



Health Systems Division

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Date: January 28, 2021

TO: Chair Gelser, Senate Human Services, Mental Health and Recovery

FROM: Steve Allen, Director of Behavioral Health, Health Systems Division, Oregon Health Authority

SUBJECT: SB 69, Substance Use Disorder Recovery Housing

SB 69: Oregon Substance Use Disorder Recovery Housing

OHA proposes statutory changes that would allow the support of a full continuum of housing options, adding Housing First to the continuum of options that already includes Alcohol and other Drug Free Housing. In the past, OHA has provided capital funds to support residential and Supportive Housing creation but has only been able to fund Alcohol and other Drug Free Housing, due to statutory limitations.

Housing First is a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, thus ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life. This approach leads with housing as an intervention and allows those at all stages of the recovering journey to access safe and affordable housing without tying shelter to treatment engagement or sobriety standards.

OHA is also requesting an update to language within this statute, moving towards Trauma Informed Terminology, and removing stigmatizing language from treatment modalities such as Withdrawal Management Services.

About Recovery Housing

Oregon has a network of recovery housing programs throughout the state. However, only three are directly funded by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA). Other recovery housing options are available through faith-based and non-profit organizations. The exact number of recovery houses outside of OHA funded programs is difficult to report due to OHA not having regulatory oversight of recovery housing.

Additionally, Permanent and Supportive Housing is available throughout the state to support the recovery process.

SB 69

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OHA Funded Programs

Oxford Inc., Housing Assistance Services: Annual fund \$750,00 for 1,676 beds. The largest recovery housing provider that OHA funds is Oxford Inc. They are currently contracted within 20 counties to provide technical assistance through paid outreach workers, to facilitate increased capacity in the recovery housing network, and to integrate medication assisted recovery (MAR). It should be noted that this funding does not include rental assistance but does include a revolving loan program available for start-up costs for new recovery houses across Oregon.

- 62 women's houses (507 available beds)
- 141 men's houses (1169 available beds)

Oxford, Inc. reports a 94% occupancy rate but notes it has gone down to 90% during the pandemic.

The average cost to live in an Oxford house is \$450 per month.

The Housing Assistance Services Program (HASP): Annual fund \$1,232,364. This includes 11 providers who coordinate rental assistance, coordinate housing placement, and provide rental barrier removal funds for individuals who have a substance use disorder(s). The average number of individuals participating in the program per quarter was 423.

The Marion County recovery housing assistance program: \$100,000. This is funded by the State Opioid Response grant and is a one-time funding allocation of that will expire on September 30, 2021 and will not be renewed. Marion County provides assistance through housing vouchers to individuals engaged in opioid medication assisted recovery.

Other Programs (Outside OHA)

Many recovery housing providers in Oregon are not funded by OHA but are well established and provide critical recovery housing needs in the community. Some recovery housing options offer peer services, family reunification, and case management. The following recovery housing options are well-known and located in the Tri-County area:

Iron Tribe Network: <https://www.irontribenetwork.org/>

Bridges to Change: <https://bridgestochange.com/housing/>

Central City Concern: <https://www.centralcityconcern.org/services/housing/>

Recovery housing resources can also be found on the following website provided by the Mental Health and Certification Board of Oregon (MHACBO):

<https://www.oregonrecoveryresidences.org/en/>

SUD residential programs are not considered recovery housing but do offer individuals with substance use disorder(s) clinical services that includes room and board. The average length of stay in a SUD residential program is 30 to 90 days, which includes intensive clinical services and case management that help individuals find recovery housing during the transition back into the community. There are currently 42 licensed SUD residential programs across the state of Oregon. Use this link to learn more about the program locations:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HSD/AMH/Publications/provider-directory.pdf>