**What is Sober Living? Is it the same as treatment or detox?**

Detox is generally a short term (1-2 weeks) place where a person goes to have medical attention during early stages, to assist with withdrawal symptoms, to rest, and learn about addiction/attend meetings.

**Treatment:** A longer term place (anywhere between 30 days and a year) where a person goes for intensive work on their sobriety. Generally the person will remain at the treatment center, not work, etc. while undergoing addiction workshops, discipline training, etc. Treatment can be anywhere from a couple of hundred to a few thousand dollars per day and many accept insurance.

**Sober Living Home:** Unfortunately there is no standard definition as sober homes can range from extremely healthy like A Leap of Faith Recovery Living to extremely unhealthy environments where at best there is little sobriety and safety.

So we are going to give the definition that best fits our sober living homes, which is: "A home where alcoholics and addicts voluntarily choose to live together, submitting to structure and accountability, while learning and practicing the tools needed to remain permanently sober for the rest of their lives."

**A Leap of Faith Recovery Living REAL Sober Living Home Standards:**

First, we say "REAL" because frankly most sober living homes do not provide real structure or accountability.

A home where individuals live together who not only say they are attempting to recover from substance abuse, but in order to really change their lives and to protect the sanctity of the sober house, are willing to prove it on a daily basis by their own actions and by holding each other accountable.

A nice, clean, and comfortable home.

Within walking/biking distance of plenty of jobs, AA meetings, and public transportation.

Members are provided strong, healthy structure and accountability.

Members are required to work an active and consistent 12-step program.

Daily chores and weekly deep cleaning duties.

**Safety:** Individuals with sexual, arson, or violent-based felony convictions are screened out. However those with "light violent" offenses (such as "I was in a drunken bar fight 5 years ago") are allowed to apply but are only accepted via interview/house vote.

We have a zero tolerance policy towards substance abuse. (vs. a "I won't tell if you won't" or a "come on back in a few days" policy).

Fees cover all basic necessities except food, clothing, and toiletries.

A max of two people per bedroom ratio.

A max of five people per bathroom ratio.

A max of five people per refrigerator ratio.

Effective rules that benefit and protect the health and sobriety of the house.

Proper maintenance and care of the house.

Observance of basic 'good neighbor' policies.

Onsite house manager who actively engage and hold those accountable living in the house.

At least weekly regular visits, inspections, and oversight from off-site A Leap of Faith Recovery Living

Operational Managers to further insure the good and healthy operation of our houses.

Mandatory weekly 14-panel drug and alcohol testing for ALL members (including house managers).

No overnight 'guests'. Allowed guests remain in the common areas.

Minimum "Sobriety Standards", such as minimum and verified:

Meeting attendance

Working with a sponsor

Reading recovery literature

Progress on 12-step work

Working with other alcoholics (Sponsoring)

**Are there any reasons I won't be accepted? (This does not cover financials as those are dealt with below)**

"Do you have any violent, sexual, or arson based felony convictions?" Sexual and arson-based felons will not be accepted. Violent based felons are only accepted on a case-by-case basis and only via house vote.

Let's look at two examples:

Example 1: Applicant #1 was convicted of murder or some other overtly violent crime. He will not be accepted.

Example 2: Applicant #2 was convicted of a felony after getting into a drunken bar fight back in college 5 years ago. This would lead to the house interviewing the applicant and depending on his attitude, how chronic the issue is, etc, may still be accepted but only pending a majority house vote in favor of the applicant.

"Are you taking (or would you need to take) any medications while living here?"

Abusable Meds: Regardless if the person taking a potentially abusable medication has issues with addition on that particular medication, we simply do not allow any medications that have any potential for abuse.

Mental Health Meds: We accept people who are in need of basic anti-depressants. However, we do not allow heavier mental health meds such as anti-psychotics or anti-schizophrenic medications.

Attitude: The only other item that would automatically prevent someone from being accepted is if we feel they have a poor attitude, lack the willingness to follow our program, won't submit to structure, or won't follow directions.

**Do you accept insurance/Are you state subsidized? Meaning, is there a way I can get in for free?**

We do not know of any sober living in Connecticut that accepts insurance. While treatment is closer to $500 - $1000/day, our sober living is closer to $22/day. So it is actually cheaper to live in sober living than if you had your own apartment since everything is included except food, clothing, and toiletries.

**I've lived at other "sober” houses before, but they weren’t very sober and living there was not optimal for recovery. Is this different?**

It’s import to us that it is understood that A Leap of Faith Recovery Living houses are absolutely NOT what's known in sober living circles as a “flop house.” This means we do not simply cram people together and call it sober living.

If you're looking for a place to simply not be homeless, to "do your own thing," to "just hang around other sober people," to "please the judge," or any similar reason then A Leap of Faith Recovery Living is not for you.

BUT... If you are truly at your bottom, are ready to listen and follow directions, are humbled, and desperately ready to learn how to live a permanently sober life, then you will be a good addition to our house. Sobriety is a life and death disease to us. We treat it as such and expect all our members to do the same.

**How do I avoid "flop house" / low quality 'sober' houses**

Be sure to use our "what a sober home should be" definition above as a reference when asking questions.

1. Make sure:

You are able to thoroughly research the house you’re considering.

Ask as many questions as you have without issue and are comfortable with the answers.

If your gut feels any "red flags," there probably are red flags.

2. Do the policies of the house meet your goals? Is it "self-managed" by the members or by other people with low sobriety time? Do you need real structure? If so, how is structure implemented and held accountable?

3. Find out the major requirements of the house's rules and don't move in unless you'll be able to abide by them.

4. Will they allow you to see the house in advance or meet other members to get an idea of what life there is really like?

5. What medications are allowed? How many people max? Do they except / don't accept?

6. What, in general, is expected of you. What are you willing to do?

**I understand that A Leap of Faith Recovery Living requires house members to work the 12 steps?**

When someone choses to live at A Leap of Faith Recovery Living home, they're saying, "I need structure and accountability getting my life back together. Will you please provide that?" And in our experience, those who are actively working ALL 12 steps to the best of their ability are the ones who not only stay sober, but build a habitual sobriety based lifestyle, and reap the rewards of spiritual growth.

Therefore, we require (and verify) that people attend minimum numbers of 12 step meetings, obtain a sponsor AND actually use that sponsor, make regular progress on the 12 steps, and eventually begin working with other alcoholics so that you can keep what you've got by passing it on.

**Am I free to come and go? Or is it more like a treatment center or medical facility?**

While we are definitely structured, it is absolutely not a treatment center or medical facility. You are free to come and go and you please provided it is within curfew limitations.

Sober living is a family-like dwelling in which members live with other alcoholics / addicts who are absolutely committed to remaining sober and strengthening that sobriety. Provided you are fulfilling your duties and responsibilities, you are free to come and go as you please within the curfew limitations.

**Do you accept gay people?**

A Leap of Faith Recovery Living does not discriminate against anyone because of their sexual preference. However, just as we require our straight members (who are all men) to have male sponsors in order to stay clear of any potential issues with a female sponsor, we require gay members to either have a straight male sponsor or a female sponsor. Likewise, no inter-member relations, physicality's, or anything else in this area allowed, period between our members.

**But how do the other members react to a gay member? Do they accept them the same way?**

Our experience is that whether you're straight or gay, just respect everyone and they will respect you. With that said, we've had several gay members and have never had any issues with anyone feeling disrespected over sexual preferences, etc.

**Are there rules?**

Like any structured environment, there are rules for members. These serve as a way to help the individuals succeed and protect the safety and sanctity of the house. We do not list all house rules on our website, but our intention is to give you enough information to understand the "flavor" of structure that we utilize at A Leap of Faith Recovery Living so that you may make an informed decision.

However, if you have concerns or questions about potential rules, you are welcome to contact us for more information.

**How long until I can move in?**

It could be as quick as the same day. It totally depends upon each perspective member's circumstances, time of day, availability of house managers to perform intakes, etc.

**How much does it cost?**

Please click here for our pricing information.

**If I pay for someone else to get in, am I enabling?**

It depends on each individual case's details. In some cases, it may be enabling. In some cases it won't be. Here are some guidelines we feel are reasonable for anyone interested in helping someone our members financially:

Don't force them into sober living. Simply make it crystal clear that you will only assist them one time. And if they wish for this to be that time, then great. If not, then that is fine also, but they're now on their own.

Then if they decide to use their last "ticket" to get assistance, then you both know that this is the last time. Period. Then stick to it. Otherwise they know they can relapse and then come back to you again and again because you will always be there to clean up their mess and give them another chance.

Only provide financial assistance one week at a time. We work with parents, friends, or whoever it is that is providing financial assistance to the member by giving weekly reports by phone. If the person is not taking it seriously, then stop assisting. If they are doing well, then keep assisting (but only for a limited time provided the member is following all directions).

Financial assistance should be for a very limited time. Basically, it should only occur long enough for the member to obtain work and possibly for a couple of more weeks until the member is steady with their paychecks. But each instance is different as one person may be debt free, while another person is paying off fines to the state in order to stay out of jail. We can help guide you through that when the time comes.

**What if I'm on disability and can't work?**

With the exception of people on living with us on house credit, all members must "work" a minimum of 30 hours per week. Here is what we consider to be "work":

Part or Full-Time Job(s)

School

Community Service/Volunteer Work

Part of the strength in our house is due to our members being active. Part of its strength is that everyone follows the same requirements. If we suddenly have everyone but one person being active while the one sits around the house all day, we're asking for a relapse, and one that will likely take others down with him.

**I have to go to a meeting per day when I first move in?**

Correct, all "Phase 1" members must attend a minimum of 7 meetings per week. (We also count church, temple, etc. as one meeting per week.) Meeting attendance is not nearly as difficult as it sounds. In fact, AA recommends 90 meetings in 90 days and most new members end up attending more than that in the beginning because they discover a whole new world in sobriety that they sometimes can't get enough of in the beginning.

With that said, the higher the phase you are, the fewer required meetings there are. For example, "Phase 5" requires three meetings per week.

**Vehicles: Can I have a car? What if I don't have a car?**

Yes, you are allowed to keep one vehicle at the house provided it runs, has insurance, is street legal, and provided you have a valid driver’s license.

For those without vehicles, don't worry. Most people don't have one when they first enter. That is why our homes are specifically within walking distance of daily 12-step meetings, plenty of job opportunities, and public transportation. Plus, house members offer rides to other members in need often and sometimes attend the same meetings.

**What happens if I can't afford to pay on time?**

Unless you are receiving pre-authorized financial assistance from the house, the best case scenario is that you will be charged a late fee each day you are late. The worst case scenario (depending on the circumstances and how chronically you are late) you could have your membership terminated.

**What do I need to bring with me?**

Members must provide their own food, clothing, and toiletries. They will be given dedicated dry and refrigerated space for their food. For other personal items, members generally will have about enough space for 1-2 suitcases worth of possessions.

And keep in mind that we provide all the other basic necessities, so please visit our What's Included section to help you decide what you want to bring.

**Is there anything I should not bring?**

Besides the obvious like drugs, weapons, etc., we do not allow members to bring furnishings, appliances, and other large items. We never want anything that could get mixed up with the house's property. Because if a member ever relapses or is terminated, they are not allowed to take any property with them other than their food, clothing, toiletries, and other pre-approved items.

**Are there house managers? Or does everyone manage themselves?**

Yes, there are house managers. Then there is a manager over the house managers that does not live on site, but visits the house weekly, works with the house managers daily, and oversees any issues that arise above common day to day issues.

However with that said, our members are expected to require little management. We are not a rehabilitation center. We are sober living. Therefore our members are expected to follow house rules from the start and jumpstart their lives without having to be prodded to do it.

So while we do have house managers as well as a staff manager, their job is to keep the shipping running smooth and make sure the house remains healthy, not "babysit."

**Are you a treatment center? Do you provide counseling?**

We are not considered a treatment or medical center, nor do we provide any counseling services that are considered professional. However we are also more than just a place to live around other people focusing on sobriety. While we are definitely in the realm of sober living, we are more like "Sober Living Plus" because of the expectations and requirements we have of our members.

**What if I do not have a job when I move in?**

All members are required to work at least 30 hours per week (40 hours if you are on house credit). Members who do not yet have jobs, will be required to work 40 hours per week finding a job, going to bed early, getting up early, and looking for work from 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM, and turning in a minimum of 10 job applications per day.

Members will update their House Mentor throughout the day (and will do so often). Updates will be done with photo proof to ensure we know where you are and what you are doing.

**How long can I live in A Leap of Faith Recovery Living house?**

As long as you like, provided you adhere to A Leap of Faith Recovery Living house requirements.

**How long do I need to live there? (The Three Commitments)**

If we had to put a specific "minimum amount of time" on it, then we would recommend at least 1 year. With that said, we feel that telling people there is a "magic" length of time is a false premise as everyone is different.

1. Remaining until the member has completed their Goals List (will occur once in the house), and worked ALL 12 steps of AA with a sponsor as directed in the Big Book of AA (the instruction book).

2. Taking someone else through all 12 steps.

3. Having a core group of 3 or 4 people who you know provide wise counsel about your life (examples include pastor, mom/dad, counselor, sponsor, best friend, etc.) provided they know you well and that at least some of them understand addiction thoroughly.

Then when that group unanimously agrees that it is time for you to move out, then it is likely time for you to consider moving out. However, before they all agree, you agree not to worry about moving out.

**What if I relapse?**

If you relapse while you are away from the house, then you will simply be terminated and given an opportunity to collect your property.

If you bring drugs and/or alcohol onto the property (or have paraphernalia of any kind), then A Leap of Faith Recovery Living will help facilitate you experiencing the full consequences of your actions. For example, if you bring drugs onto the property, the police will be called and you will be prosecuted to the full extent allowable by law.

We do NOT mess around with people who are not serious and will protect our serious members to the best of our ability.

**I have a court case or was referred to a sober living by my parole/probation office, is A Leap of Faith Recovery Living willing to work with my parole officer?**

Absolutely! In fact, we prefer it. We also provide court reports as needed.

**Will there be dangerous people living in the house?**

To help ensure the safety and security of all members, we have a Safe Housemate policy in which we run a background check on all applicants prior to them moving in.

In order to promote the highest level of safety and security, we do not accept felons with sexual or arson-based convictions. Felons with cases that are considered "violent" are reviewed on a case-by-case basis as there is a wide spectrum on what is considered violent. For example, we simply would not consider accepting a person convicted of murder.

But if a 42-year old man had been convicted one time, back when he was 18, for a domestic case where he had gotten into a fight, then we would ask the person to interview with the other members of the house, then the house would vote.

**Would I be considered a “tenant”?**

No. You are a member, not a tenant. As an alcoholic/addict, you are considered legally disabled under federal law. As such, you may freely choose to live somewhere that assists with your disability. That, combined with an exclusions clause included in the Connecticut Residential Landlord and Tenant Act, you are not legally considered "tenants" and therefore do not have the same rights as a tenant.

(For example, we do not need to go through an eviction in order to have a member removed as your presence could be a danger to other members.)

**Visitors: Are women or minors allowed to live in A Leap of Faith Recovery Living House? How about visitors staying overnight?**

A Leap of Faith Recovery Living only has men-only sober living. So no women or minors housing are available at this time. As for visitors, your ability to have visitors come to the house depends on your phase.

But regardless of what phase you are on, you will not be allowed to have overnight guests. Nor will you be allowed to have female guests anywhere except common areas.

All members have roommates and we do not wish to place a roommate in the awkward position of having to share a room with his roommate and girlfriend.

**What is the Safe Housemate policy/Background Check and why do you do this?**

Many sober living houses in CT perform no background checks. Therefore, no one knows anything about the people living in the house, whether they're safe, etc.

A Leap of Faith Recovery Living strives to provide a safe home for everyone who lives or may come to live in A Leap of Faith House. To help achieve this, we run thorough background checks on all House Guests prior to entry.

Have a spotty past? Don’t worry. We expect it. After all, we’re an alcoholics/addicts right? That is why we do not run the check until we are sure that, based upon your interview, you will be approved.

So provided you were honest in your interview, and assuming we've deemed your application acceptable, then there should be no reason why you will be turned down after we run the background check. Therefore, you aren't risking losing any money on the background check.

The check costs us $35 to run. Therefore we charge $35 to the applicant. This fee must be paid in advance as we cannot afford to chance paying for this ourselves should someone have lied on their app and then left us with the background check bill.

**What is expected of me once I am there?**

Recovery is our first priority. If you don't stay clean, sober, and active, you don't stay – it’s that simple. Beyond that:

**(Bulleted list – in this order)**

Actively maintain and participate in a 12-step based recovery program by attending meetings.

Maintain a sponsor/sponsee relationship.

Work the steps.

Have a job.

Submit to random drug testing.

Remain current with weekly lodging fee.

Follow the rules.

Complete daily household chores.

Have a good attitude.

**(End of list)**

**Do I have to go to treatment or detox before being accepted?**

No. Treatment or other programs are not a direct prerequisite. However, we also do not act as a detox or treatment facility. So if you've been using recently, you will likely not be accepted until you are out of danger of going through withdrawals or until you go through detox.

**What's the curfew for A Leap of Faith Recovery Living House residents?**

Our goal is to transition individuals to making their own decisions and is based upon a "Phase System." For example, Phase 1 members have a 9:30 PM curfew whereas the curfew at Phase 5 is 12:00 AM.

At the same time, that does NOT mean that a Phase 5 can stay out till 12:00 AM every night. Rather, it means that because you've been making good, trustworthy, and wise decisions for some time that you will be trusted with the freedom to occasionally stay out late if you desire provided you're remaining accountable.

Jobs/Curfews: We are a daytime house and therefore don't want everyone sleeping during the night except for one guy who sleeps all day. It just doesn't work out well. So you will be expected to obtain a job that gets you BACK TO THE HOUSE BEFORE midnight, REGARDLESS of what Phase you are.

**Can I stay away from the house overnight?**

Overnight passes are allowed for those who are at a qualifying Phase level.

**Can I have visitors?**

Yes, but the restrictions (or lack of restrictions) are based upon your Phase level.

**Are telephones allowed?**

They are not only allowed, but are actually required. Photo-based texting is our primary method for holding new members accountable. Therefore, you must have a phone with a data plan.

If you do not have a telephone, we will help direct you on how to obtain a government-issued cell phone, but you will still be responsible for making sure you have the appropriate amount of data on the phone in order to be able to send photo texts as required by house management.

**Do you provide TV/Internet?**

Yes and yes! We provide high-speed Wi-Fi to Roku, which provides more than 1,500 channels.

**Tell me a little more about your drug-testing policies.**

Unfortunately, most sober living homes do not test regularly (if they test at all). If they do some testing, they often only use 5 or 8 panel tests.

A Leap of Faith Recovery Sober Living not only tests everyone in the house at least once per week (including house managers so that no one is "above the law," but our tests are 14 panel tests. We also perform random breathalyzers throughout the week. Further, we are an "at will" testing house.

That means that ANY member, regardless of Phase, may test ANY other member, including testing house managers. If anyone refuses to test immediately at the time of request, then they are instantly terminated.

**Will I have a roommate? / Are there private rooms?**

Yes, all new members will have a roommate. Private rooms are reserved for house managers and those who are doing especially well.

**Are past A Leap of Faith Recovery Living Alumni able to visit Sober Living after they move out?**

Yes, but only if they have stayed active and in touch with the house and have remained sober. For those people, it is highly encouraged.

**Our Phase System**

A Leap of Faith Recovery Living does not base merit on the amount of time one has been a member. Rather, it is based on action! As such, we have a 5-level phase system which grants new privileges (and in some case responsibilities) for those who have accomplished the items necessary to advance to a higher phase.

The "big" limitations of Phase 1 are the following:

9:30 PM curfew

Must go to a minimum of seven meetings per week

Must have a sponsor within one week of moving in and be using that sponsor a minimum of 4 times per week

No visitors allowed other than approved immediate family (Approved wives, kids, etc.)

You will not receive the codes to Wi-Fi until Phase 2

**How do I phase up?**

For the most part, a member phases up by working the 12 steps and doing a Big Book study (The "Big Book" is the primary text book used in 12 step meetings.

Here is an example of the requirements to phase up from Phase 1 to Phase 2:

Must listen to an audio based Big Book study from the beginning through Step 3

Must complete steps 1-3 with a sponsor

Must receive approval from house manager for a written goals list

Must have a job

**How do I phase up and what are the benefits?**

The lower the phase, the higher the structure and accountability. The higher the phase, the more freedom, trust, and privilege a member enjoys. Our philosophy is that the steps is where the "magic" happens. So a person phases up primarily through working the 12 steps. So as they work more steps they mature more

spiritually. As they mature more spiritually, they are ready to make more of their own decisions. Eventually leading to them being ready to move out on their own.

**Example Comparing Phase 1 to Phase 5**

**Phase 1 Limitations:**

House Votes: The group will hear your input, but you will not have a house vote.

May use TV/Wi-Fi/Computer when a higher phase is present, but does not receive codes to these items until Phase 2.

No visitors except approved immediate family.

No overnight passes.

Curfew: 9:30 pm

Must follow instructions provided by higher phased members. (if you feel an instruction is not proper, see

the house manager)

Must attend 7 meetings per week.

Must have a sponsor within 1 week of moving in.

Must have a job or work full time finding a job.

No choice in which room you will stay in.

Will update activities throughout the day until house manager removes this requirement.

**Actions required to move to Phase 2:**

Have a job.

Listen to Big Book study from the beginning through Step 3

Work steps 1-3 with a sponsor.

Not be under any house restrictions or house demerits.

**Compare to Phase 5**

Curfew: 12:00 AM when used in a responsible and accountable way.

May have female house visitors even when no other member is present (but only in common areas).

Overnight Pass: 2 per week. May save up to 6 days’ worth. (must use accountability plan if gone for more than 1 night.)

3 meetings per week minimum.

Special considerations / requests / favors may be approved for those who are specifically going above and beyond.

Verified actions required to remain at Phase 5

Consistently

Reading recovery literature.

Working with sponsor.

Progressing on your 9th Step.

Progressing on steps 10-12. \*Step 10 shall include a regular written inventory (not just "mental" ones).