

# **Current Developmental Services Residential Supports offered in Vermont**

## **UCS Bank Street Apartment Building**

The Bank Street setting is in North Bennington, VT. It is an apartment house with six separate apartments; 3 upstairs and 3 downstairs. Each apartment has its own kitchen, living room, bedroom, and bathroom and each apartment can be locked, with the tenant having the key. There are two common living room areas in the home, and a washer and dryer on the lower floor which is open for all tenants to use. There is a staff office on the first floor. All apartments have two exits for safety in case of a fire. The main entrance has a handicap ramp.

The building is owned and maintained by United Counseling Services. Tenants pay rent to UCS which primarily covers utilities and building maintenance. The building is not staffed 24/7. Instead, tenants have support staff come in twice a day for medication administration and each tenant is funded an individual amount of support hours each week depending on need. Support staff joins individuals during these hours to do grocery shopping, medical appointments, assist with house-work or other activities the consumer may have difficulty doing on their own. This model seems to work because it allows each individual their independent living space, but they are also there for each other when needs arise. The individuals come and go as they please and a staff member is always on call after hours in case of an emergency.

## **SUCCEED**

SUCCEED is a 2-3-year post-secondary program for high school graduates between the ages of 18-25 who have intellectual disabilities or Autism. This program is provided by Howard Center in collaboration with area colleges. It includes 2 residential locations in downtown Burlington that offer a total capacity for 14 students. The residences function similar to a small, specialized dorm with daytime staff and a Residential Advisor who lives onsite and is present

for evening/overnight supports. New students live in one of the "main houses" where they share a bedroom, learn to live with housemates and develop a variety of independent living skills with the assistance of daily staffing supports. Students who have demonstrated the necessary independent living skills to take the next step, transition into a "back apartment" where they have more responsibilities and less staffing supports. Graduates of the program are eligible for a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher through Burlington Housing Authority.

The goal of SUCCEED is to provide students with a comprehensive college experience that prepares them for a future of success, creativity, and contributions to their community. Throughout their time in the program, students receive support from SUCCEED staff, as well as the opportunity to receive support from their peers, professors, and community members.

Students graduate with the ability to live in their own apartments, develop meaningful friendships, obtain fulfilling employment, and establish social connections within their community.

### **Safety Connections**

Safety Connections is a support provided by Howard Center. It provides nightly support to individuals who wish to pursue their goal of living on their own. Through the use of state-of-the-art technology and highly trained monitors and staff, the program offers individualized programming for adults of all ages. Nightly check-ins by Safety Connection monitors provide participants with a sense of connection to a larger community, and daily communication with Safety Connection case managers helps participants achieve their goals.

### **Shared Living Provider Model**

A Shared Living Provider (SLP) model is a non-licensed residential setting in which 1 to 2 people live in the home with a contracted SLP who provides supports in natural manner. SLPs are screened, contracted, trained, and overseen by the developmental service providers located throughout Vermont. The homes are all inspected for safety and accessibility. SLPs receive a tax-free stipend for providing care and support in their homes. The structure of the SLP can vary

depending on the needs of the individual being supported. The SLP may be a single person just living with the person needing support, or it may be a couple or a family with children. Sometimes, the home has a separate, but attached space that the person lives in so that they have some level of independence while having needed support. In some circumstances, there are two individuals contracted to provide support when needed due to medical or behavioral issues. The individual generally receives other services such as employment, community and respite supports.

SLP homes can be a transitional setting preparing an individual to live in his or her own apartment or be a long-term home for the individual.

In order to qualify for the tax-free stipend, the care must be provided in the home of the caregiver. The majority of SLPs are providing care in a home that they own or rent. There are some arrangements in the state where the home is owned or rented by the person, family or an organization. The SLP moves into the home of the person and pays their share of the rent.

An example of such an arrangement is Black Mountain Assisted Family Living. Several families joined together to purchase property where their children could live. The local DS provider agency collaborated on this project. The agency recruits and oversees SLPs who move into the homes of the individuals to provide care. In the most common SLP model, when a SLP decides to end their contract, the individual has to move out and the provider agency must find another SLP to provide a home. The families who developed Black Mountain Assisted Family Living had a desire to create a more stable, long term home setting for their adult children. In this model, when a SLP terminates their contract, the SLP moves out and a replacement is recruited. This allows for stability in housing, while the only the caregiver changes.

### **Supervised Living Model**

This model has regularly scheduled or intermittent hourly supports that are provided to an individual in his/her home or apartment. These supports can be focused on skill building or to

be a support for individual's current skill set in order to maintain a level of independence. Safety connections is also a support available in this setting.

### **In-home Family Supports**

This model has regularly scheduled or intermittent hourly supports that are provided to an individual who lives with their family. These supports can be focused on skill building or to be a support for individual's current skill set in order to maintain a level of independence. These supports offer support to family members caring for their family member in their home.

### **Staffed Living Model**

A staffed living model is available if an individual's needs are assessed as being substantial and/or complex. This means an individual support needs require around the clock support from agency trained staff for support in medical, behavioral, living routine (sleeping), personal care and/or mental health needs on a consistent and ongoing basis.

### **Home Based Model**

This model is designed to have a support person available locally to provide support to an individual in his or her home. These supports could be provided on a scheduled basis or as needed depending on individual circumstances. Since support person also lives in same community, they would be able to facilitate developing social connections as well as other skill building or skill maintenance needs. This model may be beneficial for an individual who needs support close at hand but prefer to maintain their own living space.

Safety connections is also a support available in this setting.

The proximity to support staff is dependent on the person's needs and preferences. Support person may live in same building, same neighborhood, or same town as person receiving services.

## **Avenue 7**

Avenue 7 is a transitional housing model for individuals ages 18-28 with an intellectual disability or autism and who receive Home and Community Based Services. It offers a supportive residential community for those who need to learn the skills necessary to live independently. Individuals served may be transitioning from their family home or from another residential support program. All participants share the common goal of living independently with success.

## **Group Home Model**

A person being proposed to live in a group setting should have needs consistent with the level of care provided in the home. There are 19 active state licensed group home models throughout the state of Vermont. Licensing and oversight related to licensing is completed by The Division of Licensing and Protection, Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living. Most models support people who have specific but common support needs. This need may be medically, behaviorally, or legally based in nature. These models range from serving 3 to 6 people depending on each program. Oversight is provided by the designated agency of that county, but each home is considered at statewide resource open to referrals from all developmental services providers.

## **Heartbeet Lifesharing Community**

Heartbeet Lifesharing is an Camphill affiliated residential community in Hardwick for people with developmental disabilities. It is licensed as a therapeutic community residence for 18 people. Individuals live in one of a number of homes on the farm property in groups of 1-5 people. There is a host individual or family also living in each home to support the residents. People have individual rooms and share common space in each home. There are also other buildings on the farm that support a variety of activities for the residents and at time the broader community. Heartbeet is an independent non-profit organization that did considerable private fundraising to support the creation and maintenance of the community.

Developmental Disabilities Services provider agencies sub-contract to Heartbeet for the support for individuals to live there.

### **Yellow House Community (YHC)**

The Yellow House Community is a licensed therapeutic community residence (TCR), located in Middlebury. The YHC provides inclusive room, board, day supports and employment services for residents. Currently, the Yellow House is supporting 4 individuals in 2 units. YHC began in 2019 as an effort by two families through private funding and fundraising, and now sub-contracts with a Developmental Disabilities Services provider agency to support individuals who live there.