

Exodus Amsterdam - The Netherlands

Introduction

Exodus Amsterdam is located in the center of Amsterdam. The overarching organization is an NGO called "Stichting Exodus Nederland". This organization was founded in 1979 and their mission is to have a safe society where people can build a meaningful life with new opportunities. They offer various services, including assisted living to people in detention or people who have been in detention. In function of this they have eleven houses spread over the Netherlands, of which Exodus Amsterdam is one. All these houses offer the same program with a similar working method.



Scale

Exodus Amsterdam has room for 16 people, both men and women. They all live together in one house.

RESCALED-principles in practice:

- Small-scale
- Differentiated
- Community-integrated

Differentiation

Target group:



Exodus Amsterdam provides aftercare to former people in detention and people in the final phase of their sentence. It is a mixed-gender facility for adults. No people are excluded from the program based on their sentence. However, people who need a lot of care related to addiction or other mental health problems are not welcome in Exodus Amsterdam. What makes Exodus unique is the opportunity for individuals to engage in this program using a different name, to facilitate their reintegration process.

Since both people during the last part of their sentence can stay here, as well as people who are no longer in detention, there are different placement procedures. People in detention can apply or be referred through

the information system that supports the general forensic care process. Former people in detention can stay at Exodus on a voluntary basis. On a voluntary basis is often done if it was not possible for the client to start the program at Exodus during detention. In case it is after detention, it should preferably start immediately after detention. The application form can be found on the website of Exodus.

Forms of security:

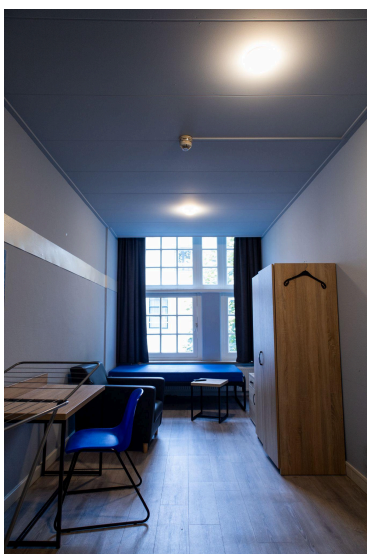
Exodus Amsterdam is described as an assistance house, and not as a detention facility, which means that there are few security measures. The focus lies on relational security because a great deal of responsibility and autonomy is placed on the residents themselves. In addition, there is staff present day and night, whom the residents can always talk to. There is also informal contact between the residents and the staff through cooking or sports activities. In this way, the staff remains accessible in case of problems or questions.

Relational security is complemented by a few static and procedural security measures. For example, not everyone can just enter or leave the domain, they have cameras and you can be checked for drugs and alcohol. Exodus Amsterdam also has house rules, such as being in the house at 11 p.m. and in your room at 12 p.m. However, exceptions can be made to this.



Activities:

Exodus Amsterdam works according to the 'Your Power' methodology. This methodology encourages residents to become aware of their strengths and use them as tools to achieve goals, face challenges and further develop themselves. Each resident is assigned an individual counselor and, together with the counselor, starts to identify their own strengths and desires.



Exodus Amsterdam's program focuses on five domains: working, living, finances, relationships and meaning. Residents are responsible for their own weekly schedule but must take into account some organized activities by the staff and working on these four domains. Almost all their activities take place outside the house.

The first domain is work. Residents must devote at least 26 hours per week to work or education. In doing so, they are expected to work at regular hours, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Volunteer work also plays an

important role and in particular to find out what work suits the resident's needs and abilities. Living is the next domain. In Exodus Amsterdam, residents live together in a house and together they are all responsible for the household. People cook individually and once a week they all cook together. Exodus also helps residents find housing. Third, residents receive financial support, which includes assistance in paying off debts.

The fourth domain is relationships. Exodus helps residents, if necessary, to restore or improve old relationships with a partner, children, family or friends. If the resident knows only a few people, attention is paid to expanding the circle of acquaintances. Exodus can help with this through social skills training. Finally, there is also meaningfulness. This mainly refers to looking for leisure activities. What does the resident like to do in their free time?

Community-integration

Location and architecture:

First impression of a visitor: "My first impression was positive. The place seemed homely, although there were also some visible measures of control (tall fences, cameras etc.) Some residents were present, who seemed happy and greeted us nicely".

Exodus Amsterdam is located in the center of Amsterdam. It is the capital city of the Netherlands with an average population of 921.468 (2023).¹ The population is diverse, with 58% comprised of nationalities other

than the Dutch one. (2022).² The Exodus house is housed in an old school building, located on a busy street between several stores and houses. Within walking distance are several nearby parks and public transportation stops.

To enter the domain, you must go through a small gate after which you enter a courtyard. From this courtyard you have access to the main building, and a room for staff. The house consists of individual bedrooms, two shared bathrooms and a common living room with kitchen. Because the building was used for religious purposes in the past, you can find some elements of this. People try to make the building homely by including quotes on the wall and other decorations.

¹Gemeente Amsterdam in cijfers en grafieken (bijgewerkt 2023!) | AlleCijfers.nl. (2023, september 6th). *AlleCijfers.nl*. Retrieved June 14th, 2023, from <https://allecijfers.nl/gemeente/amsterdam/>

²Gemeente Amsterdam in cijfers en grafieken (bijgewerkt 2023!) | AlleCijfers.nl. (2023, september 6th). *AlleCijfers.nl*. Retrieved June 14th, 2023, from <https://allecijfers.nl/gemeente/amsterdam/>

Interaction with the community:

There are no concrete collaborations with organisations in the area to promote community integration because interaction with the community is natural. Residents are expected to work, do voluntary work or do other activities outside the facility. Because of this, there is constant interaction with the community and residents can constantly leave the property for this.

Exodus Amsterdam

Founded: 1997 (1979)

Capacity: 16

Security level: Low

Nearest city/town:

Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

Nature of interaction: Visited

by RJN and RESCALED

(19/04/2023)

Publicity/ read more

- About Stichting Exodus Nederland at the official website of Exodus:

Exodus hulp na detentie. (n.d.). *Exodus*. Retrieved June 14th, 2023, from <https://www.exodus.nl/>

- Document about the houses of Exodus and how they work (in dutch):

Informatieboekje voor (ex-) gedetineerden. (2023). *Exodus*. Retrieved June 21th, 2023, from <https://files.enflow.nl/6ffbb417-1260-4c26-83de-726071701f4b/ae735d93-b6b0-4e31-8967-22c fb77b9e0a/promotiemateriaal/exodus-nederland-infoboekje-def.pdf>