




Information Bulletin 03-21

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Deputy Secretary
Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs

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Subject: Emergency Contact Notification by Drug and Alcohol Recovery Houses

To ensure individual safety, it is important that families and significant others are notified when an individual leaves a recovery house (or a transitional living facility) early, unplanned, or does not return as expected.

Act 35 of 2021, 71 P.S. § 613.19, took effect on August 29, 2021. Act 35 requires drug and alcohol recovery houses to **immediately** notify an emergency contact if a resident self-discharge from or leaves and fails to return to the facility as expected. Notification shall occur immediately and **in no event later than 12 hours of self-discharge or after a resident fails to return** to the drug and alcohol recovery house at the expected time. A drug and alcohol recovery house must notify the emergency contact by a method **consented to by the resident**.

Notification Attempts: Drug and alcohol recovery houses must attempt to notify the emergency contact **at least once** and develop policies and procedures to implement a notification protocol. The written policies and procedures must include details regarding how the facility will advise residents of notifications required to be made by the facility. In addition, the policies and procedures must dictate that a facility may not make notifications when the facility has knowledge of or reason to know of allegations of domestic abuse perpetrated upon the resident by the resident's designated emergency contact.

Questions regarding this Information Bulletin should be directed to the Bureau of Program Licensure at (717)783-8675 or RA-licensuredivision@pa.gov.