

CHAPTER 37A

**COMMUNITY RESIDENCES FOR
MENTALLY ILL ADULTS**

Authority

N.J.S.A. 30:11B-4.

Source and Effective Date

R.1999 d.203, effective June 4, 1999.
See: 31 N.J.R. 1179(a), 31 N.J.R. 1805(a).

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Chapter 37A, Community Residences for Mentally Ill Adults, expires on June 4, 2004.

Chapter Historical Note

Chapter 37A, Community Residences for Mentally Ill Adults, was adopted as R.1994 d.292, effective June 6, 1994. See: 25 N.J.R. 2672(a), 26 N.J.R. 2271(b).

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 66(1978), Chapter 37A, Community Residences for Mentally Ill Adults, was readopted as R.1999 d.203, effective June 4, 1999. See: Source and Effective Date. See, also, section annotations.

CHAPTER TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUBCHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 10:37A-1.1 Scope and purpose
- 10:37A-1.2 Definitions

**SUBCHAPTER 2. LICENSING, SITE REVIEW AND
WAIVERS**

- 10:37A-2.1 Initial licensing process
- 10:37A-2.2 Licensing of group homes
- 10:37A-2.3 Licensing PA apartments
- 10:37A-2.4 Licensing family care homes
- 10:37A-2.5 Provisional license
- 10:37A-2.6 Waiver of standards
- 10:37A-2.7 License renewal
- 10:37A-2.8 Evaluation and monitoring
- 10:37A-2.9 Appeal of the Division's findings
- 10:37A-2.10 Administrative sanction
- 10:37A-2.11 Review of administrative sanctions
- 10:37A-2.12 Administrative hearing of appeal
- 10:37A-2.13 Emergency situation

**SUBCHAPTER 3. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES;
CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 10:37A-3.1 Written policies and procedures
- 10:37A-3.2 Confidentiality

SUBCHAPTER 4. CLIENT SERVICES

- 10:37A-4.1 Population/admission priorities
- 10:37A-4.2 Services to be provided
- 10:37A-4.3 Settings to provide residential programs
- 10:37A-4.4 Client service agreements
- 10:37A-4.5 Recordkeeping

SUBCHAPTER 5. STAFF

- 10:37A-5.1 Staffing requirements

- 10:37A-5.2 Residential counselor requirements, qualifications and duties
- 10:37A-5.3 Senior residential counselor requirements, qualifications and duties
- 10:37A-5.4 Residential specialist requirements, qualifications and duties
- 10:37A-5.5 Residential program coordinator requirements, qualifications and duties

SUBCHAPTER 6. FACILITY

- 10:37A-6.1 Physical plant requirements
- 10:37A-6.2 Water supply
- 10:37A-6.3 Residences
- 10:37A-6.4 Garbage and rubbish disposal
- 10:37A-6.5 Electrical system
- 10:37A-6.6 Lighting
- 10:37A-6.7 Ventilation
- 10:37A-6.8 Heating
- 10:37A-6.9 Structural safety and maintenance
- 10:37A-6.10 Kitchen facilities
- 10:37A-6.11 Occupancy and use of space
- 10:37A-6.12 Uniform Fire Code
- 10:37A-6.13 Group homes with five or less residents not in multiple unit dwellings
- 10:37A-6.14 Group homes with six to 15 residents not in multiple unit dwellings
- 10:37A-6.15 Group homes in multiple unit dwellings
- 10:37A-6.16 Family care homes
- 10:37A-6.17 PA apartments
- 10:37A-6.18 Smoke detectors
- 10:37A-6.19 Fire drills in group homes
- 10:37A-6.20 Kerosene heaters
- 10:37A-6.21 Fireplaces
- 10:37A-6.22 Variances

SUBCHAPTER 7. HEARINGS, APPEALS, COMPLAINTS

- 10:37A-7.1 Administrative hearings
- 10:37A-7.2 Development of residential complaint procedures
- 10:37A-7.3 Appeal process; ombudsman
- 10:37A-7.4 Client protection

SUBCHAPTER 8. QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 10:37A-8.1 Quality assurance

SUBCHAPTER 9. ADMISSION AND DISCHARGE

- 10:37A-9.1 Criteria for admission
- 10:37A-9.2 Additional criteria for admissions
- 10:37A-9.3 Procedures for admission
- 10:37A-9.4 General rule regarding the discharge of clients
- 10:37A-9.5 Conditions permitting discharge
- 10:37A-9.6 Discharge procedures
- 10:37A-9.7 Miscellaneous provisions regarding the discharge of clients

APPENDIX A. STATEMENT OF CLIENTS' RIGHTS

SUBCHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

10:37A-1.1 Scope and purpose

(a) Provider agencies (PA) operating community residences for mentally ill adults shall comply with the physical and program standards contained within this subchapter.

These residences include group homes serving a maximum of 15 persons, PA apartments, and family care homes serving five or fewer persons with a services agreement with the PA. These residences shall be approved for a purchase of service contract pursuant to this chapter and Department contract rules, including N.J.A.C. 10:4, and shall not be considered health care facilities within the meaning of N.J.S.A. 26:2H-1 et seq.

(b) The PAs shall provide a residential care program to all enrolled clients. Such a program shall consist of the services described in this chapter and shall be provided in facilities owned or leased by the PA, or through services agreements with private operators.

(c) The major goal of the community residence program for mentally ill adults shall be to support and encourage the development of life skills required to sustain successful living within the community. Residential housing and services shall be organized around the principle of client responsibility and participation.

(d) The residential care program shall have a rehabilitation focus designed to develop and improve skills necessary for successful community integration. Programming shall focus on empowering the client's use of generic community supports to meet physical, psychological and social needs as a means to promote an improved quality of life and emotional well-being. Clients shall live in the most normalized, least restrictive environment possible to promote individual growth and safety.

Case Notes

Although the Court understood Plaintiff's claim that New Jersey law did not require community residences to provide for the safety of the surrounding community, standards of care for mentally ill residents must be understood, by extension, to provide some degree of community safety by offering at least a basic level of care focused on successful community integration. *Township of West Orange v. Whitman*, 8 F.Supp.2d 408 (D.N.J. 1998).

10:37A-1.2 Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicate otherwise.

"Assessment and evaluation" means activities that will analyze an individual client's desires, functioning, strengths, needs and environment to determine appropriate interventions. An opportunity will be given for the client to provide a self assessment and for any family member or significant other of the client's choice to provide an assessment of the client as well.

"Client" means a person suffering from a mental illness who is a resident of a community residence for mentally ill adults.

"Client service agreement" means a written agreement between the PA and client which includes responsibilities of both the PA and the client.

"Community residence for the mentally ill" (residence) means any community residential facility approved by the Division which provides food, shelter, and personal guidance under such supervision as required, to not more than 15 mentally ill persons who require assistance, temporarily or permanently, in order to live independently in the community. Community residences for the mentally ill have an approved purchase of service contract pursuant to the Department's contract rules and this chapter. These residences do not house persons who have been assigned to a State psychiatric hospital after having been found not guilty of a crime by reason of insanity or unfit to be tried on a criminal charge. These residences are not considered health care facilities, within the meaning of the "Health Care Facilities Planning Act", P.L. 1971, c.136 (N.J.S.A. 26:2H-1 et seq.) and include, but are not limited to, group homes, supervised apartment living arrangements, family care homes and hostels.

"Comprehensive service plan" (CSP) means the periodic formulation of goals, objectives, and interventions for residential services based on a functional assessment which shall include treatment recommendations and may include: psychological, medical, developmental, family, educational, social, cultural, environmental, recreational and vocational components.

"Crisis intervention counseling" means an attempt to facilitate crisis stabilization through the use of specific, time-limited counseling techniques. Crisis intervention counseling focuses on the present, providing pragmatic solutions to identified problems.

"Crisis intervention services" means the implementation of the PA's written emergency policies and procedures focusing primarily on client and staff safety. Examples include provision of residential counseling, crisis intervention counseling, behavior management techniques, and request for outside assistance. Behavioral management techniques exclude physical and chemical restraint, aversive conditioning and punishment. Crisis intervention services can be documented via crisis reports, for example, and can be supported by such policies which reflect adequate responses to emergent situations.

"Department" means the Department of Human Services.

"Division" means the Division of Mental Health and Hospitals, within the Department of Human Services.

"Education" means instruction for clients in basic skills, including academics, and increasing learning capabilities, in the areas of psychoeducation and health.

“Family care home” means a private home or apartment in which an individual resides and provides services to as many as five clients who also reside in the home. The PA provides mental health services to the client and consultation to this individual, based on a services agreement.

“Group home” means any leased or owned single family residence or any structure containing three or more dwelling units, all of which are utilized for the provision of residential care services wherein staff reside or are stationed either on-site or in immediate close proximity and for which a contract exists with the Division. Group homes do not include family care homes nor apartment facilities where individuals

may receive regular or periodic staff supervision and/or training visits, except where such apartment facilities include those contained in a structure of two or more units and all units are operated under contract with the Division.

“Individual services coordination” means those staff activities which are aimed at linking the client to the mental health and social service system and the arranging of the provision of appropriate services. Coordination activities include intake and referral, admission and acceptance, placement, termination and follow-up, individual services planning and treatment reviews, advocacy with non-mental health systems, and documentation of services provided.



COMMUNITY RESIDENCES—MENTALLY ILL ADULTS**10:37A-2.1**

"Family care home" means a private home or apartment in which an individual resides and provides services to as many as five clients who also reside in the home. The PA provides mental health services to the client and consultation to this individual, based on a services agreement.

"Group home" means any leased or owned single family residence or any structure containing three or more dwelling units, all of which are utilized for the provision of residential care services wherein staff reside or are stationed either on-site or in immediate close proximity and for which a contract exists with the Division. Group homes do not include family care homes nor apartment facilities where individuals may receive regular or periodic staff supervision and/or training visits, except where such apartment facilities include those contained in a structure of two or more units and all units are operated under contract with the Division.

"Individual services coordination" means those staff activities which are aimed at linking the client to the mental health and social service system and the arranging of the provision of appropriate services. Coordination activities include intake and referral, admission and acceptance, placement, termination and follow-up, individual services planning and treatment reviews, advocacy with non-mental health systems, and documentation of services provided.

"Initial service plan" means the initial formulation of goal(s), objectives, and interventions, based on initial assessments, which serve as a focus for staff and client activities.

"Life experience" means functioning in non-employment roles, such as a homemaker, whose requirements are comparable to those of a residential counselor.

"Life support services" means services which include, at a minimum, providing living environments which are safe, secure, and clean and in compliance with this chapter.

"Other life support services" means activities that provide basic personal support which are provided to maintain successful community living whenever possible. These services include, but are not limited to, providing transportation, providing prepared meals and performing household tasks, providing clothing, relocating client belongings, and providing direct assistance in securing household furnishings, utilities and other needed building services.

"Provider agency" (PA) means a public or private organization which has a mental health contract with the Division and has been licensed to provide residential services to individuals 18 years of age and older.

"PA apartment" means an apartment owned or leased by the PA in which clients reside and receive the services described in this subchapter.

"Recreation" means social or recreational activities of a relaxing or entertaining nature designed to promote the ability to socialize and manage leisure time.

"Residential counseling" means verbal interventions provided to clients and families to assist the client in accessing and utilizing all planned or assigned services. It may include problem-solving, advice, encouragement and emotional support to enhance stability in the living arrangement.

"Services agreement" means an agreement between a PA and another agency or service provider which describes the program or service provided to clients in the community residence including responsibilities for both the PA and the provider of the program or service. Only the governing body (or its official designee) of the PA makes such agreements with service or program providers.

"Staff support services" means interventions provided by on-site staff, which may include verbal support or behavior management, in accordance with the needs of the client(s).

"Training in daily living skills" means activities designed to develop and maintain the knowledge, behaviors, skills and attitudes needed to improve or maintain quality of life, for example, budget management and housekeeping skills training.

Case Notes

Staffing at group home for mentally ill adults, which staffing provided for on-site staffing a minimum of one hour per week but contemplated that staff typically would be on-site providing services three to four hours per week, met requirements of rule requiring that group home for mentally ill adults have staff that reside or are stationed either on-site or in immediate close proximity, where home contained persons who required no more than four hours of supervision weekly. *Borough of Merchantville v. State Department of Human Resources, Division of Mental Health Services*, 325 N.J.Super. 258, 738 A.2d 981 (N.J.Super.A.D. 1999).

SUBCHAPTER 2. LICENSING, SITE REVIEW AND WAIVERS

10:37A-2.1 Initial licensing process

(a) All inquiries related to licensure of community residences shall be made to:

New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Hospitals
PO Box 727
Trenton, NJ 08625-0727

(b) To become a licensed PA, an agency shall:

1. Demonstrate intent and capability to operate a community residence in accordance with this chapter; and

10:37A-2.1**DEPT. OF HUMAN SERVICES**

2. Be a mental health services provider with a service contract with the Division. Such a service contract shall include provisions for the operation of community residences.

(c) The PA shall be in compliance with this chapter.

(d) The PA shall apply for licensure to the Division. Applications shall indicate the type or types of community residences intended, the specific geographical location in which residences would be located, and the number of residents to be served. Such application shall be made to the Division at the address in (a) above. There shall be no fee charged to the PA regarding licensing or application for licensing.

10:37A-2.2 Licensing of group homes

(a) The Division shall inspect any proposed group home site, and shall review all program operations or descriptions for compliance with the provisions of this chapter.

(b) The Division shall notify the PA in writing of any violations.

(c) Once the PA has corrected all violations, the PA shall request a final site inspection and shall submit documents indicating habitability.

(d) A license shall be issued once intent and capability to comply with all program requirements is demonstrated, inspections are satisfactory, life hazard registration is initiated and there is reasonable assurance that the residence shall be operated in a manner required by this chapter.

(e) The license shall be issued by the Department through the Division.

(f) The license shall be limited to a specifically identified facility, issued for a period of one year, and shall indicate the maximum number of persons to be served within that facility.

(g) The license shall be available on the agency's premises, for review by the Division, or any interested members of the public, during normal business hours.

10:37A-2.3 Licensing PA apartments

(a) The Division may inspect any proposed apartment site(s), and review all program operations or descriptions for compliance with the provisions of this subchapter.

(b) The Division shall notify the PA in writing of any and all violations.

(c) Once the PA has corrected all violations, the PA shall request a final site inspection and shall submit documents indicating habitability.

(d) A license shall be issued once intent and capability to comply with all program requirements is demonstrated, inspections, if any, are satisfactory and there is reasonable assurance that the apartment(s) shall be operated in a manner required by this chapter.

(e) The license shall be issued by the Department through the Division.

(f) The license shall be issued to the PA for a specific number of apartment spaces within a defined geographic area for a period of one year. The PA shall have the right to relocate apartment spaces within the defined geographic area, as needed. The new facilities shall comply with all requirements of this chapter.

(g) The license shall be available on the agency's premises for review by the Division, and any members of the public, during normal business hours.

10:37A-2.4 Licensing family care homes

(a) The PA shall develop a written services agreement with the individual who operates the family care home.

(b) The content of the services agreement between the PA and the individual who operates the family care home shall have been approved by the Division, based upon individual client needs and this chapter.

(c) The Division may inspect any proposed family care home and review all program operations for compliance with the provisions of this chapter.

(d) The Division shall notify the PA in writing of any violations.

(e) Once the PA has corrected all violations, the PA shall request a final site inspection and shall submit documents indicating habitability.

(f) A license shall be issued once intent to comply with all program requirements is demonstrated, inspections, if any, are satisfactory and there is reasonable assurance that the family care home(s) shall be operated in a manner required by this chapter.

(g) The license shall be issued by the Department through the Division.

(h) The license shall be issued to the PA for a period of one year and shall be limited to a defined number of family care homes within a defined geographic area and shall indicate the maximum number of persons to be served. No family care home shall serve more than five clients at any one time.

(i) The license shall be available on the PA's premises for review by the Division, and any members of the public, during normal business hours.

COMMUNITY RESIDENCES—MENTALLY ILL ADULTS**10:37A-2.6****10:37A-2.5 Provisional license**

(a) A provisional license may be issued by the Department to a prospective PA which expresses interest in operating a residence, indicates in writing an intent to comply with the guidelines contained in this chapter, and who applies to the Division for such provisional licensing. The application shall indicate the type or types of residences desired, the specific geographical areas in which residences would be located, and the number of residents to be served.

(b) The Division shall review the application of the prospective PA, assess the fiscal, programmatic, and administrative capabilities of the PA, and determine whether a provisional license shall be issued. There shall be no fee charged for the issuance of a provisional license.

(c) The provisional license shall authorize a PA to secure a facility or facilities in which to provide services.

(d) A provisional license shall not authorize a PA to provide services to clients.

(e) The provisional license shall be issued for a time period not to exceed six months, and may be renewed in six month intervals by the Division if, in its judgment, the PA consistently made good faith efforts to establish the proposed residence(s).

(f) A PA issued a provisional license shall immediately make application for an annual renewable license under provisions specified in N.J.A.C. 10:37A-2.1 when facility(s) have been secured and services to residents are ready to be initiated.

10:37A-2.6 Waiver of standards

(a) Requests for program waivers shall be made to the Division, in writing, with supporting information justifying the request.