

**Summer 2021
Blue Sky Planning Document**

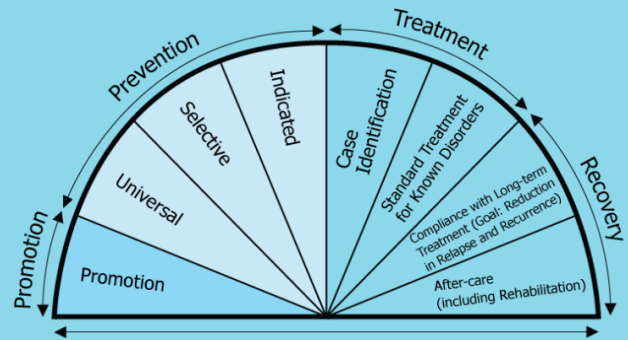


**Recovery Friendly
Workplace Program**

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Surry County Recovery Friendly Workplace Program

Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery (SCOSAR) is dedicated to building a continuum of care that eliminates impediments for residents who seek treatment and recovery from substance use disorder.



This document presents a framework to develop a Recovery Friendly Workplace Program at your company or organization. The Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery is building a Recovery Oriented System of Care (ROSC). This system includes the development of employment networks and support mechanisms that will help our community improve outcomes and enhance our community and economic development.



Welcome

The Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery appreciates your interest in learning more about the disease of addiction and how the businesses can support community efforts to recover from the effects of the substance use epidemic and be healthier.

We know that supporting employees is good for business. The unemployment rate for Surry County was 4.1% as of May 2021. The regional unemployment rate was lower than the national rate of 5.5%. One year earlier, in May 2020, the unemployment rate in Surry County was 12.6%.

The population in Surry County, North Carolina was 71,971 per American Community Survey data for 2015-2019. The Current Labor Force Participation Rates and Size (of the civilian population 16 years and over) is 55.8% (32,601) as compared to the North Carolina rate of 62.0%. In addition, the Prime-Age Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 25-64) equals 76.1% (20,053) as opposed to the North Carolina rate of 81.7%. Data tells us that many potential employees exist who are working hard to find recovery from substance use and other behavioral health issues.

One in every 12 workers in the United States manages an untreated Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and 75% of all people who use substances are currently employed. Such statistics indicate that employers are already absorbing the additional cost of employees who need better recovery supports. There is tremendous opportunity to reduce cost and to improve the overall health of the community. On average, an employee in sustained recovery saves their employer an average of \$8,500 in associated cost including reduced rates of turnover, absenteeism and improved job performance.

Our Ask



We need employers to help us achieve this goal. Is your company or organization willing to:

- Consider providing employment opportunities to individuals in recovery and working on a path to wellness that may reduce the number of position vacancies?
- Better support existing employees that may need services to increase successful recovery and refer those in need to community organizations to better support their recovery path?

The benefits of implementing a Recovery Friendly Workplace (RFW) are numerous:

- Increased productivity
- Reduced absenteeism
- Greater employee job satisfaction
- Improved retention and reduced turnover
- Development of partnerships with community organizations
- Enhanced public exposure of the respective company/organization and contribution to the overall wellness of the community

Addiction and Recovery are complex social issues that impact every facet of our community. Employers should not have to resolve these problems in their workforce alone. The Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery is committed to assisting companies and organizations if they desire to develop a Recovery Friendly Workplace.

What is the Definition of Addiction?

The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) defines addiction as:

“...a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and an individual’s life experiences. People with addiction use substances or engage in behaviors that become compulsive and often continue despite harmful consequences. Prevention efforts and treatment approaches for addiction are generally as successful as those for other chronic diseases.”

Addiction impacts the physical body, impacts the soul, and crushes the spirit of the person. Shame and guilt are the normal partners of addiction. Employees suffering from addiction are frequently thought to lack will power, self-discipline, and good judgement. But addiction science has determined that genetics, environment, and adverse childhood experiences have significant influence on addictive behavior. Recovery from substance use is complex. There is no easy solution to achieve recovery. The approach must be holistic. Recovery from addiction is possible. Treatment works. Success can be achieved.

Recovery Oriented System of Care (ROSC)

A ROSC is a coordinated network of community-based support that is an essential element of the Recovery Friendly Workplace. A ROSC is person-centered and builds on the strengths and resiliencies of individuals, families, and communities to achieve abstinence and improved health, wellness, and quality of life for those with or at risk of alcohol and drug problems. Building a Recovery Friendly Workplace Program in Surry County is part of the Recovery Oriented System of Care Model that the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery is attempting to build.



The ROSC model focuses on:

- Development of support services unique to the person's needs
- Creating multiple pathways of success, because there is no one size fits all solution to addiction and recovery
- Creating a holistic support network to serve the needs of the individual and the family
- Providing community support and peer support to leverage the talents of our community and lived experiences of individuals
- Building relationships through one-on-one connections
- Encouraging a culture of recovery and creating a community norm that recovery is possible
- Supporting efforts to reduce the impact of past trauma and acknowledging the impact of past traumatic events on the present and future
- Leveraging community strengths and shared responsibility
- Fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect to avoid stigma and blaming
- Providing support through successful journeys of recovery

What Does the Term "Recovery" Mean?

The National Institute of Drug Abuse defines Recovery as a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

Effective recovery includes:

- **Health:** overcoming or managing one's disease(s) as well as living in a physically and emotionally healthy way;
- **Home:** a stable and safe place to live;
- **Purpose:** meaningful daily activities, such as a job, school, volunteerism, family caretaking, or creative endeavors, and the independence, income and resources to participate in society;
- **Community:** relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love and hope.

One in fourteen Americans are in recovery from addiction. Employment can be a major part of a successful recovery journey. Employers can have an enormous impact on the health of an employee in recovery. Common impact points include the opportunity to provide recovery specific education to employees and families and implement policies that support recovery.

Benefits of Participation

Guidance & Support

Receive guidance and support from a Recovery Friendly Workplace Advisor through the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery. The Advisor will help your company or organization implement recovery friendly practices within your workplace, including customized staff training and resources to better support your employees. If you are interested in expanding recruitment efforts within the recovery population, we will assist with connections and provide additional resources for both you and the prospective employee.

Connect to Resources

Connect to local recovery support, educational services, and wellness resources.

Retain Employees

Retain a healthier, more motivated, and more productive workforce through the delivery of evidenced based health and safety practices.

Earn the Designation of a “Recovery Friendly Workplace”

Receive designation as a “Recovery Friendly Workplace” from the Economic Development Partnership and the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery. By earning this designation, you send a strong message to your employees, customers, and community about the positive culture of your workplace.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is a Recovery Friendly Workplace?

A Recovery Friendly Workplace (RFW) supports the health, wellness, and safety of its employees by providing education about SUD, prevention, addiction, and creating opportunities that support the journey of recovery. The Recovery Friendly Workplace works to reduce the stigma often associated with SUD and recovery.

What is the Cost of Participation?

The RFW program and the services of the Recovery Friendly Workplace Advisor are of no cost to a business. This also includes specialized services for successful implementation, connection with local organizations and businesses, referrals for employment, and employee support where appropriate.

What is a Recovery Friendly Workplace Advisor?

The Recovery Friendly Workplace Advisor is a community advocate who works as an intermediary between the Recovery Community and the Business Community. As a staff member of the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery working directly with individuals in recovery, the RFW Advisor will be available to answer questions, support you in implementing and customizing your RFW toolkit, and education.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What are the Benefits of Employing Individuals in Recovery?

The benefits of employing County residents in recovery are numerous. The benefits to your business of retaining employees in Recovery are improved productivity, decreased absenteeism, and increased job retention. Providing opportunities for continued employment and access to support to your employees during their recovery journey dramatically increases the odds of their success.

What Resources are Available to Your Business?

Companies and organizations of all sizes and readiness levels can benefit from participation in the RFW program. Resources will include customized training, RFW materials, and support. RFW Program Staff will also ensure that workplaces are well connected to community prevention and recovery services to best support their employees.

What Training is Available and How Much Time Will it Take to Complete?

Training options are tailored to meet your needs. Staff from the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery facilitates training in person or virtually, based on the needs and preferences of each worksite.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Will I have to Change Policies or Commit to Hiring or Retaining Employees in Recovery?

Developing a RFW will not require your business to alter specific policies. We hope your company uses the information presented and the subject matter expertise of our RFW Advisor to supplement your current recruitment and wellness efforts. The Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery RFW effort is designed to honor recovery, combat stigma, and provide resources to employers, their prospective and current employees, and family members.



My Company or Organization Wants to Participate. What is Next?



The RFW Advisor from the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery will be with you from the very beginning of the project.

While every workplace situation and need is different, a typical business engagement model includes multiple milestones:

Milestone #1 - Letter of Intent

Submit a letter of interest to the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery indicating a willingness to learn more about the Recovery Friendly Workplace model.

Milestone #2 - Orientation

Work with the RFW Advisor to assess business needs and receive a program orientation.

Milestone #3 - Implementation

Based on the respective needs and interests of the business or organization program, the RFW Program Advisor will provide support and training to the employer, as well as connections and access to other potential employees in recovery.

Milestone # 4- Sustain

RFW Advisors will be available throughout the process providing education, support, and referral networks to ensure successful implementation of the Recovery Friendly Workplace.

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