

# Patient & Family Guide

2025

## East Coast Forensic Hospital

### Forensic Assessment Corrections Treatment (FACT) Unit



Artwork by: Dylan Thiessen

# Contents

What is the ECFH? .....	2
What is the Forensic Assessment Corrections Treatment (FACT) Unit?.....	2
Court ordered assessments.....	2
Corrections treatment .....	3
Admission to the FACT Unit .....	3
Information about the FACT Unit .....	3
FACT Unit routine .....	4
Safety .....	4
Privacy .....	5
Visitors .....	5
Contact visits.....	5
Non-contact visits .....	5
Meals .....	6
Mail.....	6
Laundry.....	6
Shaves.....	7
Corrections Canteen .....	7
Corrections fund (money).....	7
Phone .....	7
Community supports .....	8
Legal Aid phone numbers .....	9

# East Coast Forensic Hospital: FACT Unit

My health care team on the Forensic Assessment Corrections Treatment (FACT) Unit includes:

Primary nurse: \_\_\_\_\_

Associate nurse: \_\_\_\_\_

Psychiatrist: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

Social worker: \_\_\_\_\_

**Students:** Having a student as part of your treatment team is your choice.

You may also see other staff during your stay, like:

- › Administrative assistants
- › Recreation therapists
- › Correctional officers
- › Housekeeping staff
- › Dietitian
- › Unit aides
- › Lab/EKG technician
- › Volunteers

**ECFH address:**

88 Gloria McCluskey Avenue

Dartmouth, NS B3B 2B8

**ECFH phone numbers:**

- › ECFH switchboard: 902-460-7300

**My FACT Unit dayroom payphone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Patient/family feedback (Patient Relations):**

- › Phone (toll-free): 1-844-884-4177
- › Email: [healthcareexperience@nshealth.ca](mailto:healthcareexperience@nshealth.ca)

- For more information, ask a member of your health care team for pamphlet 0466, *Your Rights and Responsibilities*, scan the QR code below or visit:
  - › [www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources/0466](http://www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources/0466)

Scan the QR code below on your device  
(open the camera on your device, point the camera at the code, and tap the banner or border that appears)



**Patient Rights Advisor Service:**

- › Phone: 902-404-3322
- › Phone (toll-free): 1-866-779-3322

## What is the ECFH?

- The ECFH is a medium security facility that works with the Department of Health and Wellness and the Department of Justice. Patients at the ECFH have been in conflict with the law and are sent to the facility by a court order.

## What is the Forensic Assessment Corrections Treatment (FACT) Unit?

- The FACT Unit is a 24-bed psychiatric assessment unit. Patients on this unit may be:
  - › remanded (sent back) from the judicial system for a court ordered assessment.
  - › admitted from a provincial correctional facility (prison) for treatment after becoming mentally ill.

## Court ordered assessments

People remanded to the ECFH have been charged with an offence under the Criminal Code of Canada. You may be sent to the ECFH for a psychiatric assessment if the court has reason to believe:

- › you are not fit to stand trial.
- or
- › you may have had a mental illness when the offence was supposed to have happened.
- › If you are here for a court-ordered assessment, anything you say or share could be part of a report sent to the court. This means the usual confidentiality between patients, doctors, and staff, does not apply.

After the assessment is done, a report is sent to the court. This report helps the court to decide if you are:

- **Unfit:** because of a mental illness, you are not able to:
  - › understand the legal steps used by courts
- OR
- › talk with your lawyer.
- **Not criminally responsible (NCR):** at the time the offence happened, you could not understand the nature, quality, and consequences (outcomes) of the offences.
- **Criminally responsible (CR):** after being assessed by the ECFH, you cannot use a defense of NCR. The judicial (legal) process then continues.

## Corrections treatment

- When a person in a correctional facility has symptoms of a mental illness, they are assessed by a psychiatric health care provider in the corrections health care clinic.
- After the assessment, a treatment care plan may be created. The person may stay at the correctional facility during treatment or be moved to the FACT Unit for treatment, if needed.

## Admission to the FACT Unit

- All admissions take place in the admissions area of the hospital. When you arrive at the FACT Unit, you will come from:
  - › the courts for a court-ordered assessment
  - OR
  - › a provincial correctional facility for inpatient psychiatric care.
- When you are admitted, you will:
  - › meet with members of the health care team who will talk with you about your needs and explain what to expect on the FACT Unit.
  - › have a complete body scan, with help from correctional officers. You may shower and change into hospital-issued clothes.
- When you arrive (or shortly after you arrive) on the FACT Unit, you will be:
  - › shown around the unit and your personal living area.
  - › examined by a doctor.
  - › given the chance to talk with your assigned psychiatrist.

## Information about the FACT Unit

### Smoking

- **The ECFH is a non-smoking facility. Smoking and tobacco products are not allowed on the FACT Unit.** Nicotine replacement patches are available to help you adjust, if needed. Talk with nursing staff if you would like a nicotine patch.



### What your health care team will expect from you

- Keep your bedroom clean and free from clutter.
  - › You must change your bed clothes once a week.
  - › **Do not** hide items in your bedroom.
  - › **Do not** store open food or liquids in your bedroom.

- › **Do not** store sealed food (like bread, sugar, fruit, meals) in your bedroom for longer than 2 days at a time.
- **Do not** change or destroy hospital-issued clothes.
- **Do not** hang pictures, papers, or posters anywhere in your bedroom or in the dayroom.
- **Do not** deface any hospital property, including walls, windows, doors, sinks, and floors.

## FACT Unit routine

- The FACT Unit offers organized activities, including access to the gym, rec room, and airing court.
- There are daily quiet times to support your wellness. During these times, there are no patient interviews and you cannot leave the unit:
  - › 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
  - › 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
  - › 10:00 p.m. to 7:30 a.m.

## Safety

- Patient and staff safety is very important at the ECFH. Correctional officers help to keep the ECFH safe. Physical and verbal aggression towards yourself or others is not allowed. If it happens, it will be handled by staff with support from correctional officers.
- There is an intercom panel connected with the Master Control (correctional officer control post) in each room. If you are in distress and are not able to reach nursing staff, press the intercom button and you will be connected with a correctional officer. If you are distressed by another patient's behaviour, please talk with staff.
- Help keep the unit safe by not taking part in arguments and reporting them to staff.
- **Do not** use aggressive words or actions. If you have concerns or an argument with another patient, talk with a correctional officer or nursing staff.
- Be respectful to staff and other patients. Keep your voice and TV volume at a normal level. **Do not** use inappropriate, loud, or rude language.
- **Do not** contact other dayrooms by phone, notes, or gestures.

- During airing court time, you must be in the airing court.
  - › **Do not** stay in the hallways or in dayrooms.
- Jackets are available for use in the airing court on cold days. Hang up the jacket after use near the airing court door.
  - › **Do not** take jackets into the dayroom.
- For the health and safety of everyone on the unit, sexual behavior (sex) is **not allowed**.
- TVs and phones cannot be used after 10:00 p.m. **All patients must be in their own bedrooms at this time.**
- You must wear a shirt at all times unless you are in your bedroom.

**Please note:** We may change these safety guidelines and/or expectations to manage risk.

## Privacy

- Respect the privacy and personal belongings of others. **Do not go into other dayrooms or bedrooms.**
- Respect other patients' privacy by not talking about them.

## Visitors

### Contact visits

- You will be allowed contact visits with:
  - › Your lawyer
  - › Spiritual care providers
  - › Other **approved** community partners
- All other visits will be in the non-contact visiting area.

### Non-contact visits

- During non-contact visits, you will be separated from your visitor by a secure window. You will talk to them using a phone handset.
- Non-contact visits are booked for 30 minutes, depending on how many visits are booked that day. All visitors must show a picture I.D. to Reception or Master Control when they arrive at the ECFH.

- Both non-contact and contact visits can be booked from:
  - › 9:00 a.m. to noon
  - › 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- **Visits must be booked 24 hours (1 day) in advance.** Your visitor can book by calling the ECFH switchboard:
  - › 902-460-7300

## Meals

- Meals and snacks will be delivered to your dayroom. Meal times:
- **Weekdays:**
  - › Breakfast: 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.
  - › Lunch: 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
  - › Supper: 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
  - › Night lunch: 8:00 p.m. to 8:15 p.m.
- **Weekends:**
  - › Coffee/snack: 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
  - › Brunch: 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
  - › Supper: 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

## Mail

- You may send and get mail while on the FACT Unit. All incoming mail must be opened in front of staff to check for contraband (not allowed) items.
- **You are not permitted to send or receive mail from anyone listed in a non-contact order.**

## Laundry

- Laundry is picked up on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings. You must have your laundry bag ready for pick-up on these days.
- Personal clothes may be washed for court appearances. Talk with staff about this when needed.

## Shaves

- Shaves are offered at scheduled times. These times are subject to change.

## Corrections Canteen

- You may place an order through the Corrections Canteen if you have money in your corrections account.
- Canteen chits (orders) must be given to correctional officers by Sunday evening.

## Corrections fund (money)

- Money for patients on the FACT Unit is managed through the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility.
- You must have money in your corrections account if you wish to order items through the Corrections Canteen.
- You may add to your corrections account using cash, money orders, or government-issued cheques, Income Assistance, or GST/HST rebate cheques.
- We **do not** accept funds by electronic money transfer (e-transfer) or personal cheque.

## Phone

- There is a payphone in each dayroom. Payphones are available for use starting between 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. every day.
- The payphones only accept quarters. If you need quarters, place an order for change at the Corrections Canteen.
- You can get calls directly to the payphones. Staff do not answer the payphones, so please stay in the area if you are expecting a call.
- If you answer a call in a dayroom:
  - › If a patient in the dayroom is present and awake, please tell them that the phone is for them.
  - › If a patient is not present or is asleep, please ask the person on the phone to call back at another time.

- If you are calling your lawyer and there is no answer, leave a message with your dayroom's payphone number. If you do not know your dayroom's payphone number, ask your nurse.
- Toll-free Legal Aid phone numbers are listed on the next page.

**Phone privileges may be put on hold if you abuse payphone privileges or make inappropriate calls.**

## **Contraband items**

- ECFH staff are committed to providing a safe environment for the rehabilitation and recovery of our patients. Any item that may be a risk to the safety and security of patients, staff, or the public is contraband (not allowed).

## **Community supports**

### **Healthy Minds Cooperative**

- › Phone: 902-404-3504
- › Email: [healthyminds@eastlink.ca](mailto:healthyminds@eastlink.ca)
- › [www.healthyminds.ca](http://www.healthyminds.ca)

### **Nova Scotia 211**

- › Phone: 211
- › Email: [help@ns211.ca](mailto:help@ns211.ca)
- › [www.ns.211.ca](http://www.ns.211.ca)

## Legal Aid phone numbers

### **Halifax**

Toll-free: 1-877-777-6583  
Phone: 902-420-6583  
Fax: 902-420-1260

### **Dartmouth**

Toll-free: 1-877-420-8818  
Phone: 902-420-8815  
Fax: 902-420-6562

### **Truro**

Toll-free: 1-877-777-5920  
Phone: 902-893-5920  
Fax: 902-893-6112

### **Antigonish**

Toll-free: 1-866-439-1544  
Phone: 902-863-3350  
Fax: 902-863-7598

### **Amherst**

Toll-free: 1-866-999-7544  
Phone: 902-667-7544  
Fax: 902-667-0030

### **New Glasgow**

Toll-free: 1-877-755-7020  
Phone: 902-755-7020  
Fax: 902-752-8733

### **Windsor**

Toll-free: 1-866-798-8397  
Phone: 902-798-8397  
Fax: 902-798-8345

### **Yarmouth**

Toll-free: 1-866-742-3300  
Phone: 902-742-7827  
Fax: 902-742-0676

### **Sydney**

Toll-free: 1-877-563-2295  
Phone: 902-563-2295  
Fax: 902-539-0489

### **Annapolis Royal**

Toll-free: 1-866-532-2311  
Phone: 902-532-2311  
Fax: 902-532-7488

### **Kentville**

Toll-free: 1-866-679-6110  
Phone: 902-679-6110  
Fax: 902-679-6177

### **Bridgewater**

Toll-free: 1-866-543-4658  
Phone: 902-543-4658  
Fax: 902-543-3044

### **Port Hawkesbury**

Toll-free: 1-888-817-0116  
Phone: 902-625-4047  
Fax: 902-625-5216

## Notes:

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find all patient education resources here:  
[www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources](http://www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources)

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:  
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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