Center for Community Engagement at Chestnut Health Systems

RECOVERY HOUSING FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

What is recovery housing?

- Recovery housing is a general term for safe, healthy, substance-free living environments that support individuals in recovery. The goal of recovery housing is to promote health, wellness, and personal growth for its residents.

Who qualifies for recovery housing?

Someone who:

- Has a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) diagnosis,.
- Needs Recovery Home level services

Individuals with histories of sex offenses, arson convictions, or severe violent offenses may not be appropriate candidates for recovery housing.

How long does a resident stay at a recovery house?

- This is specific to the resident and is resident-centered. They may stay a few weeks to many months.

What rules do residents need to follow?

- Recovery homes may have rules about sobriety requirements, Medication Assisted Recovery (MAR) documentation, financial obligations, curfews, chores, recovery meeting, employment, education, guest policies, conduct standards, discharge processes and discharge violations. For more ideas and information on rules in recovery homes, please review our Recovery Home Sample Rules document.

How does rent work in a recovery house?

- Most recovery houses charge residents per bed and per week or month.

Who do I contact if I have questions about starting a recovery home?

- Start off by visiting Illinois Help Line.
- Review Starting a Recovery Home 101 in the CCE Recovery Housing Toolkit.

What is Oxford House?

- Oxford House is a non-licensed, independent, supportive sober living environment.
- In this model, members share house expenses and responsibilities.
- For more information, visit http://www.oxfordhouse.org.

FOR POTENTIAL LANDLORDS

I want to start a recovery home. Where should I look for a house?

When starting a recovery home, look at jobs in the area, transportation access, and recovery meetings in the area. These things should be the foundation when looking for a location for a recovery home.

What problems might I run into with opening a recovery home in my city?

You will need to look at zoning laws, what types of properties can be in an area, and how many people can live in a residence. These are typically city or county ordinances that need to be followed. Please note, individuals in recovery are protected through the Fair Housing Act and this should be considered in the planning and process. As a landlord, you may not ask about a prospective resident's medical history, status of recovery, medication usage, or disability.

You may also run into NIMBYs (Not In My Back Yard). People and neighbors may not understand what a recovery home is and why they are needed in a community. For more information on this see our sheet on Recovery Housing Stigma.

What communities should I look at for a recovery home?

Some people prefer a recovery home away from their hometown. This allows them to get away from their familiar people and places and start new. Other people prefer to find a recovery home close to or in their hometown, to have a support system of loved ones around them during their recovery.

Where do I find funding?

Funding can come in a variety of sources such as federal/state grants, local coalitions, donors, and in-kind donations. If you want more information about funding, go to the Recovery Housing Funding document in the toolkit.

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