 24 hours).
5. Notification of the client's case manager and next of kin or legally responsible person is recommended as a best practice measure but is not an agency requirement prior to the search.
6. "Standing orders" for searches of clients, such as upon returning to the facility from school, are permitted when they are identified in the clients Service Plan (PCP) as a need, service goal, staff intervention, etc.

A search shall be limited to the individual client or clients under suspicion and/or their private living area(s). Other clients' private living areas may be searched if there is reason to believe that the client in question has hidden the item(s) in question in some other living area.

These procedures shall be followed:

1. clients shall receive explanation of reason for the search and given an opportunity to surrender the items or substances or give consent voluntarily prior to the activity;
2. when feasible or requested by the consumer, searches shall be conducted in a private location by a staff member of the same sex as the client and when possible in the presence of one other staff member (staff members are discouraged from touching clients of the opposite sex during searches);
3. strip searches shall not be allowed;

4. searches of private living areas shall be limited to the space designated for the personal use of individual clients in question, and when feasible in the presence of the client or of another staff person;
5. unless otherwise indicated (i.e., possible imminent threat to the health or safety of clients, staff, or other persons) a client's stated preference to be present when his room or private space is searched shall be honored. A client's relevant history of assaulting or threatening staff or engaging in property destruction in response to room searches may be considered in making a judgment about imminent threat.
6. physical force is not to be used in searching clients. If the client actively refuses or resists being searched then staff shall inform the facility manager and ask for further instructions. If deemed necessary to protect the safety of individuals (i.e., the client is suspected of having a dangerous weapon or illegal drug) the facility manager may request assistance from a local law enforcement agency. In emergency situations in which the risk of harm is deemed imminent and any delay would increase the risk, staff may contact local law enforcement officials immediately.

Seized property shall be placed in a secure location until such time that it can be delivered to the program director, who has responsibility for the final disposition.

1. Items or substances prohibited by program rules may be disposed or destroyed in a safe and reasonable manner unless the consumer's legally responsible person requests some other disposition. They may not be taken for the personal use of agency employees.
2. Stolen items shall be returned to the rightful owner or given to a local law enforcement authority or other person of rightful authority (i.e., school officials if the property was likely stolen at the consumer's school placement). They may not be taken for the personal use of agency employees.

Every instance of search and/or seizure of client's person, property, or private living area shall be documented in a separate administrative file. Documentation of searches/seizures shall contain the following: 1) scope of search; 2) reason for search; 3) procedure followed in the search; 4) a description of any property seized; and 5) an account of the disposition of seized property.

Alberta Professional Services

## CONSUMER GRIEVANCE

Each consumer has the right to file a complaint or grievance regarding his or her treatment or habilitation care and to have this issue impartially considered in a reasonable period of time. Any consumer who wishes to file such a complaint or grievance should request a meeting with the director of the specific agency program providing them with services for this purpose. Complaints may be handled informally if the consumer desires. However if the consumer wishes to file a more formal grievance, this request shall be in writing and should specify the nature of the grievance and what rules, actions, etc. are being grieved. The consumer may have the assistance of his/her parent/guardian, social worker, case manager, or other professional involved in his/her care in preparing and presenting the grievance. This person may be present when the grievance is heard.

The program director shall inform the consumer in writing of the decision reached within one week after the meeting to hear the grievance.

If the consumer is not satisfied with the program director's decision, the decision may be appealed to the agency's Executive Director. This appeal must be in writing and follow the process as outlined above for filing and hearing the original grievance.

Consumers may also file grievances with their home Local Management Entity (Area Mental Health Program) located in the county of the consumer's legal residence.

Finally, each consumer and/or his or her legally responsible may contact the office of the Disability Rights North Carolina for Persons with Disabilities (877-235-4210) if they believe this would be helpful in resolving concerns about their services.

## Alamance House Group Home

### Program Description:

Alamance House is a 4-bed residential treatment facility licensed by the State to provide high management residential (Medicaid Level III) services to children and adolescents. An adolescent may continue to receive services in the group home based on continued medical necessity and a waiver of rules from the State licensing authority. Alamance has typically served older adolescents with severe and persistent behavior and emotional problems and it is therefore not unusual for clients to continue to reside in the home past the age of 18 years.

Alamance House provides a highly structured and supervised therapeutic milieu with an emphasis on encouraging clients to develop and express their own unique personalities and accept such individual differences in their peers, while coming to understand the legitimate restrictions and imperatives that society places on them at various stages in their maturation. This is achieved by emphasizing each client's strengths and special interests while requiring from them that they respect the rights of others and learn the social norms of the many community groups and settings that they are experiencing.

Our clients are encouraged to set their own goals, experience their own successes and failures, and assess the progress they are making towards greater independence and adulthood. This requires from the staff an active engagement in the lives of their clients, a close knowledge of their interests and abilities, and above all frequent, overt expressions of confidence in their clients' abilities to overcome their past traumas, errors, self-defeating views of the world, and related issues. Staff assist their clients in recognizing and developing their individual strengths and using these to supplant past approaches that are not allowing the clients to develop to their full potential and progress towards greater independence.

This is a relationship intensive process and often not a short-term one. Staffing ratios are typically 2 staff per four clients with awake overnight staff. In addition, a licensed professional visits the home for consultant and treatment on a weekly basis and professional support is available for crisis assistance around the clock. Staff are trained in and use a variety of professionally accepted interventions including behavior management, role-modeling, psychosocial education, cognitive behavioral techniques, group process, and peer pressure. They have learned that their clients over time will progress as they make fewer mistakes, think through their responses, develop plans for their future, and develop their own identities. A key aspect of this approach is that our clients are expected to make mistakes. The world can be punishing enough of our client's errors so staff, rather than add to the negative consequences, are trained to set their focus on helping their clients to learn from these mistakes and improve their chances of getting it right next time.