

## **Current Home Supports offered in**

### **Developmental Disabilities Services - 2022<sup>1</sup>**

Below are examples of some of the existing home support arrangements supported by Developmental Disabilities Services Home and Community-based Services funding. This is not a complete list. Each of these fits in one of the existing types of Home Supports listed in the current System of Care, including: Shared Living, Group Living, Supervised Living, and Staffed Living.

#### **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 everyone who lives there 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 (UCS). 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 individuals 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. This is funded under Supervised Living.

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<sup>1</sup> Compiled by DDSD, March, 2022

## **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 an autism spectrum disorder. 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 like 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.

Individuals living in the main part of the home are funded under the category of Group Living. Individuals living in the apartments are funded under the category of Staffed Living.

## **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 is operated by the Howard

Center. 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. This home supports six individuals who each have their own private room. People have individual rental agreements for their rooms, although there is shared common space in the home. Agency staff are available to provide needed support. All participants share the common goal of living independently with success. This is funded under the category of Staffed Living.

### **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. Using 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. Individuals live in their own apartment or home. This is funded under the category of Supervised Living.

### **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 of 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 SLP is receives a room and board payment through the individual's Supplementary Security Income (SSI). 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 support.

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.

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 contributes to the housing cost.

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.

These arrangements are funded under Shared Living.

### **Supervised Living Model**

This model has regularly scheduled or intermittent hourly supports that are provided to an individual in his/her home or apartment. The workers providing support may be agency staff or hired by the individual or family. These supports can be focused on skill building or to be a support for individual's current skill set to maintain a level of independence. Safety

Connections (described above) is also a support available in this setting. This is funded under Supervised Living.

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

This model has regularly scheduled or intermittent hourly supports that are provided to an individual who lives with their family. The workers providing support may be agency staff or hired by the individual or family. These supports can be focused on skill building or to be a support for individual's current skill set to maintain a level of independence. These supports offer support to family members caring for their family member in their home. (This category was added in 2021. These services were previously funded under Supervised Living.)

### **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. This arrangement is generally funded when an agency has been unsuccessful in meeting the person's needs in other, more cost-effective, models or when, given the individual's history, it is unlikely that the person could be supported in other models. The homes are typically operated by the provider agency. This model is funded under the category of Staffed Living.

### **Home Based Model**

This model is designed to have a support person available locally to provide support to an individual in his or her apartment or home. These supports could be provided on a scheduled basis or as needed depending on individual circumstances. Since support person also lives in the 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 prefers to maintain their own living space. Safety Connections (described above) is also a support available in this arrangement.

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. This model is funded under the category of Supervised Living.

### **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 specific group home. There are 19 active state licensed group home models operated by Designated Agencies (DA) throughout the state of Vermont. 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, and most of homes are considered statewide resources open to referrals from all developmental services providers. The quality of the services is overseen by the DDS Quality Review Team.

There are a few group homes for people with developmental disabilities that are not operated by DA or Specialized Services Agencies (SSA). These homes are not considered state-wide resources and the homes have the discretion to accept referrals. If a person wishes to live in one of these homes and use their HCBS funding to cover the cost, the home must agree to serve the person within the person's individual approved HCBS budget and the individual's DA or SSA must agree to sub-contract with that group home provider.

Group Homes are funded under the category of Group Living.

## **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 times 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. Individuals authorized HCBS budgets are used to cover the costs of receiving services through Heartbeet. Heartbeet must agree to serve the person within the authorized budget. The home supports are funded through the category of service that is consistent with the services being provided, generally, Group or Staffed Living.

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

The Yellow House Community is a licensed therapeutic community residence (TCR), located in Middlebury. The YHC provides inclusive home supports, 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 is sub-contracted by a Developmental Disabilities Services provider agency to support individuals who live there. Yellow House must agree to serve the person within the authorized budget. The home supports are funded through the category of service that is consistent with the services being provided.