



Making the Case for Recovery Housing

1. What is Recovery Housing?

Recovery Housing, sometimes also called Sober Living, or Sober Housing, is shared-housing utilizing the “Social Model of Recovery”, where the residents support each other to help maintain abstinence and improve the quality of their lives. A 2022 study of U.S. Recovery Housing estimated that there are 10,358 recovery homes across the U.S. There are around 400-500 recovery homes in Oregon. Of these, most (75%) are either NARR Accredited or Oxford Approved.

2. What is NARR Accreditation?

NARR is the National Alliance of Recovery Residences. NARR accreditation is the most intensive recovery housing accreditation in the U.S. There 105 standards within NARR accreditation across four domains: 1) Administrative Standards, 2) Physical Environment Standards, 3) Recovery Support Standards, 4) Good Neighbor Policies. 39 U.S. States utilize the NARR Standards.

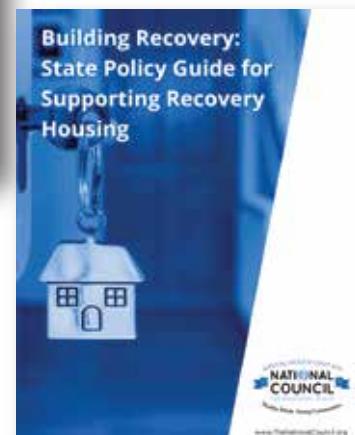
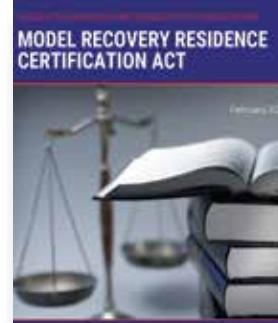
Administrative and Operational Domains		LEVELS
A. Core Principles: Mission and Vision	• Core principles and vision are clearly defined	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
B. Staff Selection and Training	• Staff selection and training are conducted in accordance with the mission and vision	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
C. Programmatic and Financial Operations	• Programmatic and financial operations are conducted in accordance with the mission and vision	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
D. Recovery Support Services	• Recovery support services are provided in accordance with the mission and vision	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
E. Good Neighbor Policies	• Good neighbor policies are in place to support the mission and vision	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
F. Continuous Improvement	• Continuous improvement processes are in place to support the mission and vision	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
G. Programmatic and Financial Operations	• Programmatic and financial operations are conducted in accordance with the mission and vision	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
H. Recovery Support Services	• Recovery support services are provided in accordance with the mission and vision	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
I. Good Neighbor Policies	• Good neighbor policies are in place to support the mission and vision	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
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3. NARR Accredited Recovery Housing is Endorsed by the Federal Government

The Biden White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and the Legislative Analysis and Public Policy Association, developed Model State Legislation for funding Recovery Housing. This Model Legislation recommends public funding of NARR Accredited Recovery Housing and Oxford Housing, as a minimum standard for funding.

SAMHSA has just released a Best Practice Guide regarding recovery housing that highlights NARR Accredited Recovery Housing as a national model recommended to states.

The National Council for Behavioral Health authored a State Policy Guide to advise states on public funding of NARR Accredited Recovery Homes.



HUD recommends individuals should be offered the choice “Housing Choice”, between “Housing First” and “Recovery Housing.” HUD released a policy brief stating, “Recovery Housing, when administered in a manner consistent with this brief and in a community that has adopted the principles of Housing First community wide, can be a part of a larger community approach grounded in choice for people who are experiencing homelessness and have substance use disorders.”



4. OHSU Gap Analysis

The OHSU Gap Analysis reports that Oregon needs an additional 3,859 recovery housing beds to address both homelessness and Oregon’s addiction and overdose crisis.

5. Recovery Housing is Inexpensive compared to SROs

A new single-residency SRO unit can cost between \$250,000-\$600,000 per unit. Whereas, a basic recovery housing averages about \$800/month. The cost of one single occupancy unit could house up to 62 people in recovery housing for a year.

6. Recovery Housing is a research-based best practice

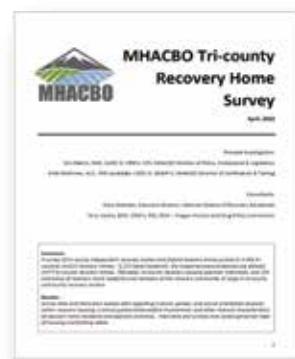
There have been well over a hundred research studies demonstrating the efficacy of Recovery Housing. A 2023 Research Review found significant, sustained improvements at 18-month follow-up for measures of abstinence, arrests, mental health, and employment. The review also highlighted a 2018 study of 47 recovery homes showing "there were significant improvements on measures of alcohol and drug use, severity of alcohol and drug problems, legal problems, HIV risk including needle sharing, psychiatric problems, employment, and homelessness." The 2023 study highlighted other research reviews and characterized the overall scientific support for recovery housing as "moderate to strong" within the breadth of outcome studies.



Moreover, SAMHSA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration has released a best practices guide based on contemporary research.

7. Can Recovery Housing actually work with individuals experiencing homelessness?

An OHA funded survey of 215 recovery homes reveals that 46% of recovery home residents experienced homelessness within the past year prior to entering recovery housing



8. Recovery Housing Myths

Zero-Tolerance - Myth

Recovery Housing is ZERO-TOLERANCE and they kick people out when they relapse. This is false. An OHA funded survey of 215 recovery housing organizations reveals that no one is evicted for a relapse. Rather, people receive second chance, or third chance type agreements while staff and peers participate in providing additional support. The primary causes of eviction are: 1) not paying rent, 2) creating an unsafe environment through distribution of drugs or acts of violence.

High Barrier - Myth

Housing First is “low barrier” and Recovery Housing is “high barrier” housing. Ironically, individuals can enter recovery housing often within a day of application, whereas it can take 3 months or longer to get into Housing First. Housing First has a list of requirements; verification of income, state issued ID and social security number, passing a criminal background check, passing a rental history check, sometimes having a TB test, long wait list, etc. Recovery housing does focus on sobriety and recovery, however recovery housing is much easier to get into, often without any background exclusions, and even undocumented individuals participate in recovery housing.

No MAT or Medications Allowed - Myth

Recovery Housing does not accept people on MAT (Methadone, Buprenorphine, etc.). This is false. An OHA funded study of 215 recovery homes reveals that 100% allow individuals participating in MAT to enter their homes, and 29.15% of current residents were participating in MAT, and 56.7% were consuming psychiatric medication.