



Psychosocial Rehabilitation & Recovery Center (PRRC) Participant Handbook

What is the PRRC?

The PRRC is a transitional learning center designed to help you build the necessary skills and supports for achieving the goals that you have defined for your life. We believe in focusing on your unique strengths, interests, and values to create a personally meaningful journey of recovery. Our aim is to promote mental health wellness by instilling hope and the message that all persons have the capacity to learn and grow. The PRRC care team forms partnerships with you and other supports in your life to ensure collaboration toward your specific self-chosen goals. PRRC services consist of education and skills training, as well as opportunities for peer learning to encourage mutual support and empowerment among the participants.

What is Recovery?

"Mental health recovery is a journey of healing and transformation enabling a person with a mental health problem to live a meaningful life in a community of his or her choice while striving to achieve his or her full potential."

– Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)



PRRC Mission

To inspire and assist individuals with serious mental illness in obtaining the skills and supports necessary for fulfilling personally-meaningful roles and purposes in life. The PRRC is committed to promoting mental health recovery based on the individual's strengths and self-defined values, interests, and goals for wellness in various aspects of life.

PRRC Participant's Commitment

The PRRC is a voluntary program designed to help you achieve personalized wellness and recovery goals. While your enrollment in the program is voluntary, regular attendance and class participation in the PRRC is expected as part of your commitment to the learning process and your own journey of recovery. You are expected to notify your primary PRRC provider or class facilitator in advance if unable to attend a scheduled appointment. Issues such as chronic absences and disruptive or inappropriate behavior are likely to result in discharge from the program.

Potential Risks and Benefits of Participation

Your recovery progress depends on a number of things, including but not limited to, the severity of your problems, other physical or health problems, drug and/or alcohol use, and how well medicine or therapy helps with the problem(s). While no promises can be made about the outcome of treatment or any therapeutic activity provided by the PRRC team, continuing healthy habits, and working together with your treatment team will help increase your chances of success. Through your participation in the PRRC, you may notice the following benefits: feeling better mentally and physically; improving your quality of life; increasing your social support; improving your relationships; and decreased hospitalizations. There are also potential risks of participating in the PRRC, such as sometimes having to talk about difficult experiences in the past or negative thoughts/feelings which can be distressing. The possible cost of this service is another factor which will be reviewed with you. There are also alternative forms of outpatient mental health care that may be a possible treatment option for you. If you have questions about your treatment in the PRRC or alternative forms of treatment, your primary PRRC provider or designee can provide further clarification.

COVID-19 Related Changes

In response to COVID-19, the PRRC will collaborate with VHA guidelines, local Hines VA guidance, and health department guidance to determine if and how face to face care is delivered to optimize staff, trainee and participant safety while ensuring Veteran access to care. The PRRC has been quick to pivot to virtual

services using “VA Video Connect,” Webex and teleconferencing modalities. To ensure safe access to care, PRRC group and individual services are now offered remotely using virtual platforms. There are also limited face-to-face groups available due to space restrictions and social distancing requirements. The PRRC team will do their best to honor each participant’s preference regarding face-to-face or video services, as clinically appropriate and safety guidance permits. There are some situations in which the PRRC team may decide that face-to-face visits are necessary. For in person visits, both staff and participant must wear appropriate PPE (i.e., face masks) FOR THE ENTIRE DURATION of appointments and follow appropriate safety guidelines. If you are unable to follow these guidelines, please speak to your PRRC provider about requesting virtual telehealth options. Included in this packet is a Technology Resource page to assist you with troubleshooting any technology related issues.

PRRC Care Team

The PRRC care team works collaboratively with you, each other, and other relevant providers and/or supports to help address your individualized needs and recovery goals. Our care/support team consists of various members with diverse training backgrounds:

- Program Manager/Clinical Psychologist – Amanda Lyskawa, PhD
- Clinical Psychologist – Patricia Cano, PhD
- Clinical Psychologist – Alex Curland, PhD
- Clinical Social Worker – Joseph Pacetti, LCSW
- Clinical Social Worker – Bernadette O’Keefe, LCSW
- Certified Peer Support Specialist – Bert Patania, CPRSS, CADC
- Program Support Assistant – Wendy Neal

PRRC Location/Phone Number/Hours

The PRRC is located on the 1st floor of building 13. PRRC hours are from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, although participation in the program will

vary based on a participant's choice of classes. The program is closed for federal holidays. **To reschedule/cancel an appointment or to obtain more information about the program, please contact our main office at 708.202.4803.** Our Program Support Assistant, Wendy Neal, will be able to assist you.

PRRC Services

Enrollment and Orientation:

- Following a referral from a mental health provider, PRRC candidates are invited to participate in an informational/screening session with a PRRC provider to help establish eligibility for the program.
- Once the suitability of the participant's treatment needs and the PRRC program are determined, potential participants are immediately invited to engage in a 30-day trial of the program and invited to attend a Peer Support Orientation session.
- Participants will also complete program evaluation forms after their initial screening. These forms will be reviewed with participants upon successful completion of their 30-day trial.
- Upon a successful 30-day trial (i.e., the participant continues to demonstrate appropriateness for the program and remains interested and consistently engaged), they will then complete an intake assessment with a PRRC clinician where they will be formally admitted into the PRRC.
- Once enrolled into the PRRC, participants will be invited to attend a one-hour orientation session focused on goal setting and the fundamental mental health recovery components.

Individual Recovery Planning:

- PRRC participants meet individually with their assigned PRRC providers within 30 days of orientation to work on identifying personal recovery goals and any existing or potential barriers. Recovery plans are re-assessed at least every 3 months. As needed, participants can meet with their PRRC providers more frequently to receive assistance with their recovery goals, update their recovery plans, and assess their overall progress in the program.

PRRC Classes:

- PRRC programming is evidence-based and delivered primarily in a classroom format. Classes are designed to be educational, interactive, and recovery-oriented, with participants choosing the classes in which they want to enroll based on their self-identified recovery goals. Please refer to **PRRC Description of Classes** for a detailed explanation of classes. Bridge programming to other services is also offered.
- Class facilitators come from various disciplines, including Psychology, Social Work, and Peer Support. They routinely collaborate as a team and with other relevant providers or family members, as needed, to ensure appropriate, high-quality care, communication, and documentation of services.
- PRRC classes are generally offered Monday through Friday. Most classes range from 3 to 4 months in duration and meet once or twice per week. Session days and times vary per class. Please refer to **PRRC Class Calendar** for specifics. Because class enrollment is based on participant interest and need at any given time, some classes may not be available during a particular period.

Family Services:

- The PRRC care team strives to partner with family members/key supporters in the participants' lives to provide assistance along their mental health recovery journeys. Individuals enrolled in the PRRC may be eligible for the following family services offered through the program:
 - **Consumer-Centered Family Consultation** – A brief intervention, lasting 1-5 sessions, aimed at supporting the participant's recovery goals via education, linkage to available resources, and/or assistance with focused, short-term problem-solving around a particular area of concern for the participant and his/her family.
 - **Behavioral Family Therapy (BFT)** – A curriculum-based intervention for participants and family members/loved ones (typically excludes young children and adolescents), lasting approximately 6 months. BFT goals include: 1) establishing a working alliance between the care team and family members; 2) providing education to family members about responses to the mental illness; and 3) enhancing the family's coping skills through more advanced communication and problem-solving skills. BFT helps facilitate participants' mental health recovery

by improving their family functioning and the course of their illness (i.e., promoting independence, improving social functioning, reducing relapses and hospitalizations).

- **Family-to-Family Education Program** – The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) provides additional opportunities for education through a 12-week series of classes. The program is aimed at helping families gain a better understanding of serious mental illness and provide support to their loved ones while maintaining their own well-being. Specifically designed for family members and other loved ones (not the PRRC participant), the course is led by a team of trained NAMI family member volunteers who understand first-hand the experience of loving someone struggling with a mental illness. **This series is offered based on family interest and may not be available at Hines VA year-round. Please inquire with your primary PRRC provider to obtain the most up-to-date information.*

Graduation, Transition, and Discharge:

- The PRRC strongly believes in recognizing participants' hard work and dedication to their mental health recovery. At the end of each successful completion of a PRRC class, participants are awarded a certificate in recognition of their accomplishment. Graduation from the PRRC is mutually determined by the participant and his/her care team once the participant's self-identified recovery goals have been met. PRRC alumni may choose to re-enroll in PRRC programming in the future as their interests and needs warrant.
- Efforts are made by the PRRC care team to identify any special population or changing rehabilitation needs requiring additional and/or alternative services to those provided in the PRRC. In some cases, the option of referral/linkage to other providers, services, or resources will be discussed with PRRC participants to facilitate transition when appropriate. PRRC participants are expected to take an active role in their recovery by notifying providers of any changes in their condition or symptoms and preferences for care.
- Reasons for PRRC discharge include participant desire to discontinue, chronic absences or other problematic behavior (as mentioned in later section of this packet under "PRRC Expectations"), lack of progress over time, and relocation or transition to other program/services.

PRRC Feedback

Suggestion Box:

- The PRRC care team is interested in learning about participants' positive experiences with the program as well as any suggested areas for improvement. As such, PRRC feedback is always welcome and encouraged. Participants who wish to remain anonymous may drop comments in the suggestion box located in the PRRC waiting room. Participants who wish to provide direct feedback may choose to speak to their primary PRRC providers, other PRRC staff, or the PRRC Program Manager, Dr. Amanda Lyskawa.

Other PRRC Feedback:

- The PRRC care team provides all enrolled participants an opportunity to provide feedback on how the program is currently meeting their needs and goals for recovery. Periodically, participants are asked to complete PRRC Report Cards, Class Feedback Forms, or Post-Discharge Feedback in which they provide feedback and share any positive comments, suggestions to improve services, or concerns they have regarding the PRRC. Participants' feedback is particularly useful to help us provide you with the best care possible.

Financial Eligibility

PRRC services may require a co-payment depending on your particular insurance status. Arrangement for payment of any financial fees incurred for services provided by the program will be the responsibility of the individual participant. If you are unsure of your financial eligibility for mental health or PRRC services, please contact the Hines VA Eligibility Office at 708.202.8387, ext. 28838.

Medical Records and Documentation

Your PRRC provider is a mental health provider and will work with other members of your VA Health Care Team. To ensure coordinated care, PRRC staff will document information about your progress in your medical records and consult with other VA medical and mental health providers. If you would like to see your

medical records, go to the Release of Information office in Building One or use My HealthVet system.

Grievance Procedure

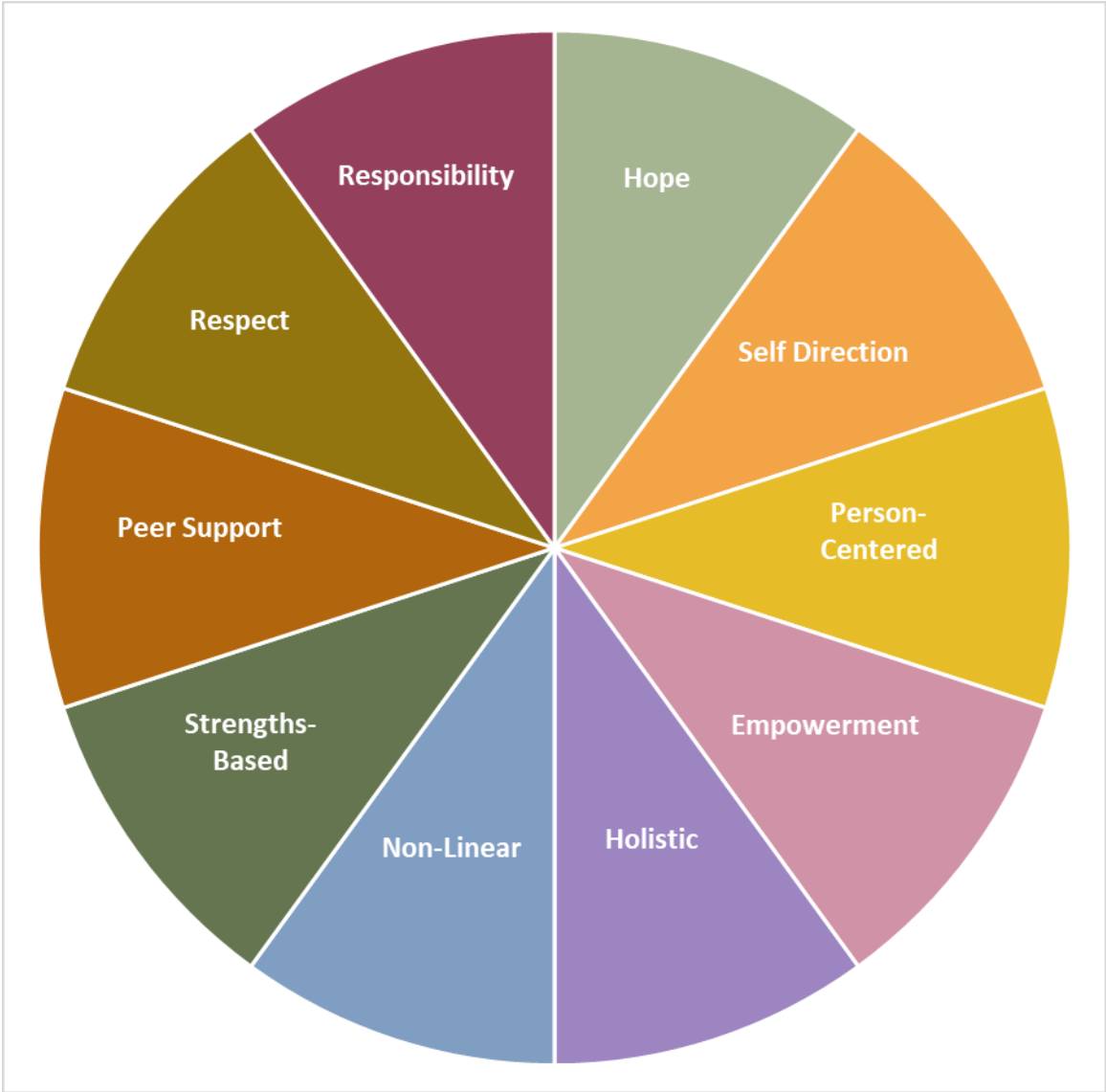
The PRRC care team is committed to providing the highest quality of care and hopes you will be satisfied with the services provided. If you are not, or you feel there has been an ethical violation of your rights, you may make a verbal or written complaint without fear of retaliation. Please follow the steps below to resolve your concern:

1. Contact your primary PRRC provider to discuss the problem/complaint.
2. If your primary PRRC provider cannot resolve the issue, or if you disagree with the decision or action taken, you may contact the PRRC Program Manager, Dr. Amanda Lyskawa, at 708.202.8387 ext. 20641, for assistance with resolution.
3. If you believe the issue requires further resolution, please contact the Patient Advocate Office, at 708.202.2716. Their office is in Building 1, Room C-130. They will review your concern within one business day.
4. The VISN 12 Clinical Appeals Process is a process in which VISN 12 patients (or their designated representatives) have access to a fair and impartial review of disputes regarding clinical determinations or services that are not resolved at the facility level. Clinical determinations or services include disputes involving referrals/transfers, discharge planning, clinical care and other factors that influence the clinical outcomes of care. The VISN 12 Network Director can request a prompt, impartial review of concerns by a professional board external to the agency. A written report is to be given to you within 30 days.

After-Hour Crises Resources

- Call 911.
- Go to the nearest Emergency Room.
- Call 24-hour Veterans Crisis Line # 988, Press "1."
- Call Hines VA 24-hour emergency treatment: Nurse Advice Line # 1.708.202.3800.

10 Recovery Components



10 Recovery Components

- 1 **Self-Direction.** Individuals determine their own path of recovery with their autonomy, independence, and control of resources.
- 2 **Person-Centered.** There are multiple pathways to recovery based on an individual's unique strengths as well as his or her needs, preferences, experiences, and cultural background.
- 3 **Empowerment.** Individuals have the authority to participate in all decisions that will affect their lives, and they are educated and supported in this process.
- 4 **Holistic.** Recovery encompasses an individual's whole life, including mind, body, spirit, and community. Recovery embraces all aspects of life, including housing, social networks, employment, education, mental health and health care treatment, and family supports.
- 5 **Non-Linear.** Recovery is not a step-by step process, but one based on continual growth, occasional setbacks, and learning from experience.
- 6 **Strengths-Based.** Recovery focuses on valuing and building on the multiple capacities, resiliencies, talents, coping abilities, and inherent worth of individuals. The process of recovery moves forward through interaction with others in supportive, trust-based relationships.
- 7 **Peer Support.** Mutual support plays an invaluable role in recovery. Consumers encourage and engage others in recovery and provide each other with a sense of belonging.
- 8 **Respect.** Eliminating discrimination and stigma are crucial in achieving recovery. Self-acceptance and regaining belief in oneself are particularly vital.
- 9 **Responsibility.** Individuals have a personal responsibility for their own self-care and journeys of recovery. Individuals identify coping strategies and healing processes to promote their own wellness.
- 10 **Hope.** Hope is the catalyst of the recovery process and provides the essential and motivating message of a positive future. Peers, families, friends, providers, and others can help foster hope.

PRRC – Core Principles & Values *(adapted from PRA)*

1. PRRC staff members convey hope and respect and believe that all people have the capacity for learning and growth.
2. PRRC staff members recognize that culture is central to recovery and strive to ensure that all services are culturally relevant to the Veterans receiving them.
3. PRRC staff members engage in the processes of informed and shared decision-making, facilitating partnerships with other people identified by the Veterans receiving services.
4. PRRC services build on the strengths and capabilities of the Veterans served.
5. PRRC services are person-centered; they are designed to address the unique needs of each Veteran, consistent with the person's values, hopes, and aspirations.
6. PRRC services support full integration of Veterans into their communities, where they can exercise their rights of citizenship, as well as accept the responsibilities and explore the opportunities that come with being a member of a community and a larger society.
7. PRRC services promote self-determination and empowerment. All Veterans have the right to make their own decisions, including choices about the types of services and supports they receive.
8. PRRC services facilitate the development of personal support networks by utilizing natural supports within communities, peer support initiatives, and self- and mutual-help venues.
9. PRRC services strive to help Veterans improve the quality of all aspects of their lives, including social, occupational, educational, residential, intellectual, physical, spiritual, and financial.
10. PRRC services promote health and wellness, encouraging individuals to develop and use individualized wellness plans.
11. PRRC services emphasize evidence-based, promising, and emerging best practices that produce outcomes congruent with personal recovery. Program evaluation and quality improvement mechanisms exist that actively involve the Veterans receiving services.
12. PRRC services are available to eligible Veterans as long as needed, being coordinated and integrated with other psychiatric, medical, and holistic treatments or practices.

Your Rights in the PRRC

You have the right to:

1. Be treated with respect and dignity;
2. Receive quality treatment for your health care needs;
3. Request information so that you understand your diagnosis and treatment;
4. Know the person(s) in charge of your mental health care;
5. Be involved in your own recovery planning;
6. Refuse treatment and be told about the risks of your decision;
7. Confidentiality and privacy for your personal needs;
8. Not be talked to, touched, or treated in an abusive manner;
9. Possess/use of your own belongings unless they pose a concern (for example, space, noise, fire hazard, safety) or are considered offensive by PRRC, VA, or legal standards;
10. Present any violations of the above rights to PRRC staff or a Consumer Representative without fear of humiliation or penalty.

****Detailed VA Patient/Family Rights & Responsibilities info also located in PRRC waiting area.***

Your Responsibilities in the PRRC

- The PRRC is a voluntary recovery center. For maximum benefits, we encourage you to take part in sessions fully by attending regularly and participating in discussions and activities.
- You are expected to notify your primary PRRC provider or class facilitator in advance if unable to attend a scheduled class session. In the event of an unexpected need to cancel a session, you may also call the PRRC main office at 708.202.4803 to cancel or reschedule an appointment.
- ***Please note that multiple no-shows or other absences may result in termination from the class in which you are enrolled, as well as discharge from the program.*** Your primary PRRC provider will collaborate with you through recovery planning to help you identify and address existing barriers to regular attendance prior to class termination or PRRC discharge.
- In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all, you are expected to respect other participants and staff and to follow program rules.
- All property belonging to facility, participants, and staff should be treated with respect.
- **Confidentiality** is a priority. It is likely that you and your peers will share personal feelings, experiences, joys, success stories, and challenges during class sessions. To ensure a sense of safety and comfort within the group setting, we expect that what is said in the classroom, remain in the classroom.
- Situations in which a staff member **MUST/WILL** break confidentiality are:
 - If you are a threat to yourself or someone else.
 - If you are aware of or engaging in child or elder abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
 - If safety is unknown and questionable.
 - Potentially in situations of court ordered subpoenas.

Disruptive, threatening, and/or violent behavior will not be tolerated during sessions or on site and may be cause for dismissal from the program. The PRRC program does not use any seclusion or restraint within the program. Positive approaches, such as verbal de-escalation, are used in an attempt to restore clinical stability and social equilibrium. However, staff may contact the police as necessary.

- **Disruptive** – any incident in which the delivery of care or services is interrupted or prevented. All forms of harassment are covered under this category.
- **Threatening** – any verbal or non-verbal expression of an intention to inflict injury or to cause annoyance or alarm.

- **Violent** – any physical force exerted to violate, damage, or abuse another person, equipment, or property.
- Report any act you believe to be unsafe as soon as possible and avoid engaging in unsafe/illegal acts that place you or others at risk for accidents, injuries, or legal troubles. We are a team—to make this a safe and comfortable environment, it will take all of us working together.
- Use of tobacco products or alcoholic beverages and possession of narcotics/illegal drugs, firearms/ammunition, knives, straight edge razors, lighter fluid, non-safety matches, and other weapons or potentially dangerous objects are not permitted in the program or VA facility. As such, failure to comply with these program and VA rules and expectations will result in a report to the proper authorities.
- You will be unable to participate in PRRC services if you are or suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at the time of session, as this limits your ability to benefit from the program and may interfere with the progress of other PRRC participants. You must submit to Urinary Drug Screens (UDS) or Urinary Analysis (UA) as deemed appropriate by request of clinical staff. Any refusal to submit a UDS/UA will be synonymous with a positive screening.
- If you have an untreated drug/alcohol use problem that is interfering with your or others' learning, your PRRC care provider can assist you with making the necessary referrals to other services.
- Repeated failure to adhere to the rules of the PRRC will result in discharge from the program. At that time, re-referral to the program would require engagement and consistent involvement in a substance abuse program for a period of time to demonstrate commitment to recovery. Legal drugs or medications prescribed to you should be kept in a secure location at all times. Exchange of drugs between individuals is not allowed.
- While we understand that certain medications can produce drowsiness, any chronic pattern of sleeping during class sessions, as well as excessive tardiness/absences or other behaviors considered by PRRC staff to be problematic or disruptive to learning, is likely to have a negative result on your and other PRRC participants' recovery efforts. In such cases, a participant/PRRC team meeting would be warranted to discuss these individual issues and to determine your ability to continue in the PRRC program.
- Follow the appropriate steps for handling conflicts or concerns with regard to a class, staff member, or peer. You may choose to consider any or all of the following:

- Discuss the issue calmly and directly with the peer or staff member involved.
- If a minor conflict or concern, ask for the class to review and honor existing ground rules.
- If a serious conflict or concern, ask to set up a time to meet individually with your primary PRRC provider or class leader to discuss the situation.
- If the problem continues to go unresolved, the PRRC staff member may meet directly with both parties to work out a solution collaboratively or to pursue an alternative solution (e.g., modification to programming, class rules/expectations, or a participant's enrollment; meeting with PRRC Program Manager; consultation with a Consumer Representative), as deemed appropriate.

Specific Telehealth Responsibilities

Suitability

- Telehealth via video conferencing or telephone are not a suitable treatment modalities for everyone. You and your provider may determine services are better offered in-person if there are ongoing challenges with technology or treatment goals to ensure you are receiving the best care possible.
- If there are continuous difficulties following treatment recommendations and/or abiding by PRRC and telehealth guidelines, your provider may determine that treatment will be transitioned to in-person.
- If you relocate out of the Hines VA service area, you are aware that you will need to establish care at your new local VA hospital/Community Based Outpatient Clinic.
- Participation in PRRC services is voluntary and you have the option to refuse telehealth services at any time without affecting the right to future care or treatment.
- You have the right to decline to answer any question, participate in any activity, or to not say anything at any time.

Confidentiality/Privacy

- Arrange for a quiet, private environment from which to participate in telehealth sessions.
- Due to the sensitive material that is covered in each session, please be alone in the room (no family or friends). This is to respect the confidentiality of you and other group members.
- If participating in classes via video conferencing, cameras should be turned on for a minimum of 10 minutes at the start of every class. We encourage everyone to have their cameras on for the full class time to get the most out of your class experience.
- Do not audio or video record any sessions, unless otherwise agreed upon with your mental health provider. This is to respect the confidentiality of you and other group members.
- Be on time or notify your provider if you will be late or unable to attend. If you present later than 15 minutes for an individual appointment your provider has the right to reschedule your appointment. Classes will be locked after 15 minutes.

Safety

- Please do not call via video conferencing when you are driving or in a public area.
- Please inform provider of any pets or people in the home at the time of session.
- Please verify your current location for the visit.
- Intimidating, threatening, or violent behaviors towards other group members will not be tolerated.

- Do not enter the class if you are in crisis. You can reach out to your VA provider, call the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 and press 1, call 911, and/or go to the nearest Emergency Department.

Behavior/Dignity

- Please be in a private area with minimal distractions.
- Dress appropriately.
- Participate in sessions sitting up, unless otherwise agreed upon with your mental health provider.
- Make sure all televisions/radios/cellphones other electronics are turned off so they are not a distraction or causing unnecessary background noise during the session.
- To reduce distractions, put your device at eye level and on a solid surface vs. holding it whenever possible.
- No eating, smoking or use of tobacco products during sessions.
- Do not engage in services while under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.
- Do not engage in other activities during sessions (e.g., driving, cooking, cleaning, caring for children or pets).
- Please do not engage in “side conversations” via the chat feature during classes. The chat feature is reserved for class related dialogue only.
- Lockup all weapons (e.g., guns, knives, etc.) and remove them from the room where you will be participating in services via telehealth.
- Ensure your device is fully charged prior to the appointment.

Telehealth Resources

- Telehealth services utilize the internet to send and receive encrypted video images and audio files of your treatment session between the VA computer or portable computer device (e.g. tablet, smart phone, laptop, etc.) and your home computer or portable computer device.
- If you are using an iOS device, you will need to install the VVC mobile app.
- Put any other devices connected to the internet in “airplane mode.” If using your phone, put on “do not disturb” so the session does not get interrupted.
- When possible, hardwire internet into your device for best connection.

➤ **In advance of your VVC session:**

- Run a speed test for your device at a site such as <https://www.speedtest.net> or scan:



- Download and upload speed should be ≥ 6 Mbps
- If your speed is <6 , VVC connection will be poor. Contact your provider to discuss other options.
- For smartphones and tablets, your cell service should be at 3 or more bars.
- Test VVC on your device at <https://care.va.gov/vvc-app/#/> or scan:



- For troubleshooting, contact National Telehealth Technology Helpdesk (NTTHD)
 - 866-651-3180, Monday – Saturday 6am-10pm CT
- For tips to maximize your VVC visit, view video at <https://youtu.be/aB2tGHHKGu8> or scan:



Emergencies

- If you feel you need immediate assistance, call 911 or go to the closest Emergency Department. Additionally, you may call the Veterans Crisis Line toll-free number, 988. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You will be immediately connected with a qualified and caring provider who can help.

Veterans Health Administration

Rights and Responsibilities of VA Patients and Residents of Community Living Centers

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is pleased you have selected us to provide your health care. We will provide you with personalized, patient-driven, compassionate, state-of-the-art care. Our goal is to make your experience as positive and pleasant as we can. As part of our service to you, to other Veterans and to the Nation, we are committed to improving health care quality. We also train future health care professionals, conduct research, and support our country in times of national emergency. In all of these activities, our employees will respect and support your rights as a patient or resident of a community living center (CLC). Your basic rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document. You will receive this information in your preferred language. Please talk with the VA treatment team members who are providing your care or to a patient advocate if you have any questions or would like more information about your rights and responsibilities.

1. Nondiscrimination and Respect

- You will be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect as an individual. Consistent with Federal law, VA policy, and accreditation standards of The Joint Commission, you will not be subject to discrimination for any reason, including for reasons of age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.
- You will receive care in a safe environment free from excess noise, and with sufficient light to ensure comfort and safety.
- You have a right to have access to the outdoors.
- We will seek to honor your cultural and personal values, beliefs, and preferences. We ask that you identify any cultural, religious, or spiritual beliefs or practices that influence your care.
- You or someone you choose has the right to keep and spend your money. You have the right to receive an accounting of any funds that VA is holding for you.
- We will respect your personal freedoms in the care and treatment we provide you. This includes trying to accommodate your normal sleep and wake cycles, food likes and dislikes, and other personal preferences.
- In the Community Living Center, you have the right to be free from chemical and physical restraints. In the inpatient acute care setting, and only in rare cases, the use of chemical and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.

- In the Community Living Center, you may keep personal items and are expected to wear your own clothes. As an inpatient, you may wear your own clothes depending on your medical condition.
- You have the right to keep and use personal items as long as they are safe and legal.
- You have the right to social interaction and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether to participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center or in the Community Living Center.
- You have the right to communicate freely and privately. You will have access to public telephones and VA will assist you in sending and receiving mail. You may participate in civic rights, such as voting and free speech.
- When a loved one is involved in support and care of a VA patient or CLC resident, VA considers a patient or CLC resident's family to include anyone related to the patient or CLC resident in any way (for example, biologically or legally) and anyone whom the patient or CLC resident considers to be family. If you are an inpatient, any persons you choose can be with you to support you during your stay. Medical staff may restrict visitors for inpatients if medical or safety concerns require it. You will be told promptly about any visitor restriction and the reason for it.
- In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients or CLC residents and staff, you and your visitors are expected to avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

2. Health Information and Privacy

- Your privacy will be protected.
- You will be given information about the health benefits you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.
- You will receive information about the costs of your care (for example, co-payments), if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying your portion of any costs associated with your care.
- Your health record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your authorization unless permitted by law (an example of this is State public health reporting). You have the right to have access to or request a copy of your own health records.
- Please respect the privacy of other patients and CLC residents and do not reveal their health information that you may overhear or otherwise become aware of.

3. Partnering in Care

- You have a right to express your preferences concerning future medical care in an advance directive, including designating a health care agent to make health care decisions on your behalf when you can no longer do so.
- You, and any person(s) you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment in your

preferred language. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse any treatment. You will be told what is likely to happen to you if you refuse a treatment. Refusing a treatment will not affect your rights to future care but you take responsibility for the impact this decision may have on your health.

- Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including over-the-counter and herbals), and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you do not understand something about your care. This will help us provide you the best care possible.
- You will be given, in writing, the name and title of the provider in charge of your care. You have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You also have the right to know the names and titles of those who provide you care. This includes students and other trainees. Providers will properly introduce themselves when they take part in your care.
- You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient or CLC resident. This includes your participation in decision making and care at the end of life.
- If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan, you have a responsibility to tell your provider or treatment team.
- You will be informed of all outcomes of your care, including any possible injuries associated with your care. You will be informed about how to request compensation and other remedies for any serious injuries.
- You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.
- As an inpatient or CLC resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your treatment plan.
- You have the right to choose whether or not you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate.
- You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. If you have ethical issues or concerns, you may speak with the Medical Center's Ethics Consultation Service for help.

4. Concerns or Complaints

- You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. Any privacy complaints will be addressed by the facility Privacy Officer. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process in your preferred language. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.
- If you believe that you or your family member has been neglected, abused or exploited by VA staff, please report this promptly to the treatment team or patient advocate. You will receive help immediately.
- If you believe the organization has failed to address or satisfy your concerns about health care quality and safety, you may contact the Joint Commission's Office of Quality Monitoring at 1-800-994-6610. If you believe that the organization has failed to address your concerns about suspected criminal activities, fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement, you may contact the

VA Office of the Inspector General at 1-800-488-8244. For more information, [visit va.gov/oig/hotline/](https://www.va.gov/oig/hotline/).

5. Additional Rights and Responsibilities of Community Living Center Residents


Because the CLC serves as your home for short or long-stay services, you have the following additional rights and responsibilities as a CLC resident:

- Staff will knock on your bedroom door prior to entry.
- You have the right to receive care from the same staff member every day to the extent that consistent assignment is possible.
- You may have visitors at any time of the day or night provided visitors are respectful of you, your need for privacy and the privacy of others. You may refuse visitors at any time.
- You have a right to conjugal visits and you have a right to privacy during those visits.
- Your care will be delivered in a setting that resembles home. Therefore, you will be invited to have your meals in a designated dining area and you will have access to those activities that contribute to meaningful use of time.
- In preparation for being discharged to your own home, you and or your care giver may be invited to participate in activities that prepare you to go home such as self administration of medications and treatments.
- You and your care givers have a right to attend treatment planning meetings and participate in household or resident council.

Medication Use Guidelines

- PRRC staff members do not prescribe, store, dispense, administer, transport, or otherwise control any type of medication for PRRC participants.
- Medication orders for individual participants are listed in the Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS).
- Participants are referred to their medical and/or mental health providers for medication management. PRRC providers can assist in linking participants to a provider for medication management as needed if a provider is not already assigned.
- Participants are encouraged to contact the local Emergency Department in case of emergencies related to the use of medication that occurs outside of normal business hours.
- Participants are responsible for independently following their own medication regimen.
- Participants in the PRRC and their families or significant others (if included in the treatment process) may be provided educational information about medications for those interested individuals. Some information regarding medications, consistent with scope of practice, is provided directly to PRRC participants by staff as part of the Illness Management & Recovery Protocol and the Behavioral Family Therapy Protocol. Additionally, participants are provided with written education regarding their medications via the inserts that accompany their medications, upon receipt, from pharmacy. They are also encouraged to discuss any additional questions regarding medications with their prescribing providers.
- Participants bringing in their own medications to be consumed during programming are responsible for ensuring their medication is kept on their person and in their control at all times. Please do not consume medications during class as this can be distracting for other participants. If you need to take medications during class, please exit the class and return when you are finished. Sharing any medication, prescribed or OTC is prohibited.
- The prescribing provider is responsible for educating the participant and family (when applicable) regarding medications. The prescribing provider is responsible for medication renewals.
- PRRC staff will promote self-advocacy; encouraging participants to report side effects, concerns and ask questions regarding medications to their prescriber.



Fire Extinguisher 



Fire Alarm 



AED 



Quick Reference Guide to PRRC & Related Abbreviations

- **BFT** – Behavioral Family Therapy (PRRC service)
- **CBT** – Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (Interventions/Techniques)
- **CWT** – Compensated Work Therapy (VA Program)
- **DBSA** – Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance (www.DBSAAlliance.org)
- **HCHV** – Health Care for Homeless Veterans (VA Program)
- **IMR** – Illness Management & Recovery (PRRC class)
- **MHICM** – Mental Health Intensive Case Management (VA Program)
- **NAMI** – National Alliance on Mental Illness (www.nami.org)
- **PRRC** – Psychosocial Rehabilitation & Recovery Center (VA Program)
- **PSA** – Program Support Assistant
- **PSS/CPSS** – Peer Support Specialist; Certified Peer Support Specialist
- **SAMHSA** – Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (www.samhsa.gov)
- **SMI** – Serious Mental Illness
- **SST** – Social Skills Training (PRRC class)
- **PRA** – Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (formerly known as United States Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association or USPRA)
- **WRAP** – Wellness Recovery Action Plan (PRRC class)

Psychosocial Rehabilitation & Recovery Center (PRRC)
Informed Consent / Participant Agreement

1. Confidentiality

I understand the laws that protect the confidentiality of my medical information also apply to telehealth, including individual and group treatment conducted over video or audio telehealth. I understand that the VA has instituted procedures and policies to protect my privacy and confidentiality. The provider will lock the virtual medical room to ensure no unauthorized person will enter the session or listen. I understand that everything said and done in group is confidential. I agree to protect the group confidentiality, by not revealing the names of other members of the group, nor what is said and done in the group. I understand that if I violate this confidentiality, I will be removed from the group. I understand that there are exceptions to this confidentiality that applies to the providers. The exceptions to confidentiality include, but are not limited to: times when a provider believes that I may be a threat to myself or others; in cases of suspected child, elder, or dependent adult abuse; expressed threats of violence toward an ascertainable victim; and in situations when a provider or my medical records have been subpoenaed in a court of law.

2. Risks and Consequences

The VA does not record telehealth sessions, including group telehealth sessions, without prior approval. I understand that I will not audio or video record any portion of the treatment session. I acknowledge that while this session will not be audio or video recorded by the VA, there is a risk that the session *could be* audio or video recorded and disseminated by a group member without knowledge or approval from VA or other group members. The consequence for any member audio or video recording any portion of the treatment session will be the removal from the group for violating confidentiality, as well as referral for prosecution to the full extent of federal and local laws. Applicable local laws may include the location of the provider and all members. There is also the possibility of technology failure. Telehealth sessions could be interrupted or distorted by technical failures.

There are also potential risks of participating in the PRRC, such as sometimes having to talk about difficult experiences in the past or negative thoughts/feelings which can be distressing. The possible cost of this service is another factor which was reviewed with me.

If participating in groups via video conferencing, I agree to turn my camera on for a minimum of 10 minutes at the start of every group. I understand that if I choose to turn my camera off, I may not be getting the most out of my group sessions. I agree to be on time for sessions or will notify my provider(s) if I am unable to attend. If I arrive later than 15 minutes for an appointment my provider has the right to reschedule my appointment. I understand that

groups will be locked after 15 minutes, and I may not be able to participate in the group if I arrive later than 15 minutes.

3. Benefits of Treatment

Your recovery progress depends on a number of things, including but not limited to, the severity of your problems, other physical or health problems, drug and/or alcohol use, and how well medicine or therapy helps with the problem(s). While no promises can be made about the outcome of treatment or any therapeutic activity provided by the PRRC team, continuing healthy habits, and working together with your treatment team will help increase your chances of success. Through your participation in the PRRC, you may notice the following benefits: feeling better mentally and physically; improving your quality of life; increasing your social support; improving your relationships; and decreased hospitalizations.

4. Alternatives to Treatment

Depending on individual circumstances, there may be alternatives to this treatment, including other outpatient and/or inpatient mental health treatment programs.

5. Privacy

I understand that I am not required to answer any question, to participate in any activity if I chose not to. If I am asked questions or asked to participate in an activity that makes me feel uncomfortable, I understand that I have the right to decline, and I agree not to pressure any other group member to participate if they are uncomfortable. If I choose to participate in treatment via telehealth, I agree to arrange for a quiet, private environment from which to participate. I will ensure I am alone in the room (no family or friends) when participating in telehealth sessions to respect the confidentiality of myself and other group members.

6. Dignity

I agree that I will be tolerant, respectful, and supportive of my peers. I will avoid language that stereotypes or is derogatory to others and will provide only helpful feedback. I will be considerate of others who are talking, will give others a chance to talk, and will not engage in side conversations. I will not pressure peers to talk or participate during groups if they choose not to.

7. Behavior

If I choose to participate in telehealth services, I agree to dress appropriately, ensure my device is fully charged and be in a private area with minimal distractions. I will participate in PRRC services, including telehealth services, while sitting up, unless otherwise agreed upon with my provider. I will make sure televisions/radios/cellphones other electronics are turned off so they

are not a distraction or causing unnecessary background noise during the session. I agree to not engage in other activities during sessions (e.g., driving, cooking, cleaning, caring for children or pets, etc.). I will put my device at eye level and on a solid surface instead of holding it whenever possible. I will refrain from engaging in “side conversations” via the chat feature during groups. The chat feature is reserved for group related dialogue only. I will refrain from eating, smoking or using tobacco products during sessions. I will refrain from participating in PRRC services while under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances. I understand that if the provider believes that I am under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, I may be asked to leave the group and/or sessions will be terminated early.

Safety is of the utmost importance. Violence or intimidation toward others is not tolerated. I agree that if I have something to say to another group member, I will say it to the member directly and in a respectful way. I will not call via telephone or video conferencing when I am driving or in a public area. I agree to verify my current location when participating in services via telehealth. I will lockup all weapons (e.g., guns, knives, etc.) and remove them from the room where I will be participating in services via telehealth. I understand that weapons and firearms are not permitted on VA property.

8. Crisis Situations

I agree that certain situations are inappropriate for telehealth groups. If I am in crisis or in an emergency, I will not enter the group. Instead I should immediately call 911 or go to the nearest hospital or crisis facility as appropriate. By agreeing to this document I understand that emergency situation may include thoughts about hurting or harming myself or others, having uncontrolled psychotic symptoms, if I am in a life threatening or emergency situation, and/or if I am abusing drugs or alcohol and are not safe. If I am feeling suicidal, I can call my provider(s), 911, or the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 and press “1” for Veterans.

9. Withdrawal of Consent

Participation in PRRC services is voluntary, and I have the right to withdraw my consent for services at any time without affecting my right to future care or treatment or risking the loss or withdrawal of any program benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. If I determine that I would like to withdraw consent, I will notify a member of the PRRC treatment team and request that my decision be documented in my medical record.

*In developing this consent form it was necessary to use several technical words; please ask for an explanation of any that you do not understand.

