

Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiatives

What are Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiatives?

Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiatives gives business owners the resources and support they need to foster a supportive environment that encourages the success of their employees in recovery. As defined by the Center for Disease Control, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), “a recovery-supportive workplace aims to prevent exposure to workplace factors that could cause or perpetuate a substance use disorder while lowering barriers to seeking care, receiving care, and maintaining recovery.”¹ A recovery-supportive workplace educates its management team and workers on issues surrounding substance use disorders to reduce the all-too-common stigma around this challenge.”

What do they do?

Recovery Friendly Workplaces:

- ◆ Promote a work culture and climate that is supportive of workers in recovery such as awareness building, stigma reduction, and alcohol-free work social events
- ◆ Provide peer support and peer coaching to bolster the social supports available to workers in recovery
- ◆ Provide workplace accommodations and other return-to-work assistance
- ◆ Support second-chance employment
- ◆ Provide information and access to care for a substance use disorder when it is needed, including access to medication-based or medication-assisted treatment, together with individual counseling
- ◆ Decrease difficult working conditions or work demands that might lead to daily or recurrent pain
- ◆ Promote the use of alternatives to opioids for pain management associated with a workplace injury or illness
- ◆ Prevent work-related injuries and illnesses that could lead to the initiation of substance misuse²

Benefits to Businesses: Workplaces that implement evidence-based health and safety programming retain a healthier, more productive, and more motivated workforce.³ Recovery friendly workplace initiatives can improve morale, employee satisfaction, and customer loyalty, while at the same time reducing absenteeism, turnover and the negative impacts on families.

Role of the Public Workforce System:

To support employers in developing recovery-supportive workplaces and hiring and retaining individuals in recovery, the state and local workforce agencies can:

- ◆ Learn about and provide the support needed by employers to obtain their commitment and test creative solutions to employ, and retain program participants and individuals with substance use disorders;
- ◆ Connect small to mid-size businesses with community resources such as the Employer Resource Network to provide participants with job retention services, work supports, and training opportunities to support entry-level employees;
- ◆ Connect employers to program participants receiving concurrent outpatient treatment and job training services
- ◆ Assist employers in identifying and providing reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities, including those in recovery from a substance use disorder;
- ◆ Explore the flexibilities available through WIOA to support work-based training, such as On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Incumbent Worker Training, and to expand the list of Eligible Training Providers;
- ◆ Consider transitional jobs, which are among the individualized career services that may be well suited for individuals struggling with substance abuse. Transitional jobs are time-limited and wage-paid work experiences that are subsidized up to 100 percent. These jobs are in the public, private, or nonprofit sectors and are only available for individuals with

¹ [Workplace Supported Recovery Program | NIOSH | CDC](#)

² [Workplace Supported Recovery Program | NIOSH | CDC](#)

³ [Recovery Friendly Workplace](#)



barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed or have an inconsistent work history, as determined by the Local WDB. TEGL 19-16⁴ further describes the requirements around transitional jobs; and

- ◆ Encourage hiring individuals with barriers to employment by promoting programs to support their employment, such as the Federal Bonding Program¹⁵ and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit¹⁶, when those individuals meet relevant eligibility criteria;
- ◆ Consider whether waivers of WIOA requirements would be a useful tool in supporting service delivery. Waivers allowing for raising the allowable OJT employer reimbursement rate for small employers could serve to fill unmet areas of opportunity. Please consult the WIOA waiver web-page which describes currently approved waivers and available flexibility at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa/waivers>.

Does Your State Have a Recovery-Friendly Workplace Initiative? Visit this state-by-state map of Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiatives, provided by New Hampshire and hosted on the US Department of Labor's Workforce GPS Community of Practice <https://dwg.WorkforceGPS.org>

Would your State be Interested in Creating a Recovery-Friendly Workplace Initiative?

For resources and information, visit the DOL Workforce GPS Community of Practice and also New Hampshire's [Recovery Friendly Workplace.com](https://www.recoveryfriendlyworkplace.com), as New Hampshire provides training and support for interested states.

For More information:

Department of Labor Resources:

- ◆ Dislocated Worker Grant Community of Practice: [WorkforceGPS](https://dwg.workforcegps.org/home/), <https://dwg.workforcegps.org/home/>
- ◆ [Strategy Spotlight. Supporting employers using the Project Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes \(ECHO\) model](#)
- ◆ [Video Case Studies: National Health Emergency Grant – Business Engagement to Support Those in Recovery.](#)
- ◆ [Department of Labor Training and Employment Notice \(TEN\) 2-21 - Serving Individuals and Communities Impacted by Opioid Addiction and Other Substance Use Disorders](#)

Other Resources:

- ◆ New Hampshire's Governor's Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiative [Recovery Friendly Workplace.com](https://www.recoveryfriendlyworkplace.com)
- ◆ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) [Recovery and Recovery Support | SAMHSA](#)

⁴ [TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE LETTER No. 19-16, Employment & Training Administration \(ETA\) - U.S. Department of Labor \(doleta.gov\)](#), March 01, 2017

